

Toolkit

HELPING YOU CARE FOR YOUR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS | ISSUE 3, 2025

DO YOU ENJOY YOUR EXERCISE?

Exercise is known to boost mental health, but the duration and intensity of a workout might not be enough. A recent study from the University of Georgia suggests that **how, when and why one exercises affects mental health more than just physical movement.** The study found that the context surrounding the activity is important too, like whether one prefers to exercise alone or with others, indoors or outside, or whether the activity was done for fun or out of obligation. While studies in the past have found that people who engage in exercise reported less depression and anxiety, the recent UG study concluded that **further studies are needed to understand its long-term impact.**



LIBRARY BOOK RETURNED... 82 YEARS LATE

The San Antonio Public Library in Texas received an overdue book... 82 years late. NBC DFW reports that the library received their book, "Your Child, His Family and Friends," along with a letter from the person who found it in their father's belongings. The library's records show the book was **checked out in July of 1943.** The letter stated that they believed the book was originally checked out by their grandmother, and that they had decided to send it back, hoping there would be no late fees. Luckily, the San Antonio Public Library **removed overdue book fees in 2021.**

CHURCHGOERS ATTENDING MULTIPLE TIMES A WEEK

Although church membership is in decline, many who attend report doing so more than once a week. A study conducted by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research found that **46% of American Christian churchgoers attend church services in multiple locations** in person and/or online. The survey of 24,000 churchgoers found that increased online access as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic may have driven up multiple church attendance, but the survey showed that most people who attend multiple services do so both in person and online. The survey also showed **younger people were more likely to seek out multiple church communities.**



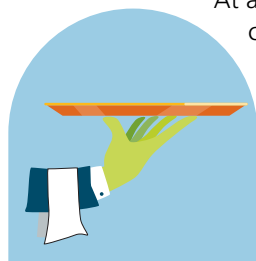
NEW: EFCU STUDENT CHECKING ACCOUNT

Everence® Federal Credit Union has launched a **new checking account exclusive for members ages 13 to 22** to help them build strong financial habits. The new Student Checking Account will not require an opening deposit and have no monthly maintenance fees. Users will have access to digital money management tools via mobile devices. **The account will also accrue dividends** when all program qualifications are met, earning account holders extra cash on their balances. To learn more or open an account, visit everence.com/student-checking.



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RESTAURANT HELPS PEOPLE AVOID RETURNING TO HOMELESSNESS



At a restaurant in the United Kingdom run by a Michelin-starred chef, **nearly all the staff members have experienced homelessness prior**, reports Positive News. Home

Kitchen is a nonprofit restaurant started by chef Adam Simmonds and Soup Kitchen London director Alex Brown. The restaurant first opened in 2024 with help from a \$677,000 crowdfunding drive, and partnered with Crisis, an organization that works to reduce homelessness, to fill eight kitchen and eight front-of-house roles. Home Kitchen provides staff with a comprehensive benefits

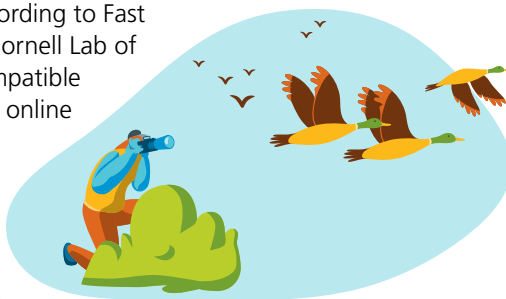
package **designed to help them avoid returning to homelessness**, which includes a living wage, travel cards to help with commuting, and in-house training.

REUSING PLASTICS TO BUILD SHELTER

A community in Taos, New Mexico, has found an alternative to tossing its plastic waste; **instead, they crush it and seal it into concrete**. Todd Wynward and Doug Eichelberger started the Repurposing Plastic Project in 2019 as a solution to dealing with plastic waste after their local recycling center stopped collecting plastic. **They produce modular walls that can be easily transported**. They've sold their modular walls to hotels and even their recycling center. Though contracts have slowed down and they are currently not collecting plastic, RPP is still selling their modular walls and hope their project can serve as inspiration for future solutions.

BIRD-WATCHING? THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

Next time you head out for a hike or bird-watching, consider taking the Merlin Bird ID app with you. With the push of a button, **the phone application will record bird sounds in near proximity and list the birds singing**, plus information about the species, according to Fast Company. The app, developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University, is compatible with Apple and Android phones, works online and offline, and **is completely free to download**. Though the app has been available for several years now, it's encountered a renaissance, with more people eager to disconnect from the internet and connect with the outdoors.



OVER \$100 MILLION DONATED THROUGH EVERENCE FOUNDATION

In 2024, members and clients donated **\$100.2 million to over 4,300 different organizations** through Everence Foundation. Clients and members helped fund churches and congregations, camps, mission and relief agencies and organizations involved in education. Organizations receiving support last year included Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Youth for Christ Foundation, Chicago Community Foundation, and Mennonite Disaster Service. Everence Foundation is 100% donor-advised, meaning **all gifts go to organizations at the direction of Everence clients**.

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Toolkit is published quarterly for people who attend churches with ties to the Anabaptist faith tradition.

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