



American Heart Association.
EmPOWERED to Serve™

EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge

Church Toolkit

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- Welcomes and thanks the senior pastor for participating in the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge.

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My Life Check®

- American Heart Association assessment tool measures your Heart Score.
- Infographic illustrates the seven measures that determine your Heart Score.

Health Lessons

- Includes a timeline with a brief overview of the AHA's health lessons.

Pulpit Announcements

- Provides talking points for clergy, a recommended announcement and helpful statistics.

Printable Announcements

- Church Flyer
 - One-page description of the program to distribute to church members, include in programs, etc.
- Church Bulletin
 - A 1/3-page flyer to distribute to church members, include in programs, etc.

Social Media Posts

- Prepared posts to recruit participants.

Inspirational Words

- Inspires participants during recruitment and throughout the program.

Promotional Videos

- Features gospel artist Brian Courtney Wilson, who encourages church members to participate.

Thank you for participating in the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge!**
The American Heart Association and WW International are excited that your congregation is taking big steps in their health journey.

Because we're dedicated to ensuring equitable health and quality of life for all, we've made this program easily accessible for your members.

To help you and your health ministry implement the program, we have provided a toolkit that includes health lessons, printable announcements and clergy talking points.

Thank you again for participating in the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge. We look forward to joining you and your congregation in pursuing heart health in 2020!

Best in health,

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge?

It's a 12-week pilot program that supports and expands health and wellness activities of Black women and their faith-based communities. It was established by the American Heart Association and sponsored by WW International, Inc. (Weight Watchers Reimagined)

What is the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge?

The 12-week online program is for churches not chosen to participate in the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge. Communities gather weekly on a designated day to watch a health lesson video and assess their learning through a short quiz.

What is a Church Ambassador?

A Church Ambassador is a member of the church community who leads the challenge. To lead a health lesson, they will need access to a computer, Wi-Fi/internet, projector and a room.

Who is eligible to participate in the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge?

Churches that weren't chosen for the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge are invited to participate in the online challenge. If other churches in your community are interested, please email empoweredtoserve@heart.org.

How do I register for the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge?

Churches that applied for the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge were notified by email about the online challenge. Churches that want to participate should email empoweredtoserve@heart.org by Feb. 14.

Is there a financial incentive to participate in the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge?

Yes, the church with the most participants take the health lesson survey (relative to their church size) throughout the challenge will receive \$1,500.

How do I learn more about Adobe Connect, the online program used for the challenge?

The AHA team will train registered Church Ambassadors in a webinar the on Feb. 19th.

When will the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge begin?

The challenge will begin Feb. 24. Further communication will be provided to staff and churches as the launch date approaches.

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When will the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge end?

The challenge ends May 18. On June 5, finalists will be announced along with the finalists for the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge.

Health Lesson Modules:

- Week 1: Be an Advocate for You're the Cure
- Week 2: Know Diabetes by Heart
- Week 3: Control Your Blood Pressure
- Week 4: Have Faith in Heart
- Week 5: Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack
- Week 6: Create Smoke-Free Communities
- Week 7: Eating Smart with Fruits and Vegetables
- Week 8: Salt and Cardiovascular Risk
- Week 9: Keep the Beat — Learn Hands-Only CPR
- Week 10: Make Life Sweet, Not Your Drink
- Week 11: Get Active
- Week 12: Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.

*To provide you the best support, please follow this schedule of health lessons and topics as closely as possible.

How does the program benefit our church?

- This program is meant to help churches establish their health ministry and to help impact the heart health of the participants.
- The top two organizations will each receive an \$1,500

Who can join the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge?

- Community members — friends, relatives or anyone who can commit — can join the challenge. You do NOT solely have to recruit your church members.
- We market the program to women because they tend to be influencers of health at home and in the church. But men, whether husbands, relatives or friends from the community, can also participate.
- Adults (18 years or older)

Can my kid(s) join the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge?

- The program is currently aimed at adults 18 years or older. However, we encourage health education at all ages. So, with permission of the Church Ambassador, minors can sit in on health lessons.

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What is EmPOWERED to Serve™?

- EmPOWERED to Serve is part of the American Heart Association's platform that includes the EmPOWERED and Well Healthier Church Challenge. It's inspired by volunteers who are passionate about driving change through health justice and empowerment in their communities. These committed ambassadors are impacting gaps in health equity through advocacy, policy, education and social change.

Is there opportunity for us to partner with the AHA after the program ends?

- Absolutely! The AHA aims to have a successful program that positively impacts the health and wellness of the program members. But ultimately, we want to not just be "in" the community, but "of" the community. We want to work with you and for you to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

Who do I contact for questions?

