

National DPP Job Aid & Promotional Materials Working with the Christian Faith Community to Promote the National DPP

Faith is central to the lives of many priority groups that the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change program (LCP) is trying to reach. This Job Aid and Promotional Materials Bundle is intended to help you understand more about the Christian faith community and how to conduct outreach to build lasting relationships and promote your LCP.

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Christianity in the United States – An Overview

History and Doctrine

Christianity originated over 2,000 years ago with the ministry of the savior and son of God, Jesus Christ, in the first century (A.D. 27-30) in what is now Palestine. Christians believe in one eternal God who is the



creator of all that is. He is viewed as a loving God who offers everyone a personal relationship with Himself in this life and for eternity. Christians believe in the Holy Trinity – that God takes the form of God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit (God active in us and the world).

Jesus Christ is a central figure across Christian denominations, seen as a messiah who walked on Earth to save mankind and call sinners to repentance. At the age of 33, he paid for the sins of all of humanity by dying on a cross (the crucifixion). Three days later, he rose from the dead, proving his deity (the resurrection). Christians believe that it is through Jesus' sacrificial death that they are forgiven. They also believe that life after death is possible because, in addition to conquering sin, Jesus conquered death and rose again to Heaven. Many Christian holidays are centered around the life of Jesus, including Christmas (which celebrates the day of his miraculous birth to the Virgin Mary) and Easter (which celebrates his resurrection).

The main scripture of Christianity is the Holy Bible. The Bible consists of two distinct sections – the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the first set of Christian writings and is primarily based on the 24 books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), which are usually considered to be the direct word of God. The second section of the Bible is the New Testament, which includes 27 books and describes the teachings and works of Jesus Christ through the words of his disciples.

There are many editions of the Bible. Editions differ in the number, order, and name of their books, and in the text or translation of text. Some Christians view the text of the Bible as the indisputable truth and ultimate authority, while others see it as guidance that is open to interpretation by religious scholars, clergy, and practicing Christians.

Christianity in the United States

There are approximately 135 million Christians in the U.S., making Christianity the largest religion in the country. Christian denominations in the U.S. are usually divided into three large groups: **Roman Catholic**, **Mainline Protestant**, and **Evangelical Protestant**.

Catholics, also known as **Roman Catholics**, belong to the oldest denomination of Christianity called Catholicism (or Roman Catholicism). Catholics believe they have a direct line from the first century church and are therefore the true church of Christ. Catholics follow the teachings of the Bible as well as church doctrine developed by Catholic clergy, the most prominent of whom is the Pope. Residing at the Vatican, an independent city-state within Rome, the Pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world. Catholicism came to the U.S. with the arrival of Hispanics/Latinos, Irish, Highland Scots, Italians,

Key Facts

Houses of Worship: Churches

Community of Believers: Congregation

Clergy: Roman Catholic – Priest,
Protestant – Pastor

Governance: Varies by denomination, generally every congregation has both non-clergy and clergy leadership structures.

Tips:

- Always make first contact with the priest or pastor. There may be a health ministry committee, health minister, or parish nurse that will be the point of day-to-day contact, but the clergy should always be engaged as the leader of the congregation.
- In all written materials, you should capitalize God as well as all corresponding pronouns (i.e. He, Him, His).

Messaging Focus: Health is a way of honoring God and recognizing the human body as a temple for the Holy Spirit. Healthy lifestyles reflect an understanding of stewardship of God's gift of life.

Dutch, Flemish, Polish, French, Hungarians, German, and Lebanese immigrants. Compared with some other religious groups, Catholics are more evenly dispersed throughout the country, with about one-in-five living in the Midwest (21%) and a quarter or more in the Northeast (26%), South (27%), and West (26%).

Mainline Protestants are a group of Protestant churches in the U.S. From the colonial era until the early 20th century, the majority of Americans attended these churches, which include **Adventists, Anglicans, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Moravians, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Puritans,** and **Quakers** and were brought to the U.S. from Northern Europe. Protestantism began in the sixteenth century as a result of the Reformation movement, in which disparate groups looked to separate themselves from the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, individuals are considered Protestant if they belong to any Western church that is separate from the Roman Catholic Church and follows the principles of the Reformation, despite variations in their beliefs and practices. While Protestantism was the majority religion in America for some time, the number of Mainline Protestants in the U.S. has dropped steadily in recent years from 30% of the population in 1972 to only 11.8% in 2018.

