MENNO PLACE

# Wellness Hub Newsletter

November 2026 | Remember, Reflect, Renew



**The November Wellness Hub Newsletter!**

## Gratitude, Purpose, Faith & Legacy

November invites us to remember what matters, thank those who shaped us, rest and recharge, live our values, and move forward with purpose.

NOVEMBER ISSUE

# Inside This Wellness Guide

This magazine-style Wellness Hub issue keeps the tone hopeful and practical while connecting November themes: Diwali, Remembrance Day, gratitude, International Men's Day, rest, simplicity, Christian values, purpose, grief, change, hope, and legacy.


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| **01 / Executive Champion Message**<br>Remembering the past and moving forward with purpose. | **02 / Diwali 2026**<br>A celebration of light, gratitude, remembrance, and hope for November 8. |
| **03 / Remembrance Day and Peace**<br>Meaning, poppies, In Flanders Fields, and a peace-centred reflection. | **04 / Gratitude for the Men Who Make a Difference**<br>A hopeful International Men's Day feature for November 19. |
| **05 / Physical Wellness**<br>Rest is not a reward: breaks, vacation, sleep, recovery, and regeneration. | **06 / Psychological Wellness**<br>Gratitude, positive psychology, and a simple daily practice. |
| **07 / Social Wellness**<br>Acts of appreciation and gratitude conversations. | **08 / Financial Wellness**<br>Financial gratitude, stewardship, and a weekly money date template. |
| **09 / Spiritual Wellness**<br>Living legacy every day through encouragement, forgiveness, service, and faith. | **10 / Environmental Wellness**<br>Decluttering to make room for peace, purpose, and joy. |
| **11 / Career Wellness**<br>Purpose in our work and why Christian Values matter at Menno Place. | **12 / Emotional Wellness**<br>Grief is not linear, and change can feel like loss. |
| **13 / Gratitude Tree**<br>A closing reflection activity: roots, trunk, branches, leaves, and seeds. | |

EXECUTIVE CHAMPION MESSAGE



## Remember. Reflect. Renew.

November is a month of remembrance, reflection, and gratitude. It invites us to pause and consider the people, values, and experiences that have shaped our lives.

At Menno Place, remembrance is not only about looking back. It is about carrying forward what matters: compassion, service, dignity, faith, peace, and care for one another.

This month, we honour Remembrance Day, practice gratitude, and recognize the men who have made a positive difference in our lives and communities. We also reflect on what makes Menno Place unique: our commitment to Christian Values as a strategic priority and a genuine foundation for care and purpose.

Christian Values is one of our four organizational priorities. It helps solidify our foundation in care and reminds us that our work is not only about tasks. Our work is about service, dignity, compassion, stewardship, encouragement, and reflecting God's love through the way we care.

May this month remind us to rest, remember, appreciate, and live our values with hope.

FEATURE ARTICLE



# Diwali 2026: A Celebration of Light, Gratitude, and Remembrance

Sunday, November 8, 2026

*“Even the smallest light can bring warmth and hope into someone’s life.”*

Diwali, also known as Deepavali or the Festival of Lights, is a beautiful celebration observed by millions of people around the world. Rooted in Hindu traditions and carrying significance for Jain, Sikh, and some Buddhist communities, Diwali celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, goodness over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.

During Diwali, homes and gathering places are illuminated with small lamps called diyas, colourful decorations, and beautiful patterns known as rangoli. Families and friends gather to share meals, exchange gifts, and celebrate hope, prosperity, and new beginnings.

Beyond the colourful festivities, Diwali offers an opportunity to reflect on three important aspects of our personal wellness: gratitude, remembrance, and hope.

## Gratitude: Recognizing the Light in Our Lives

Just as the lamps of Diwali illuminate the darkness, gratitude helps us recognize the goodness that surrounds us, even during challenging times. Gratitude does not mean ignoring life’s difficulties. Rather, it encourages us to acknowledge the people, experiences, and small moments that bring meaning to our lives.

A kind word from a colleague, a shared laugh with a resident, a supportive friend, or a quiet moment of peace can all remind us that there is light in our everyday experiences.

**Wellness reflection**
Take a moment to identify three things you are grateful for today. Consider sharing your appreciation with someone who has made a difference in your life.