- Email the EmPOWERED to Serve team at empoweredtoserve@heart.org.

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About My Life Check®

What is My Life Check®?

It's an interactive online tool that helps people assess and track their heart health information and learn more about their risk of heart disease and stroke.

How does it work?

You complete an assessment to get a Heart Health Score, recommendations to make improvements and track your progress. The tool works on desktop and mobile devices.

What's a Heart Health Score?

Your Heart Health Score indicates how you're doing with each of Life's Simple 7® factors and behaviors to achieve ideal heart health.

What's Life's Simple 7?

Life's Simple 7 is defined by the American Heart Association as seven risk factors that people can improve through lifestyle changes to help achieve ideal cardiovascular health:

1. Manage blood pressure.
2. Control cholesterol.
3. Reduce blood sugar.
4. Get active.
5. Eat better.
6. Lose weight.
7. Stop smoking.

Anyone can make these changes; the steps are not expensive and even modest improvements will make a big difference. Start with one or two. These simple, seven steps help you have a longer, healthier life.

How do my participants take the My Life Check assessment?

Go to mlc.heart.org, enter your name, your email address and the company code "AHA022" to create a password and profile.

What information do participants need to complete the My Life Check assessment?

To complete My Life Check, participants will be asked about demographics (age, height, weight, etc.) and lifestyle/diet (smoking status, physical activity, vegetable intake, etc.). They'll also be asked about blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar.

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What if my participants don't have these numbers?

They can use many community resources to check these numbers. We urge you, as the Church Ambassador, to encourage members to know their numbers as a part of their effort to get healthy. But if participants don't have access to or can't obtain these numbers, there's an "I don't know this number" option.

Do my participants need an email address to take the My Life Check?

Yes. Because the assessment asks about private health information, we cannot distribute My Life Check on paper. So, if a participant doesn't have an email address, Church Ambassadors are encouraged to help them create one.

Can the AHA perform participants' screenings?

The AHA doesn't distribute or perform biometric screenings. The AHA also doesn't diagnose or treat participants of the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge**. However, we can help participants identify abnormal biometric readings and can refer you to a physician for consultation.

Is it required for my participants to take the My Life Check assessment?

No. This is an optional tool to help participants get healthier.

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Weekly Health Lessons

Week	Health Lesson	Topic
Week 1	Be an Advocate for You're the Cure	This lesson educates your group on steps to advocate for increased access to affordable, quality health care for everyone in your community.
Week 2	Know Diabetes by Heart	Understand diabetes and its link to heart disease and stroke. Empower people living with Type 2 diabetes to take charge of their health to reduce their risk.
Week 3	Control Your Blood Pressure	Control your blood pressure — it's important to you and those you care about.
Week 4	Have Faith in Heart	Unite in our mission to prevent heart disease and stroke in women.
Week 5	Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack	Learn the warning signs of a heart attack — don't wait to call 911. "Secrets of the Heart" helps EmPOWER multicultural communities by increasing awareness about heart attacks and steps to take in a medical emergency.
Week 6	Create Smoke-Free Communities	You're the Cure — talk about your desire for smoke-free air. "Clear the Air" educates participants about how to help improve community health by curbing tobacco use.
Week 7	Eating Smart with Fruits and Vegetables	Increase access to fruits and vegetables. Let's be a united community advocating for increased access to healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables.
Week 8	Salt and Cardiovascular Risk	Eat better — pledge to reduce sodium. This lesson reviews the link between salt intake and cardiovascular risk. It provides the push needed to break off the love affair with salt and embrace a healthier relationship.
Week 9	Keep the Beat — Learn Hands-Only CPR	Watch the Hands-Only CPR Video, Two Steps to Stayin' Alive.

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Week 10	Make Life Sweet, Not Your Drink	Take a minute and think about what you drink in a typical day. You may be getting some extra calories through sweetened soft drinks, iced tea, coffee, juice and energy and sports drinks. Sugary drinks are the No. 1 source of added sugars in our diet. Reduce or eliminate the number of sugar sweetened beverages you're drinking.
Week 11	Get Active	The benefits of regular physical activity are undeniable. Something is better than nothing, and we all have to start somewhere. Go out and get active!
Week 12	Spot a Stroke F.A.S.T.	Learn the F.A.S.T. warning signs for stroke. Don't wait to call 911. Time lost is brain lost.

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Pulpit Announcements

Use these announcements in your faith community bulletin or newsletter.

ANNOUNCING YOUR CHURCH'S PARTICIPATION

We have some exciting news — our church is participating in the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge**! The American Heart Association and WW International (Weight Watchers Reimagined) are partnering to provide 12 weekly health and wellness sessions. Get in touch with (your church ambassador) to sign up today!

