

Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit News



**Health-e-AME
Physical-e-Fit**

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Special points of interest:

- *Happy Independence Day!*
- *June 30– July 7:* General Conference, Indianapolis
- *August 25-30:* Palmetto conference annual meeting
- *September 8-13:* Northeast conference annual meeting
- *September 22-27:* Columbia conference annual meeting
- *September is Healthy Aging month.* Make an effort to include older adults in your physical activity programs.
- *National Women's Health and Fitness day is September 29.* Help increase the health and fitness of your AME sisters. Learn more at www.fitnessday.com.

Spring Physical-e-Fit Trainings are a Big Success!

The spring 2004 trainings have brought the Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit program to churches across the state. The program was offered to churches in the Central, Columbia, and Piedmont conferences in addition to the Northeast, South Carolina, and Palmetto conferences that were trained in year 1.

Our first training was held on April 3 at Williams Chapel AME in Orangeburg. We trained 23



Chair aerobics at Williams Chapel AME, April 3

individuals from 13 churches, and enjoyed being physically active while enjoying the fellowship of others. Many thanks to our host: Rev. R. Belin and Ms. Barbara White.

Our second training was held on May 15 at Bethel AME in Columbia. We had 34 people from 16 churches attend, and had lots of fun while enjoying the gracious hosting of Rev. R. Brailsford and Health Director Screndria Burnette.

Our final large training for Spring 2004 was held in the upstate town of Abbeville at Long Cane AME on May 22. Rev. A. Kollock and Health Director Piccolia Garrett were our gracious hosts as we took part in



Praise aerobics at Bethel AME, May 15

physical activity, education and inspiration. A total of 28 people, representing 17 churches took on the charge of bringing the Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit program to their churches.

We now have a statewide network of trained churches more than 200 strong! We thank all of you who have taken on this important mission to better the health of your fellow AME members.

Kingstree District Christian Education /Church School Convention Gets Physical-e-Fit

The Physical-e-Fit team salutes Mr. Sampson Hughes as a trailblazer for taking the initiative in promoting physical activity during the Kingstree District Christian Education/Church School Convention in St. Stephen, June 1-2. Mr. Hughes invited the team to make presentations about the importance of nutrition and physical activity.

Throughout the two-day conference, several activities promoting physical activity were evident, including a "Walk for Christ", and Praise Aerobics with Thaje Anderson. Adult members received a mini-training about the Physical-e-fit project. This was the first training performed under the Christian Education umbrella, with 13 new

churches trained, and 7 churches receiving booster training. We are excited about this training at the Christian Education Convention, and are looking forward to future trainings with other districts!



Inside this issue:

<i>Physical activity during the summer</i>	2
<i>Health Aging month</i>	2
<i>Out & About with Physical-e-Fit</i>	2
<i>Spotlight Church: St. Paul AMEC</i>	3
<i>A word from Elder Coleman</i>	3
<i>Meet our Praise Aerobics Instructor</i>	4

When Temperature are Rising.... Staying Physically Active in the Summer Months

The summer months are finally here, they bring the promise of church picnics, fireworks, afternoons at the beach, and much more fun. Unfortunately summer months bring a lot of heat and humidity, which can throw a hitch into your physical activity routines.

Being active during the summer is easy— though there are a few precautions that should be taken. Encourage your congregation members to carry fluid with them, and drink before during and after activity time. This is especially important for individuals who are taking medications that can lead to

dehydration. Remember to encourage participants to dress in breathable fabrics, preferably light colored cotton, and wear cotton socks with supportive shoes— skip the flip-flops during physical activity.

If possible, avoid being active during the hottest part of the day. Older individuals and people with high blood pressure or diabetes



should definitely avoid activity under the hot afternoon sun. Try being active indoors, shopping malls are a great place to beat the heat!

Summer vacations are good rest for the body and soul but can cause us to get out of the habit of being active. Encourage your participants to try planning ahead for their vacations by bringing their exercise clothes and scouting out some new activities to try. If they absolutely can't find a way to be active on your vacation, be sure to encourage them to get back into their routine when they return! Have them ask friends and family for gentle reminders to stick with it.

Celebrate Older AME Members with Healthy Aging Month

September is Healthy Aging month, and a time to recognize the importance of health and well-being for older adults. Although we all know that our health can decline with age, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity, can help to slow many age-related declines. Disability and decreased quality of life are not irreversible with age.

