



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



GOOD NEWS—INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

GIVING

Wess Stafford, the former CEO and President of Compassion International, said, “The opposite of poverty is not wealth. The opposite of poverty is generosity.” When we freely give to those around us, we are truly rich. When we freely give and expect nothing in return, we are truly rich. When we freely give, and it costs us something, we are truly rich.

Giving generously does not mean you have to impact your bank account (even though that is a key way to be generous.) The most expensive commodity we have is our time. Time cannot be saved. Time is limited, and we won't have more hours in the day when the kids get out of the house, or we retire. We are all given 10,080 hours a week.

What are you going to do with your weekly allotment this December? Will you be selfish and keep it all for yourself? Will you be stingy and just give a bit to those whom you love? Will you write a check instead of going for a face to face visit? Or will you be generous and freely give your time?

Some of you (I hope) are saying, “Becky, that’s great...I want to be generous with my time, but how do I do that?” I am so glad you asked! Here are 19 ways to be generous this Advent season.



1. Turn your phone off at 6 pm and be present with your family.
2. Add a handwritten note in each Christmas card rather than just the family newsletter.
3. Invite neighbors over for Christmas cookies and coffee.
4. Spend an afternoon with your children/grandchildren baking and decorating cookies.
5. Send your pastor and his family a handwritten letter thanking them for how they have served you and your family this year, be specific.
6. Go to your church and ask if there is a shut-in who would like a visit and then go and visit later.
7. Plan a movie night with your family (be sure to implement #1 above).
8. Video chat with an out of town friend or relative.
9. Make rather than purchase gifts for Christmas.
10. Turn all the lights off except the Christmas tree lights and enjoy a hot beverage while watching the lights (be sure to implement #1 above).
11. Bake holiday treats and deliver them to the closest fire station or police station.
12. Read the Christmas story before opening any gifts Christmas morning.
13. Compliment a stranger in a specific way.
14. Write an online review on your favorite podcast or book.
15. Call a mentor and tell her the biggest lesson you learned from her.
16. Clean out your closet and donate clothing to a local charity.
17. Jot a note on your bill to your restaurant server, telling them what they did really well. (Be sure to implement #1 above while at the restaurant.)
18. Call a friend you know is having a difficult time and pray for them over the phone. It is even better if you get her voicemail!
19. Ask someone, “How was your day – really?” And be present as they answer.

Pick one a day for the next 19 days, and I can guarantee you that your Christmas will be brighter for you and all those around you!

Becky Turner

Becky is a popular FP4H speaker and currently serves as the National Managing Partner for the Barnabas Group. She uses her unique giftings and skills to fulfill her passion for discipleship and stewardship by serving the national network of TBG leaders and members who are impacting Kingdom advancing ministries. www.beckyturner.com

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SHOP ONLINE!



[FP4H](#)

[Downloadable Resources](#)



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WHAT'S NEW

While staying with the tried and true, we continue looking for ways to increase the accessibility and reach of our ministry. Starting with our new bible studies for January 2020, we will move from a 12-week session (10 weeks of bible study) to a 9-week course with eight weeks of Bible study discussions.

In the 9-week session, the first week will include the usual weighing and measuring, getting to know each other, reviewing the foundations of Matthew 6:33, Mark 12:30, and our Live It Plan. The following eight weeks will include accountability time, a Wellness Spotlight, Bible study discussion, and prayer partner time. Week 9, the final week will include the Bible study discussion and time for members to share all God has done during the session.



WHAT'S NEW?

In response to leaders' feedback, instead of having My Place for Discovery assigned weekly, the schedule will rotate between My Place for Nutrition, My Place for Fitness, and My Place for Discovery. The wellness homework will continue to serve as the focus of the following week's Wellness Spotlight.

Leaders are welcome to assign seasoned members with additional homework.

Our hope is that churches with established small group structure will include a First Place For Health group. Also, established groups can offer variety in their sessions throughout the year.

As groups plan what to do next, they have several options. If you are looking for something to do with your group before your 2020 session begins, check out the Leader Resources also available.

