

Spring is coming!

by Carol Sullivan

The church year starts with Advent; the calendar year starts with January; and a fiscal year commonly starts with July; but spring is nature's new year! As we see new grass, leaves, flowers start to emerge, as we open our windows, as day becomes longer than night, and we prepare to celebrate Easter, the miracle of rebirth is all around us.

"And so?" you may say. "What does spring have to do with health ministry?" Ah, you underestimate my understanding that health ministry is reflected in everything good! For instance, here is a springtime health tip: To wake up your skin from winter flakiness and dryness, an exfoliating treatment will remove dead cells and allow the new to shine through. How springy is that? But you don't need expensive salon products to accomplish this. Did you know that gently rubbing arms, legs, or whatever (probably not your face or other sensitive areas) with brown sugar from the grocery store is about the least expensive, safest and most effective way to accomplish this?

Well, that being your health tip of the month, back to advocating health ministry. Actually, a (non-Episcopalian) clergy person once referred to me disparagingly as a "bloody evangelist," an epithet I wear with some pride! As nature shows us new life, what new life could appear in your parish if you decided to get and post "back door readings" (health tips for display in rest rooms stalls); or to work with a health professional in your congregation to offer blood pressure screening; or to find a CPR instructor to show life-saving skills to members of the community. What could you do to bring comfort to a shut-in from your parish? Give him/her a prayer shawl/quilt? Make Anglican prayer beads and pray them with this person? Take lunch and share it with them? Health ministry takes many forms in many places – the needs are different and the resources are different. But it exists everywhere and can grow anywhere.

For ideas or assistance in getting some new health ministry blooming in your parish, contact Carol Sullivan, the Diocese of Easton liaison to the National Episcopal Health Ministries, at 410-827-6907 or songofjoy@dmv.com.

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