Evangelical Protestants are Protestant Christians who follow a faith practice that originated in Great Britain in 1730. Adherents believe in the authority and inerrancy of the Bible (biblicism) and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of humanity (crucicentrism). Evangelical Christians believe that lives need to be transformed through a “born-again” experience and a lifelong process of following Jesus (conversionism) and also emphasize the demonstration of the gospel through missionary and social reform (activism). Evangelism is a trans-denominational movement within Protestant Christianity, meaning that evangelicals can be found in nearly every Protestant denomination. Because of this, there are many denominations and congregations that consider themselves evangelical including, but not limited to: **Assemblies of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance,** and **Brethren in Christ.** For a full listing, visit the [National Association of Evangelicals website](#). The number of Evangelical Protestants in the U.S. has remained between 22.5-24% of the population for the past decade.

Other Christian denominations make up nearly 2% of the American population. These groups include **Mormons, Jehovah’s Witness, Greek, Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox,** and Anabaptist denominations such as **Amish** and **Mennonite.**

Health Views

In general, Christianity preaches that the body is a temple and a gift from God that should be treated with respect. However, it should be noted that there may be counterpoints to this belief within the Christian faith community, especially as Christianity places significant emphasis on the condition of the soul over

Historically Black Protestant Denominations

Also known as **historically African American denominations**, these Protestant churches have predominately Black congregations. More broadly, the Black church is both a specific religious culture and a socio-religious force that has shaped social justice movements in the U.S. Among the historically African American denominations are:

- The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME)
- The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ)
- The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME)
- The Church of God in Christ (COGIC)
- The National Baptist Convention of America (NBCA)
- The Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC)

the physical body. Additionally, some Christians hold the belief that suffering (such through physical ailments) is inevitable and allows one to become more “Christ-like” since Jesus himself suffered incredible physical pain during his persecution and eventual crucifixion. It is important to be aware of these viewpoints and to be prepared when you encounter them. For instance, it may be useful to share specific passages from the Bible that emphasize physical health and wellness, such as:

- “Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” – *1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NLT)*
- “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” – *1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)*
- “Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.” – *3 John 1:2 (NIV)*
- “I will restore you to health and heal your wounds.” – *Jeremiah 30:17*
- “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will find acceptable” – *Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)*
- “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance as our way of life.” – *Ephesians 2:10*
- “So if anyone cleanses himself of what is unfit, he will be a vessel for honor: sanctified, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work.” – *2 Timothy 2:21*

Promoting Your LCP to the Faith Community

Faith communities – including worshipping groups, institutions, and organizations – have long been integral to the safety network of services and resources in most communities, from church-sponsored emergency food pantries to affordable housing and faith-based health clinics. These organizations often hold pivotal roles in local communities and are seen as thought leaders and influencers in the realms of public policy and social justice with significant community connections and networks.

The following strategies and materials can be shared with Christian faith communities and faith-based organizations to promote your LCP. Instructions for suggested use are included for each resource. Be sure to tailor these resources to address local specifics and needs.

Promotional Strategies for Use by Christian Faith Leaders

As you begin to engage the Christian community, you may find that many faith leaders are unsure how to implement a promotional campaign. You can use the talking points below to provide ideas on how they can get started.

- Engage committee chairs and other lay leaders in discussions about how their ministries can be involved in raising awareness of prediabetes and type 2 diabetes prevention. Identify a day-to-day leader for these efforts.
- Hold conversations about prediabetes and type 2 diabetes prevention with your congregation. Discuss what your church community can do, both as an organization and as individuals, to prevent this devastating disease. Start the conversation by including these topics in worship

litanies, prayers for those suffering from and at risk for type 2 diabetes, and by sharing key messages and talking points from the National DPP during your sermons.

- Make materials and information available to your community, both within your church and through community-based programs you offer outside of your doors. Consider using church bulletin inserts, flyers, handouts, and social media posts (see below for customizable resources you can use). Decide which materials you will make available and who will be in charge of keeping them in stock.
- Talk to leaders within your organization about how to support healthy lifestyle changes that help people prevent and manage prediabetes and type 2 diabetes. For example, you could offer healthier foods at church receptions and meal functions or start a walking group or other physical activity group with members of your congregation. Creative events like a walking Bible study to allow your congregation to practice their faith and make healthy choices!
- Honor people who are participating in the National DPP lifestyle change program. Share their progress with the community and spotlight their successes to encourage others to follow in their footsteps.

