

What does the Bible say?

God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them. **(Genesis 1:27)**

Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I'm gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves. My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light. **(Matthew 11:28)**

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. **(Galatians 6:2)**

But the Lord says, "Because the poor are oppressed, because of the groans of the needy, I'm now standing up. I will provide the help they are gasping for. **(Psalm 12:5)**

I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rules, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created. **(Romans 8:38-39)**

I came that you might have life and have it abundantly. **(John 10:10)**



What does The United Methodist Church say?

The World Health Organization defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." Unfortunately, mental health eludes many in our world resulting in considerable distress, stigma and isolation. Mental illness troubles our relationships because it can affect the way we process information, relate to others and choose actions. **(Social Principles ¶162.X)**

No person deserves to be stigmatized because of mental illness. **(Social Principles ¶162.X)**

Persons with mental illness and their families have a right to be treated with respect on the basis of common humanity and accurate information. They also have a right and responsibility to obtain care appropriate to their condition. The United Methodist Church pledges to foster policies that promote compassion, advocate for access to care and eradicate stigma within the church and in communities. **(Social Principles ¶162.X)**



CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

HEALTH AND WHOLENESS

MENTAL HEALTH

What do the facts say?

- 1 in 5 American adults experience mental illness in a given year; 1 in 25 have severe symptoms.¹
- Only 41% of adults with mental illness sought care. 63% of adults with a serious mental illness received mental health services in the last year.²
- An average of 43% of teens experience mental illness at some point during their teen years; 21% have severe symptoms.³
- 70% of youth in juvenile justice systems have at least one mental health condition and at least 20% live with a serious mental illness.⁴
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people 15-24.⁵
- 1 in 4 people who experience mental illness will be a victim of violence.⁶
- A 2011 study from Baylor University showed mental illness in 27 percent of families in churches. Researchers found that help with mental illness was a priority for those families affected by it, but virtually ignored by others in the congregation.⁷



1 National Institute of Mental Health, 2 Substance abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 3 National Institute of Mental Health, 4 National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, 5 American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 6 World Health Organization, 7 Mental Health, Religion and Culture

What do you say?

Take **ACTION** for justice...

Remind your elected officials that individuals and families experiencing mental illness form a sizable and vulnerable population in your community. Those dealing with mental illness benefit from public health services, community health initiatives, and having thoughtful advocates that listen to their needs. Programs at the community, state, and federal level help individuals in coping with mental illness and provide assistance to families.

Learn more about how mental illness affects your community, and about how to support public and private resources for those struggling with mental illness through National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org/faithnet) and Pathways (<http://pathways2promise.org>).

Make a commitment to implement the Caring Congregations program in your church. Look for more resources through Mental Health Ministries at www.mentalhealthministries.net.



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