



6-22-2015

Dear Council Members,

As a faith-based organization that employs staff, has volunteers, serves the church community, and hosts community events, we have been committed over the years to promote health and wellness by providing health and movement opportunities. Over the last several years St John Baptist Church has been working hard to take the necessary steps to becoming a healthier congregation. This has been done by initially focusing our efforts on health and exercise practices. We have:

- Provided health and wellness seminars throughout the year.
 1. Blood pressure checks
 2. Semi-annual health fairs
- Created opportunities for movement for church members and staff, such as walking/running clubs, recreational exercise classes, and weekly boot camp exercise groups.

We also focused on improving our hospitality food handling practices. We promoted these practices for hospitality and fellowship events at our church. We therefore, required:

- Hospitality participants to wear gloves when serving food.
- Sanitizer for congregation before serving food.
- Clean and safe areas for food displaying.

This year the staff and I have been discussing how we can be a role model for our members and those in the community by promoting and consuming healthy foods and beverages and promoting health and wellness. We decided that it was necessary to move from simply adopting practices and programs to adopting a church-wide healthy food and beverage policy and continue to execute physical activity strategies and begin to more strategically implement healthy eating and drinking strategies to achieve that end. Recently, in an effort to demonstrate our commitment and leadership in this area, we adopted a Healthy Food and Healthy Beverage Policy for our church. This applies to all church sponsored and/or coordinated gatherings, meetings and events, both in the community and at church. Food and beverage offerings must be in accordance with the church's healthy food and beverage guidelines (which are under development).

Therefore, an example of what is being considered in the guidelines are as follows. **Re healthy beverages**, St John will:

- **Provide access to free, safe drinking water**
Require that there is access to free, safe drinking water wherever beverages are offered and/or sold. At meetings, for example, it will be recommended that fresh water be offered. At large events, if safe tap water is not available, then large jugs of water will be utilized.

- **Comply with Beverage Guidelines**

All beverages served (e.g., at meetings) and sold at SJBC, will strive to increase the availability of healthy beverage options by promoting to provide the following:

- a. Water with no added sweeteners;
- b. Fruit or vegetable-based juice drinks with no added sweeteners.
- c. Coffee and tea with no added sweeteners;
- d. Diet beverages

Re the **healthy food offerings**, SJBC will:

- Increase the range and availability of healthy food and beverage options on our premises and at events, including meetings and community events. Food selection should emphasize fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and nonfat or low fat dairy products.
- Encourage cooking with healthier ingredients and promote healthy eating through the following ideas: church bulletin and website, healthy potlucks, and church recipe books.
- Encourage food composed of healthy items at all ministry sponsored events and meetings.
- Significantly limit high calorie/low nutrient density foods such as donuts, pastries, cookies, candy, chips, and fried foods, etc. at any ministry events, activities or celebrations.
- Educate Hospitality Ministry participants to provide healthy food and beverage options at SJBC and events.

I trust that this update of our journey to become better stewards of our bodies and physical facility will help in your deliberations to say yes to health by voting for Council Bill 17.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rev. Robert Turner
Sr. Pastor