

## **Brunswick Wellness Coalition**

## **News release**

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### **Wellness group partners with church for first project**

SOUTHPORT—Brunswick Wellness Coalition (BWC) has started its first community program, a four-week walking challenge for congregants of Ocean View United Methodist Church on Oak Island. The Bethlehem Walking Challenge gives church members the opportunity to walk a collective 6,160 miles.

“It’s the distance from Oak Island to Bethlehem, commemorating the journey Joseph and Mary made more than 2,000 years ago,” Dr. Scott Starks, Brunswick Wellness Coalition chairman, says.

“One hundred congregants are participating and will track their miles on a weekly log for four weeks during the Advent season,” B.J. Ellender, wellness chair, Ocean View Oak Island United Methodist Church, says. “Those who submit their log sheets for all four weeks have a chance to win a gift card from Omega Sports in Wilmington.”

BWC also announced the hiring of Lindsay Maher as executive director. She joined the Coalition from Coastal Carolinas Health Alliance where she worked the past four years. Maher has worked in the health industry for 10 years and earned a Master of Public Administration degree with a concentration in health policy and nonprofit management from University of North Carolina Wilmington.

Maher wrote the application for BWC to The Duke Endowment’s Healthy People Healthy Carolinas initiative for a \$450,000 grant which was announced earlier this year.

Since the founding of the Coalition by four members—Doshier Memorial Hospital, Brunswick County Health Department, New Hope Clinic, and YMCA of Southeastern North Carolina—BWC has doubled in size. New members are New Hanover Regional Medical Center, Brunswick County Cooperative Extension, CommWell Health, and Brunswick Senior Resources, Inc.

(More)

“These partners will help us streamline and expand health education and screening services across Brunswick County,” Maher says. “We’re looking for more community groups to host a wellness program which can be anything from healthy eating to aerobic classes.”

For more information, call BWC at (919) 368-0383.

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**Seven congregants from Ocean View United Methodist Church, Oak Island, participate in a Brunswick Wellness Coalition walking challenge on December 6.**



**Lindsay Maher, Executive Director,  
Brunswick Wellness Coalition**