Often older adults don't realize the benefits of regular physical activity

"...start low and go slow—take it at their own pace."

participation, or they think it's too late to start being active. When addressing your congregation, make an effort to reach older congregation members, and encourage them to come and participate in your programs. If you offer

chair aerobics, let them know that it's a low intensity workout that offers fun and fellowship. If they'd like to participate in other activities, encourage them to start low and go slow— take it at their own pace. Consider forming a walking club for seniors, it offers a great opportunity for fellowship and support amongst older AME members.

Check out ideas for Healthy Aging month at www.healthyaging.net.

Out & About with Physical-e-Fit

The staff has been "out and about" South Carolina sharing the good news with AME members about how to improve their physical health by exercising and eating healthy foods! One of our stops was the Mid Year Pastor's Conference held at Allen Temple Church in Greenville, March 18-20th. We offered an update, and did our best to uplift and energize leaders and members about the program while working out to praise aerobics with our exercise consultant, Thaje Anderson.

During February at a Tribute Dinner honoring Episcopal Leaders in North Charleston we slowed the program down a little to honor and sponsor our leader, The Right Henry Allen Belin for embracing the program.

The next stop was at the Young People's Division Retreat held on March 26-28th. The staff engaged members from younger to older adults in praise aerobics as they all "Stomped on the Devil" in the gymnasium. The following day we showed how much fun it is to be active by setting up 30 stations of PA that participants could choose from, including double dutch, jump rope, hula hoops, volleyball, kickball, basketball, and creative dancing to name a few. At the Pastor's Retreat in Myrtle Beach April 14-16th we shared information about the program, and Pastors were encouraged to walk along the ocean while meditating each day of their stay at the resort.

The Physical-e-Fit program staff honored the support of Bishop Belin at his retirement dinner on May 15th where he was presented with a plaque commemorating his efforts. We then shared in the spirit of Pentecost held May 30th at the Colonial Center by showcasing our program, distributing brochures and sweets to keep them active for the praises enjoyed during the dynamic service!

We are constantly on the move and waiting to hear from you. Feel free to contact us if you would like to host a mini training or having a cluster meeting and would like for us to share our program with other AME churches. [(803) 777-2864, sphame@gwm.sc.edu, or visit www.health-e-ame.com.]

Spotlight Church: St Paul AMEC

Rev. James Cooper and his wife have been great role models as they both get “Physical-e-Fit” with the members at St. Paul. Working along with them is Dorothea Davis, Health Director at St. Paul AME Church in Sumter (near Shawfield). Rev. and Mrs. Cooper and Ms. Davis are just some of the active members on the health ministry team at St Paul. Church members engage in exercise lasting for 30 minutes every Thursday after their Bible Study. They have been using the Physical-e-Fit video and audio tape as members get active. Their members enjoy the chair exercises and also do the praise aerobics.

The congregation has been motivated by their health ministry team’s enthusiasm for the program, encouragement, and incentives, that addi-

tional materials have been purchased for walking and aerobics, including new videos to keep them going.

Members have purchased pedometers to help track their steps, and several members have gotten together and started a walking club that meets at Dillion Park at 7:00 am every Saturday. Then they submit their walking logs to the Health Director where it is recorded and top winners are recognized on the church bulletin board. Along with exercising, they have speakers come in and talk about issues concerning their members’ health. Although the members enjoy the physical activity, they have also incorporated the *8 Steps to Fitness* Program in their activities. St. Paul has truly been dedicated to service through mental, spiritual and physical feed-

ing/maintenance of the body! As you can see they serve as a great inspiration as they have managed to incorporate something for everyone at their church. The Health Ministry at St Paul would like to recognize several members who have made a commitment to their health and are meeting physical activity goals and reaching 10,000 steps or more day on regular basis as follows: Rev. Cooper, Miriam Cooper, Dorothea Davis, Carolyn Bridges, Emma Furman, Yvonna Pitt, Lottie Pitt, Ervin Pitt, and Evelyn Roberson. If anyone needs additional information about their program feel free to contact Dorothy Davis at (803) 775-7046.

Congratulations to Rev. Cooper, Ms. Davis and St Paul AMEC for their successful program.