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

How many of us make a resolution to get healthy in the New Year? Then the year comes and goes — and we stay the same. But through the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge**, you can join a group of people who help you meet your goals. We'll have health lessons for participants for 12 weeks. So, if your resolution is to get healthier and you want to join us, please contact (your church ambassador).

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Other Announcements

Use your pulpit to spread the word and help save lives.

Please feel free to modify this clergy speech or create your own to unite your congregation behind the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge:

How many of you have been personally affected by heart disease? Please stand if you are struggling with this disease.

Are you a caregiver for a heart disease survivor? Please stand.

Do you or someone in your family have high blood pressure or diabetes? If so, please stand.

Now stand if you have a family member, loved one or friend who has been affected by heart disease.

Look around you. Heart disease is affecting our community at an alarming rate — especially our mothers, sisters and daughters. If every person (woman) here today takes steps to learn about their (her) risk factors, stays physically active, eats a heart-healthy diet and sees their (her) health care provider, we will begin to reduce heart disease in our community.

*Join the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge** — today.*

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FACTS AND MESSAGES TO USE IN ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Black women have three times the risk of sudden cardiac death compared to white women.
- African Americans are twice as likely to suffer from sudden cardiac death compared to whites. The rate is triple for black women.
- While one third of all Americans live with obesity, that figure jumps to one-half among African Americans.
- Cardiovascular disease claims the lives of more black women than all forms of cancer, accidents, assaults and Alzheimer's combined.
- About half of African American adults have some form of cardiovascular disease (47.7% of females and 46% of males).
- African Americans and Hispanics are less likely to get their high blood pressure under control.
- More than 40% of African American men and women have high blood pressure. For African Americans, it also develops earlier in life and is usually more severe.

Resources:

1. [Racial Differences in Sudden Cardiac Death](#)
2. Investigating Denominational and Church Attendance Differences in Obesity and Diabetes in Black Christian Men and Women
3. [The American Journal of Public Health, 2002](#)
4. [County Health Rankings Model](#)

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Printable Announcements



Start the New Year right by enrolling in the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge** taking place at

The American Heart Association and WW International, Inc. have joined forces to support you and your faith family on your ongoing health journey.

We're calling on church and community members to help us win this challenge and to get in shape. Help us expand our culture of health and wellness initiatives and enroll today!

PROGRAM DETAILS

Features science-based health education and coaching.

- Includes weekly one-hour and wellness sessions.
- Wellness sessions will empower you to help improve health in harmony with your faith.

BENEFITS

- Participating faith organizations will receive materials to support their health ministries.
- Participating organizations have the opportunity to receive additional financial support and special giveaways.

See details at EmpoweredToServe.org/ChurchChallenge

or contact

The EmPOWERED & Well Online Church Challenge is sponsored by





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Calling all church members to get healthier!

WHAT?

The American Heart Association and WW International have brought the **EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge** to our church! We'll host health education and coaching sessions in the 12-week program. We'll also have the opportunity for additional resources for our health ministry.

WHERE?

WHEN?

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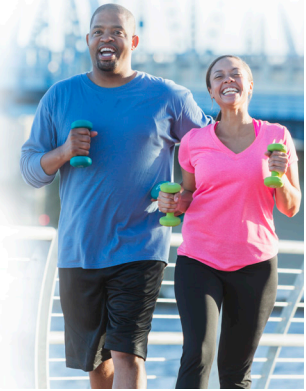


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Suggested Social Media Messages

Feel free to use these suggested social media messages throughout the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge. Whether you're recruiting members for the program or promoting your health ministry, these messages can help your faith family in their health journey.

Join us as we kick off the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge (insert time, date, location). You'll learn how our church family can help your journey to better health. The 12-week program will EmPOWER you to lower your risk of heart disease and stroke, lose weight, manage your blood pressure and lower your risk of diabetes.

More than 80% of adult black women live with obesity, and that increases the risk for heart disease, stroke and diabetes. To support the women in our church family on their journey to better health, we've joined the @empoweredtoserve and @WW Online Church Challenge. Ladies, we hope you'll join us at (insert time, date, location).

Obesity, heart disease and diabetes are real in our community. So we've joined the @empoweredtoserve and @WW Online Church Challenge. It's a faith-based health and wellness program that supports our church members on their journey to better health. We hope you'll join us at (insert time, date, place).

Help us win the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge! Come learn how you can lower your risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes and lose weight with help from the @empoweredtoserve and @WW. See you at (insert time, date place).

