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AUCC Wellness Task Force

AINSWORTH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

How We Got Started

- Plan presented to congregational meeting for approval
- Formed task force of volunteers



CHI Process

- Chose parts of CHI that were pertinent to our church
- Approached representative groups of people in church with survey
- Prioritized action plan based on responses
- Decided to focus on coffee hour for improvement of food selection



Initial focus on beverage choices

- Needed to address high sugar punch option offered to kids
- Move to offer alternative beverages to children (juice, milk and water)

Additional Focus on Food Choices

- ⦿ Designated 25% of Sundays as “healthy fellowship food” days
- ⦿ Long-term plan: Develop healthy fellowship food guidelines to guide hosts
- ⦿ Although initial focus on kids, wanted to affect congregation overall

Development of Healthy Fellowship Food Guidelines

- Brainstormed, prepared draft & revised
- Presented to fellowship food coordinator and got negative feedback
- Decided to present them as suggestions, rather than policies
- Shared guidelines with congregation

Guidelines for Healthy Fellowship Food In Faith Communities

Offer healthy options: While not every item you serve needs to be “healthy,” try to provide healthy choices as often as possible. Provide more nutrient-dense foods (foods with more nutrition and vitamins) and less “empty” calories (foods high in calories and fat, but low in nutrients and vitamins). Variety is the spice of life!

Fruits and vegetables: Make sure to include as many fruits and vegetables as possible. Remember ALL fruits and veggies count including fresh, frozen, canned and dried. Try including fruits and vegetables in baked goods and casseroles. You can also offer plates of raw veggies, bowls of canned fruits or trail mix with nuts and dried fruit.

Grains, Breads, baked goods: Try to offer whole grain breads and crackers instead of highly processed white flour breads and crackers. Grocery store muffins and sweet rolls are usually very high in fats and sugars. Whole grain breads and crackers and homemade muffins are generally better. Rice crackers, whole wheat bagels or English muffins and corn tortillas are excellent healthy choices.



Guidelines for Healthy Fellowship Food In Faith Communities

Healthy protein: Meats and cheeses can be expensive as well as high in fat. Some good choices include: sliced turkey, chicken and ham, nuts, and low fat cheeses such as mozzarella & reduced fat cream cheese. Other good protein sources are nuts, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, eggs, tofu and soybeans.

Beverages: Try to provide water, low fat milk and juice as often as possible instead of sugary drinks. Some ideas to try: water with lemon and/or orange slices in a pitcher, iced herbal teas such as hibiscus, mint or berry sweetened with a little honey.

“Healthy Fellowship” Sample Menus:

Example #1: Whole wheat bagels with reduced fat cream cheese, sliced fresh fruit, carrot and celery sticks with peanut butter, milk and juice.

Example #2: Egg casserole (made with spinach, reduced fat cheese and turkey ham), fruit salad, iced herbal tea.

Example #3: Whole grain bread, sliced turkey and cheese, sliced veggie tray (carrots, celery, cucumbers, red peppers, etc.), hummus, sliced fruit, water w/lemon and orange slices.

Example #4: Bean dip, corn tortilla chips, green salad (or other raw veggie salad such as cole slaw), fruit smoothies (made with frozen berries, bananas, apple juice and/or rice milk).

Healthy Fellowship Food Choices

Food Groups	Less Healthy Options	Healthier Options & Ideas
<i>Grains (breads, baked goods, cereals)</i>	Bakery muffins Cakes Pies Sweet rolls White Flour tortillas Cookies	Bagels Whole wheat bread or muffins Whole grain crackers Rice or rice crackers Corn or whole wheat tortillas Granola
<i>Fruits</i>	All forms of fruit are healthy!*	Sliced fresh fruit Dried fruit in trail mix or muffins Fruit salad Frozen berries made into smoothies Fruit kebabs
<i>Vegetables</i>	All forms of veggies are healthy!	Sliced fresh veggies (carrots, celery, cucumbers, bell peppers, or pea pods) Lightly steamed veggies (green beans, broccoli, cauliflower) Salsa Soups Salads
<i>Proteins (meat, eggs, beans, nuts)</i>	Fried Chicken Beans made with lard Bacon Sausage Eggs made with lots of mayonnaise or cheese	Beans (in dips, salads or salsas) Beans & rice (with little added fat) or Chicken (baked) Sliced deli turkey or ham Peanut butter Tofu (baked or scrambled) Nuts & seeds in trail mix Tuna or egg salad (with light mayo) Hummus
<i>Dairy</i>	Whole milk Whipped cream Butter	1% or nonfat milk Low fat yogurt & cheese Reduced fat cream cheese Pudding (made with low fat milk)
<i>Beverages</i>	Fruit punch (or other drinks with little or no actual fruit juice) Soda Energy drinks	Water Low fat milk Iced tea 100% juice

Using the Guidelines

- Made guidelines available to hosts of fellowship time
- Food choices have improved: fewer high-sugar carbs. and more fruits and veggies
- High sugar fruit punch no longer served; juice, water or milk are regular options

Additional Projects Underway- Focus on Physical Activity

- ◉ Installation of bike rack
- ◉ Working with Sunday school staff/volunteers to increase physical activity
- ◉ Supervision of children playing outdoors during fellowship hour
- ◉ Promotion of walks/runs for fundraisers



Future Projects

- Show “Unnatural Causes”
- Connect with an elementary school with a community garden
- Recipes in monthly newsletter
- Cooking class for youth group (6th-12th grades)
- Develop potluck guidelines
- Re-establish health ministry to continue work of task force