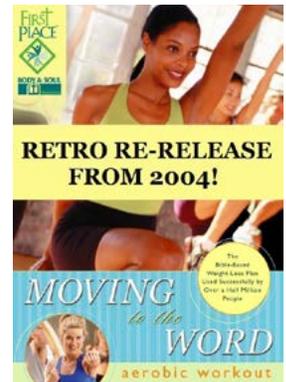
- [A Joy-Full Season](#) (6 weeks)
- [Truly Fed](#) (6 weeks)
- [Give God a Year](#) (7 weeks)
- [Live Life Right Here Right Now](#) (7 weeks)
- [Spirit Hunger](#) (7 weeks)
- [My Place for Discovery Book 1](#) (12 Weeks)
- [Restored: Embracing Weight Loss God's Way](#) (12 weeks)
- [Ten Bible Studies](#) (12 weeks)

For 2020, we have several options planned for release.

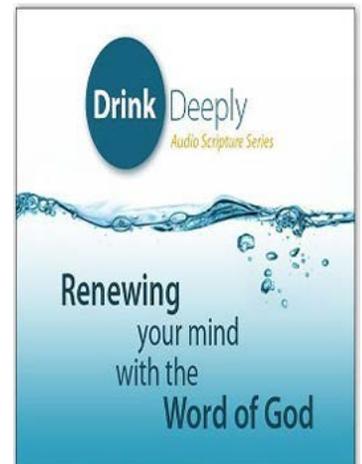
- Beyond Free* by Gari Meacham - 12 weeks - our newest Bible study
- An updated Seek God First* - 9 weeks
- An updated Motivated to Wellness* - 9 weeks
- My Place for Discovery Book Two*

Join us in praying for the impact First Place For Health will make in 2020 as we serve out our mission enabling individuals to achieve balance in heart, soul, mind, and body based on giving Christ first place.

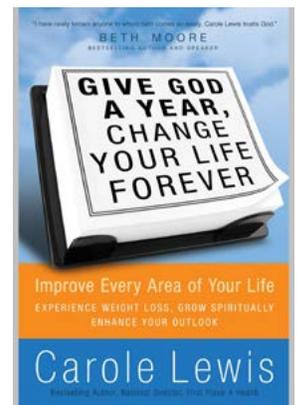
SHOP ONLINE!



Moving To The Word
Aerobic Workout



Drink Deeply
Audio Scripture Series



Give God A Year
Change Your Life Forever



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WAY TO GO

Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11



My own personal definition of the word “encouragement” is to catch someone doing something right and to tell him or her. When we encourage someone, the words we say need to be true. Encouragement can transform another person and give them hope for a brighter future.

Encouragement is an important part of the First Place 4 Health program. In our classes, we are assigned one person each week to pray for and encourage. I have never been disappointed when I take the time to call my prayer partner on the phone. I learn things about this person that I would never learn in class, and then I know how to encourage her or him even more. Getting to know another person is the key to being an encourager in a person’s life.

I have seen God work miracles through the simple act of encouragement. When a woman in a miserable marriage begins to encourage her husband when she catches him doing something right; God uses her encouragement to begin the healing of her marriage. A mom or dad begins encouraging their rebellious teenager when they catch him/her doing something right, and before long, God begins to soften the child’s hard heart.

Encouragement is like a soothing balm put on a bad burn; it takes away the pain. Life is hard, and all of us need those “atta girl!” or “atta guy” encouragements from people in our life. I always try to remember that it takes a lot of encouragement to counteract criticism.

Criticism, rather than inducing good behavior, causes us to put up a wall. Encouragement, on the other hand, takes down those walls one brick at a time.

Action Item: Do you know someone who needs a word of encouragement from you today? Try giving encouragement instead of criticism. You won’t be sorry.

Carole Lewis

First Place for Health National Director Emeritus

Devotional taken from [Better Together devotional](#), available now in the FP4H online store.



SOCIAL MEDIA





BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT EVER?

What is the best, most fabulous, wonderful Christmas gift you ever received? I've received beautifully wrapped gold jewelry from my husband. I've received homemade Christmas ornaments from my kids. (Thank you, teachers!). I've received countless homemade goodies from precious church people. All of these gifts have meant something to me. But by far, the best gift I ever received was in the fall of 1972 when I received the incomparable gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. That gift changed my life forever. Jesus is the Master Gift Giver. His gifts are never returned or abandoned in the pile of Christmas wrapping. His gifts are priceless. His gifts have purpose. The gifts we receive in Christ are riches beyond measure! His gifts have everything we need for life and godliness. These are just a few of the gifts we receive in Christ:

He has given us forgiveness and righteousness: Our sins are forgiven, and we are made righteous through Christ. (Rom. 5:1). We cannot save ourselves. Try as we might to change ourselves, we just cannot. In Christ, we are forgiven and made righteous, not by what we do but by what He has done for us.