A Word from Elder Rosalyn Coleman: “If to Know Were to Do”

For almost four years, we, the leadership and membership of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the State of South Carolina, have been talking about our health. We have been communicating, pushing, demonstrating and encouraging healthy alternatives for living. We have developed partnerships through which many opportunities to educate and train our members, plan and implement programs have been available. We know what to do, but are we doing it?

One day, as I listened to a presentation given by Lottie McClorin to the Presiding Elders of the Church, I immediately began to think about how I can pass this information on to the pastors and members of the churches in the District where I serve so that they may “do it”. But then, Ms. McClorin threw a boomerang. All seventeen of the Elders were given pedometers for our personal use. That’s when it hit me! I know what to do, but can I do it? We were encouraged to make walking a part of our daily routine by taking at least 10,000 steps a day.

Here I was telling people about the importance of exercise and eating right, but was I doing it? Apparently the scale

didn’t think so. And my body must have agreed because I always felt tired. I heard this as a personal challenge that day. So the very next day, I wore my pedometer. I kept tabs on it, hoping to see the right numbers. But it was difficult and it seemed that the numbers were rolling around so slowly.

“Here I was telling people about the importance of exercise and eating right, but was I doing it?”

And then I rationalized – well, I’m sitting a lot and driving a lot and that’s why I can’t reach 10,000 steps.

But deep down inside, I wanted to see those numbers. I wanted to “do it”! I started walking in the evenings regularly, trying to gradually increase the distance. And then one day, I got up early in the morning and made it to the track. This time while walking, I got a third wind, and I walked three miles. During the day, I had a little more energy, and so I parked a distance away from the building, and I

walked from one building to the next at work instead of driving. I was so busy that day, I forgot about keeping tabs.

When I got home that night and looked at my pedometer, I was stunned, I was surprised! The number registered 11,373. I did it! I did it! I told my husband, my assistant and then I got on the phone and told a few others. It was a great feeling to finally accomplish that goal. And now, I must keep the momentum. I cannot stop. I am feeling better, and I’m not quite as tired. I look forward to going out on the track.

I was reminded by this experience that it is important to make exercise a priority. Make it the first thing you do after morning devotions. And when you do, it will help you to accomplish all the other tasks of the day. It is still a great challenge, but I’m determined to “just do it”.



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**Check out the progress of the
Physical-e-Fit program at
www.health-e-ame.com**

*Take action and take care of your temple!
Get 30+ minutes of physical activity a day.
Eat 5+ fruits and vegetables a day.*



This project was funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The project is a partnership between the AME church, the Medical University of South Carolina and the University of South Carolina. © 2003 Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit

Meet our Praise Aerobics Instructor: Thaje Anderson

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior! I am Thaje Anderson, President and CEO of Praise Aerobics Inc. It is an honor for me and my company to be a part of the Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit program. When I was asked to be an exercise consultant for this program and a committee member, I thanked God for allowing me to begin fulfilling the vision he gave me of promoting better health in the body of Christ.

Since the program began over a year ago, I have had the privilege of meeting and exercising with thousands of AME church members across the state. Conferences and trainings have enabled our program to accomplish this. However I always depart from trainings wishing that I had more time to spend with people who really want to become fit. I am living proof that physical

activity can change your life. Over the past year I have lost three dress sizes doing my own program. Other benefits are stress reduction, disease prevention, metabolic increase, and more energy. As a busy working mother of three small children I learned quickly that I needed to make time for physical activity to reap the benefits. An unexpected benefit I received from physical activity this year was winning the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness honorable mention award for an individual. This is a statewide award that I believe God used to encourage me to keep reaching my goals for myself and the ministry he gave me to help others.

My prayer for everyone who chooses to take advantage of the Health-e-AME Physical-e-Fit program is to never stop working towards meeting your goals for your

personal health, your family's health, and health of the church. Every child of God has the right to experience the gift of divine health. The choice is always yours. I offer you sincere wishes for optimum health! You may contact me at tacon0255@aol.com or (843) 412-5182. Praise Aerobics Inc. does conferences, seminars, health fairs, and a variety of programs. Call for available dates and fees.



Congratulations to Thaje Anderson, winner of an award at the 2004 South Carolina Governor's Council for Physical Fitness.