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Twitter: @aha_empowered

Facebook: @empoweredtoserve

WW

Twitter: @ww_us

Facebook: @ww

Instagram: @ww

Sources: Benjamin EJ, Muntner P, Alonso A, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics - 2019 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. E259.

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000659> Published January 31, 2019.

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Inspirational Words

Feel free to use these inspirational scriptures and quotes throughout the EmPOWERED and Well Online Church Challenge. Whether you need content for a newsletter or to help participants stay on course, these quotes are meant to inspire you and your faith family.

Bible Quotes

(NIV, unless otherwise specified):

Wellness as Worship

- *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God — this is your true and proper worship.” – Romans 12:1*
- *“For **we are God’s handiwork**, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” – Ephesians 2:10*
- *“Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I **do not run aimlessly**; I do not box as one beating the air. But **I discipline my body** and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.” – 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 (ESV)*
- *“Do you not know that **your bodies are temples** of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, **honor God with your bodies.**” – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*
- *“**So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.**” – 1 Corinthians 10:31*
- *“Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. Make level paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.” – Hebrew 12:12-13*
- *“**..And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith..**” – Hebrew 12:1*

Staying on Course

- *“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; **he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear**. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” – 1 Corinthians 10:13*

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- *"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."* – Philippians 4:13
- *"He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint."* – Isaiah 40:29-31
- *"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize?
Run in such a way as to get the prize."* – 1 Corinthians 9:24

Other

- *"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 2
- *"She sets about her work vigorously;
her arms are strong for her tasks."* – Proverbs 31:17

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Other Inspirational Words

WW Mantras

- *"Yes, it's a challenge. Yes, I can do it."*
- *"It's not a race, it's a journey."*
- *"It's choice, not chance, that determines your destiny."* - Jean Nidetch (Founder of WW)
- *"Healthy life, healthy body, healthy mind."*

Inspiration to Join

- *"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."* - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *"You get in life what you have the courage to ask for."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"The greatest discovery of all time is that a person can change his future by merely changing his attitude."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"The biggest adventure you can take is to live the life of your dreams."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"Maybe you don't need a new situation, maybe you need a new perspective."* - Bishop T.D. Jakes
- *"I decide that this is the help that I needed, because I couldn't do it [on] my own."* - Tamela Mann (on joining WW)
- *"Looking over my life and just thinking about everything, I was like, man, it would be great to be an encouragement to somebody else and not just to help myself get over this journey I've been struggling with my whole life, because I've lost weight and gained weight, and lost weight. I'm really excited about the lifestyle change and to be able to have people that you can connect with and who can coach you."* - Tamela Mann (on joining WW)
- *"I'm not just doing this for my family, I'm doing this for myself."* - Tamela Mann (on joining WW)
- *"A lot of times we'll want to do everything for everybody else, but I want to encourage people to do it for them."* - Tamela Mann (on joining WW)

Staying on Course

- *"Do the one thing you think you cannot do. Fail at it. Try again. Do better the second time. The only people who never tumble are those who never mount the high wire. This is your moment. Own it."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"When there is no struggle, there is no strength."* - Oprah Winfrey
- *"The Lord was pleased to strengthen us, and remove all fear from us, and disposed our hearts to be as useful as possible."* - Bishop Richard Allen

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- *"It is your passion that empowers you to be able to do that thing you were created to do."* - Bishop T.D. Jakes
- *"He is present in our lives: healing, comforting, correcting, strengthening."* - Brian Courtney Wilson

Why We Want to be a Part of Your Wellness Journey

- *"The time is always right to do what is right."* -Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *"We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."*
-Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"*
-Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."* - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *"If you want to feel good, you have to go out and do some good."* - Oprah Winfrey

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Promotional Videos

Please feel free to use these videos within the church to recruit members:



Video 1: Brian C. Wilson - EmPOWERED to Serve

Click on the above image or enter this link into your address bar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s25_gbft_ck



Video 2: Brian C. Wilson - Healthier Church Challenge

Click on the above image or enter this link into your address bar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obdxsftri6u>

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Video 3: *Brian C. Wilson: Sign up for the Healthier Church Challenge*

Click on the above image or enter this link into your address bar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gi-erizpy_q



Video 4: *EmPOWERED to Serve Ambassador Brian C. Wilson*

Click on the above image or enter this link into your address bar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ex-sghyaktg>

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Video 5: Brian C. Wilson - Proud to be EmPOWERED to Serve

Click on the above image or enter this link into your address bar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6nf0eposje>

Please Note: These AHA videos may be used at your discretion within the church and externally (including the church's social media.) In the videos, Brian Courtney Wilson references "100 participants" per church. Please note that this number is a minimum number of participants. We encourage churches to enroll more.

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