Material for Use in Promoting Your LCP to the Christian Faith Community

Letter of Support Copy or Script for Congregations

To use: Customize this letter of support by filling in the highlighted portions with specific details about your program. Once you've filled in the letter, you can mail it to local churches or Christian faith-based organizations to ask for their participation in your program. Be sure to tailor these resources to address local specifics and needs and use community liaisons when available.

Promoting [Name of Your Local CDC-Recognized Lifestyle Change Program] For Better Health in Your Congregation

"Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body." – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NLT)

How do these words relate to our health and the choices we make every day to live a healthy lifestyle? As a faith leader, you, like Paul, can emphasize the importance of taking care of the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. By doing so, you can help your community, especially those most at risk, achieve better health and honor God by treating their body with reverence and respect.

For example, members of your congregation may be at higher risk for certain conditions like prediabetes. One in three Americans has prediabetes, a condition where a person's blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet for a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. People with prediabetes are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. By helping your congregation understand that good health is an important part of honoring God, you can encourage them to take steps to prevent or delay onset of type 2 diabetes.

What is [Name of Your Local CDC-Recognized Lifestyle Change Program]?

[Name of program] is [part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention program OR a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program]. Lifestyle change programs that are part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program are proven interventions developed specifically to prevent or delay onset of type 2 diabetes. The program is designed for people who have prediabetes or are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes, but who do not already have a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Our trained lifestyle coaches are members of the community. They lead the program to help participants adopt a new lifestyle to take care of their bodies and souls, through healthier eating, reducing stress, and getting more physical activity.

Participants build a community together where they can learn, laugh, share stories, try new things, and create new habits that support their faith in God and a healthier lifestyle – all while lowering their risk of developing type 2 diabetes and improving their physical health. And as a year-long program, their new lifestyle will be an ongoing journey – supporting them not just for today, but for the long term.

Why Promote [Name of Your Local CDC-Recognized Lifestyle Change Program]?

Participating in a program to lose weight through healthy eating and increased physical activity can reduce [name of faith-based organization's members] risk of type 2 diabetes, heart attack, and stroke.

When you're talking to your congregation this week, I hope you will consider telling them about [name of program]. I've enclosed a bulletin and flyer for your use, and if you have any questions please reach out to me at [contact information]. [Include any additional details or asks, such as setting up a meeting with you or letting you know that you will be following up with them via phone or email.]

Materials for Use by Christian Faith Leaders to Promote Your LCP

Church Bulletin or Drop-in Article

To use: Customize this article by filling in the highlighted portions with specific details about your program. Then share it with local churches or Christian faith-based organizations in your community to include in their church bulletin or newsletter, on their website, or hand out to their congregations. You can also encourage them to share these messages during services and meetings of churches committees, groups, and organizations.

Practice Your Christian Faith and Prevent or Delay Onset of Type 2 Diabetes

You go to church to nurture your soul. But what about nurturing your body through better health? As Paul reminds us, our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. We honor God by treating our body with the reverence and respect of any holy place.

"Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NLT)

Knowing this, what are you doing to take care of your body, and how are your everyday choices supporting a healthy lifestyle?

One thing you can do is find out if you are at risk of prediabetes. One in three Americans has prediabetes, a condition where a person's blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet for a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. People with prediabetes are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. Many people with prediabetes don't know they have it. You may be at risk of developing prediabetes if you are overweight, 45 years or older, or have a family member with type 2 diabetes. If you think you're at risk, you can take a one-minute, online quiz at cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/.

Prediabetes is often reversible and there is a program right here in your community that can help you prevent or delay onset of type 2 diabetes. The program is [Name of program], [part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program OR a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program]. In the program, you'll work with a coach and other members of [name of church or faith-based organization]. Together, you'll learn new skills that will help you to improve your health and take care of your body and your soul by eating healthier, reducing stress, and getting more physical activity.

Your body is a temple – and nurturing it is an important part of not only honoring, but connecting, with God. Make healthy lifestyle changes a lifelong part of your faith by preventing or delaying onset of type 2 diabetes.

To learn more about [Name of program], contact us at [phone number, email, etc.].

Flyer Copy

To use: Customize this flyer copy by filling in the highlighted portions with specific details about your program. Then share it with local churches or Christian faith-based organizations in your community to post on their church bulletin board, share it in their church bulletin or newsletter, on their website, or hand out to their congregations. You can also encourage them to share these messages during services and meetings of churches committees, groups, and organizations.