He has given us shame-free living. Some of the first weight you need to lose is the weight of sin and shame you've been carrying way too long. We are free from condemnation. (Rom. 8:1). Christ does not condemn us, so why do we continue to condemn ourselves?

He has given us His Holy Spirit. We have the gift of the Holy Spirit so we may receive wise counsel and understand the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:12). Jesus said, "and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. And you will know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." (John 14:16 NIV)

He has given us His Mind. We have been given the mind of Christ. (1. Cor. 2:16). Our thoughts are the boss of us. We no longer have to be tormented by our thought life that takes us over with anxiety and worry. He can transform our minds with His Word, and we can experience Christ like thinking and experience real peace of mind.

He has given us His Peace. Nobody does Peace like Jesus. "My peace I give you, not as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27 NIV)

He has given us His Power. Jesus told His disciples, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these." (John 14:12 NIV). The reason this gift is so critical is that the same power that raised Christ from the dead is the power that will bring about the change in your life.

He has given us His Good Name. In His name is all authority in heaven and on earth. "I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name, until now you have not asked for anything. Ask, and you will receive, and you will be complete." (John 16:23 NIV). I am definitely a namedropper when it comes to Jesus.

Jesus wants to change your life forever. This change will not be temporary. Jesus wants to lead us in the way everlasting. Through these wonderful gifts, He will help you lose the weight and keep it off. He is the Master Gift Giver. I pray this Christmas you receive all He has for you - starting with Himself.

Happy Healthy Christmas

Vicki Heath

Vicki Heath is the National Director of First Place 4 Health. Vicki is a certified fitness instructor for the American Council on Exercise, a certified life coach and Wellness Coordinator for her church in Edisto Beach, SC. Vicki is an author of the books Don't Quit Get Fit and Wellness Journey of a Lifetime. She has led a successful First Place 4 Health ministry in her church for twenty years. Vicki is passionate about Christ and has a desire to help others understand the value of caring for their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Vicki is a pastor's wife and mother of four wonderful children and six grandchildren. She strives to bring others into the Kingdom through health and wellness.





HEALTHY RECIPES

STEEL CUT OATS WITH WARM BERRY SAUCE

Note: When you make steel-cut oats, you should make enough for a whole week, or at least several days. Unlike gluey, sticky rolled oat oatmeal, steel-cut oatmeal is great when reheated the next day. It just gets creamier.

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon butter
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Dash of ground cinnamon
- 1 (12-ounce) bag frozen mixed berries
- 1 serving prepared Steel Cut Oatmeal

Basil

Instructions

Melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add honey, lemon juice, a dash of ground cinnamon, and mixed berries; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 5 minutes. Spoon 1/3 cup berry sauce over prepared oatmeal; top with basil. Refrigerate remaining berry sauce; reheat as needed. Serves 1.



Nutrition Information:

Number of Servings 1 • 233 Calories • 4g Fat (16.5% calories from fat) • 7g Protein • 44g Carbohydrate • 7g Dietary Fiber • 5mg Cholesterol • 397mg Sodium.

FIRST PLACE 4 HEALTH LIVE IT TRACKER: 1 1/2 oz.-eq. Grain, 1/2 cup Fruit

This recipe taken from [Healthy Happy Cooking](#), available now in our online store.

BANANA BREAD PLUS!

This is a wonderful recipe to take to a party or wrap with cellophane and ribbon and give to a neighbor or friend.

Ingredients

- 2 cups unbleached flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 3 large ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Plus! Add-ins (each adds less than 10 calories per slice)

2 tablespoons chopped walnuts sprinkled on top before baking

1/2 cup cranberries, chopped, folded into batter just before baking

1/2 cup mini chocolate chips, folded into batter just before baking

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350. In a large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. In another mixing bowl, combine eggs, bananas, oil, buttermilk, and vanilla. Add egg mixture to flour mixture, stirring just until combined. Pour into a greased loaf pan. Bake for approximately 1 hour or until it tests done with a toothpick.



