

## **Transitions**

**March is a month of transition and we have March-ed into spring. As the saying goes, March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, the whole month has been rather lamb like. Winter did have its last hurrah with a little snow, but warmer weather is certainly on its way. March is usually quite stormy. Makes me wonder what April has in store.**

**Many in our church family have had to make a transition from one life style to another. Whether it be marriage, birth of a baby, loss of a family member, loss of income or serious personal illness, a transition of any kind can cause stress.**

**April is National Stress Awareness Month. The Encarta World English Dictionary defines stress as “mental, emotional or physical strain caused by anxiety or overwork”. This definition includes strain on a part of the body that can cause pain, a tear or fracture. The focus of Stress Awareness Month is on the mental and emotional aspect.**

**While stress is most often seen as causing emotional upset and depression, it can also cause physical problems. Many believe Christians should never feel stressed about anything. Have you ever heard someone say, “If you are really a Christian you just wouldn’t worry about that?” All we need to do is pray, acknowledge that God is in control and not be concerned. Even knowing this, when living with a situation for a period of time, when a choice has to be made to pay the mortgage or buy food, it’s only human to be concerned. Physical problems occur when the mind turns its pain over to the body and we may not even realize why we are feeling so badly. Headaches, hypertension, digestive disruption, changes in appetite, ulcers, insomnia, nightmares and a myriad of other symptoms and medical problems are caused by stress.**

**Some people handle stress very well. They have learned to not sweat the small stuff and that it is all small stuff. But if you sometimes feel overwhelmed and would just like to be put in time-out but that is not really possible, there are some simple things that you can do. Information about recognizing stress, making stress work for you and relaxation techniques can be picked up at the welcome center. Remember stress is normal and managing it can be a challenge. The goal is to learn some coping skills that will work and give relief in whatever situation you find yourself.**