***“So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,
do it all for the glory of God”***

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)

[or replace quote with one you prefer]

One in three Americans has prediabetes, a condition where a person’s blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet for a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. People with prediabetes are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. **Many people with prediabetes don’t know they have it.**

You may be at risk of developing prediabetes if you:

- Are overweight
- Are 45 years or older
- Have a family member with type 2 diabetes

If you think you’re at risk, you can take a one-minute, online quiz at cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/.

Prediabetes is often **reversible** and there is a program right here in your community that can help you prevent or delay onset of type 2 diabetes by helping you to eat healthier, stay physically active, and manage stress.

To learn more about **[Name of program]**, contact us at **[phone number, email, etc.]**.

Text Message Copy

To use: Share the copy below with your church or Christian faith-based community organization to send out to their members via text message or SMS. They can be shared as individual messages or a mass text message if appropriate. They can also consider posting these short messages on their worship screen. You can also share this with community organizations, faith-based organizations, employers, and other people who influence the Christian faith community and ask them to share as well.

“Hi faith family! Don’t forget to nurture your body AND soul today by eating healthy, being physically active, and managing stress. Ask me for more information.” *[For everyone who replies, send them the link to* **[organization website and/or cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention]***].*

"Hi faith family! Remember this passage today: So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Learn more: [\[organization website and/or cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention\]](#)."

"Hi faith family! You make sure to feed your soul, but what do you feed your body? Choose a new healthy recipe to try today and learn about how eating healthy leads to better health: [\[organization website and/or cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention\]](#)."

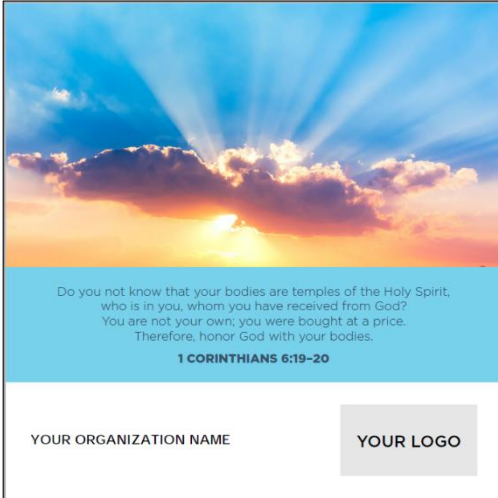
"Hi faith family! Celebrate the glory of God today when you get up and get moving! Physical activity nurtures the body AND soul. Ask me for more information." *[For everyone who replies, send them the link to [\[organization website and/or cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention\]](#).*

"Hi faith family! Remember managing stress is an important part of your health. Take a moment today to pray, meditate, or just relax. Learn more at: [\[organization website and/or cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention\]](#)."

Social Media Copy and Images

To use: Images for social media are provided with copy below. Share this post and the copy below with your church or Christian faith-based community organization to post on their Facebook or Twitter page. You can also share this with community organizations, faith-based organizations, employers, and other people who influence the Christian faith community and ask them to post it as well. Images are available in Facebook and Twitter sizes.

Post Copy	Recommended Image
You go to church to nurture your soul. But what about nurturing your body for better health? If you have or are at risk of prediabetes, you can join [insert name of program]. Learn more: [link to program website].	 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind He will find acceptable. ROMANS 12:1-2 YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME YOUR LOGO
	 So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31 YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME YOUR LOGO

Your body is a temple. But what are you doing to take care of it? Start today by finding out if you are at risk for prediabetes with a simple, online quiz: cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/.	
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Christian Faith Community Resources for LCPs

[Catholic Health Association of the United States \(CHA\)](#)

The mission of CHA is to advance the Catholic health ministry of the U.S. in caring for people and communities.

[Catholic Medical Association \(CMA\)](#)

The Catholic Medical Association is the largest association of Catholic individuals in health care. We help our members to grow in faith, maintain ethical integrity, and provide excellent health care in accordance with the teachings of the Church.

[National Association of Evangelicals \(NAE\)](#)

Founded in 1942, the National Association of Evangelicals seeks to honor God by connecting and representing evangelical Christians in the U.S. It represents more than 45,000 local churches from 40 different denominations and serves a constituency of millions.

[The Balm In Gilead, Inc.](#)

The mission of The Balm In Gilead is to prevent diseases and improve the health status of people of African Descent by supporting faith institutions in areas of program design, implementation, and evaluation to strengthen their capacity to programmatically eliminate health disparities.