Nutrition Information:

Number of Servings 10 • 210 Calories • 6g Fat (24.7% calories from fat) • 4g Protein • 36g Carbohydrate • 1g Dietary Fiber • 36mg Cholesterol; • 259mg Sodium.

FIRST PLACE 4 HEALTH LIVE IT TRACKER: 1 oz.-eq. Grain, 1/2 cup Fruit

Recipe taken from [Healthy Happy Cooking](#).



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HEALTHY RECIPES

OATMEAL, CHOCOLATE CHIP & PECAN COOKIES

What a treat to have oatmeal cookies with chocolate chips and nuts. These chewy cookies are packed with flavor and won't last long in your cookie jar.

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups unbleached flour
- 1 cup regular old fashioned oats
- 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate mini chips

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine flour and next 4 ingredients (through salt), stirring with a whisk; set aside.



Place sugars and butter in a large bowl; beat with a mixer at medium speed until well blended. Add vanilla and egg; beat until blended. Gradually add flour mixture, beating at low speed just until combined. Stir in pecans and mini chips. Drop dough by tablespoonful 2 inches apart onto baking sheets lined with parchment paper. Bake at 350° for 12 minutes or until edges of cookies are lightly browned. Cool on pans 2 minutes. Remove cookies from pans; cool on wire racks. Makes 36 Cookies.

Nutrition Information (per cookie):

Number of Servings 36 • 75 Calories • 3g Fat (30.5% calories from fat) • 1g Protein • 12g Carbohydrate • trace Dietary Fiber • 10mg Cholesterol • 78mg Sodium.

FIRST PLACE 4 HEALTH LIVE IT TRACKER: 1/2 oz.-eq. Grain

This recipe taken from [Healthy Happy Cooking](#), available now in the First Place 4 Health online store.

TURKEY OR CHICKEN SALAD SPREAD

Ingredients

- 1 cup leftover turkey or chicken, chopped
- 1 cup 2% cottage cheese
- 2 hard boiled eggs, chopped
- 1/3 cup light mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon lemon pepper blend
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup 2% sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

Instructions

Add first 6 ingredients to a food processor and finely process, add celery and cheese. Use as a sandwich spread, on crackers, or with romaine leaves as a wrap.

Nutrition Information:

Serving Size 1/2 c • Number of Servings • 6156 Calories • 8g Fat (47.7% calories from fat) • 16g Protein • 4g Carbohydrate • trace Dietary Fiber • 101mg Cholesterol • 467mg Sodium.



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 ⇒ SIMPLE RECIPES
 ⇒ HEALTHY TIPS
 ⇒ LIVE IT TRACKER INFO.

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HEALTHY HAPPY COOKING
 Dinner's back—the family table with healthy, delicious and simple recipes.
 LISA LEWIS



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UPCOMING EVENTS



ONLINE GROUPS

Starting in December & January

[Online](#)

WEBINAR - HAPPY HOLIDAY COOKING

December 9, 2019

[Online](#)

FUN & FITNESS 4 LIFE

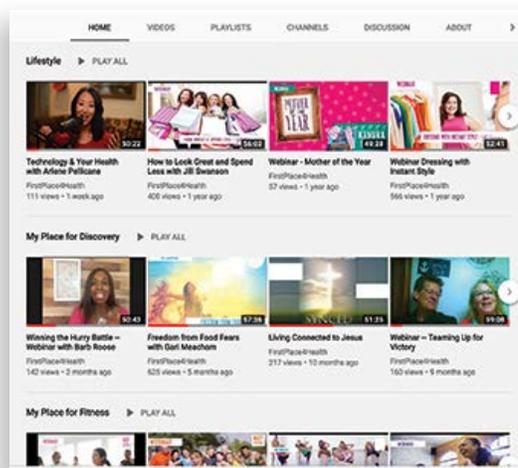
January 31-February 2, 2020

Sandy Cove, MD

RESTORE: EXPERIENCING FREEDOM FROM FOOD STRONGHOLDS

May 3-5, 2020

Sandy Cove, MD



Watch us on



- ◀ Lifestyle
- ◀ Tech
- ◀ Fitness
- ◀ Nutrition
- ◀ Discovery

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The First Place For Health ENewsletter is published monthly by First Place For Health.

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