# Remembrance, Hope, and the Light We Share

## Remembrance: Honouring Those Who Have Lit Our Way

Light can also symbolize remembrance. Across the communities that observe Diwali, the celebration may honour different spiritual teachings, historical events, and traditions. This spirit of reflection offers an opportunity for all of us to remember individuals who have influenced our lives, shaped our values, and helped us become who we are today.

For some, remembrance may bring feelings of warmth and appreciation. For others, it may carry sadness or longing. Both experiences are a natural part of honouring meaningful relationships. Whether we remember a loved one, a mentor, a friend, or someone whose kindness changed our lives, their influence can continue to shine through our own actions.

**Wellness reflection**

Think of someone who has brought light into your life. What lesson, value, or memory from that person continues to guide you?

## Hope: Carrying Our Light Forward

One of Diwali's most inspiring messages is that darkness does not last forever. Life brings uncertainty, change, and challenges, but hope encourages us to recognize that tomorrow can bring new possibilities.

We can carry this message into our workplaces, homes, and communities by choosing kindness, extending compassion, and supporting one another. Sometimes, the smallest gestures create the greatest impact: listening without judgment, offering encouragement, expressing appreciation, or simply being present when someone needs us.

## A Moment to Reflect

**Gratitude:** What brings light and joy into my life?

**Remembrance:** Whose kindness or wisdom continues to inspire me?

**Hope:** How can I bring a little more light into someone else's day?

Diwali reminds us that light is not only something we see. It is also something we share through our words, our actions, and the care we show one another.

**To everyone celebrating, we wish you a joyful and peaceful Diwali. May this season bring gratitude for yesterday, appreciation for today, and hope for tomorrow.**

**Happy Diwali!**

FEATURE ARTICLE




# Gratitude for the Men Who Make a Difference

In recognition of International Men's Day on November 19, November gives us an opportunity to recognize and appreciate the men who have positively influenced our lives, families, workplaces, and communities.

### Men we may be grateful for

- Fathers and grandfathers
- Husbands and partners
- Sons and brothers
- Friends and neighbours
- Coworkers and mentors
- Volunteers and spiritual leaders
- Caregivers and residents
- Community builders

### Reflection activity

A man I am grateful for is: _____

One thing he taught me is: _____

One quality I admire in him is: _____

If I could thank him today, I would say: _____

### Men's mental health matters too

Many men have been taught to carry stress quietly or solve problems alone. Strength includes support, connection, health care, mental health care, friendships, and community.

### Workplace activity

Create a "Men Who Made a Difference" gratitude wall. Staff can complete: "I would like to thank _____ because _____."



FEATURE ARTICLE

# Remembrance Day: Peace, Gratitude, and Meaning

Remembrance Day gives Canadians an opportunity to remember those who served, suffered, sacrificed, and hoped for peace. In a Mennonite organization, remembrance can be meaningful without glorifying war. It can invite us to grieve loss, honour human life, give thanks, and recommit to peace, reconciliation, compassion, and service.

## In Flanders Fields

John McCrae, 1915

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow*
*Between the crosses, row on row,*
*That mark our place; and in the sky*
*The larks, still bravely singing, fly*
*Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago*
*We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,*
*Loved and were loved, and now we lie*
*In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:*
*To you from failing hands we throw*
*The torch; be yours to hold it high.*
*If ye break faith with us who die*
*We shall not sleep, though poppies grow*
*In Flanders fields.*

### A peace-centred reflection

The poppy helps us remember sacrifice. The “torch” can be understood as a call to carry forward responsibility, compassion, and the pursuit of peace in how we live and serve today.



PHYSICAL WELLNESS

## Rest Is Not a Reward: Rest • Recharge • Regenerate

In care work, it can feel natural to keep going because people need us. But rest is not a reward earned after everything is done. Rest is part of wellness, safety, and sustainability.

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|---|---|
| **Take your breaks**<br>Breaks help support attention, patience, communication, and safer work. A break is not stepping away from care. A break helps make ongoing care possible. | **Use your vacation time**<br>Vacation is recovery time. It gives the body and mind space to reset, reconnect, and regain energy. |
| **Sleep supports the body**<br>Quality sleep supports energy, mood, immune function, memory, focus, muscle recovery, stress regulation, heart health, and blood sugar regulation. | **Sleep and hormones**<br>Sleep supports hormonal rhythm, including hormones connected to stress, appetite, hunger, repair, and sleep-wake cycles. |
| **Sleep and weight management**<br>Sleep does not guarantee weight loss, but it supports appetite regulation, metabolism, energy, and healthier choices. | **Rest audit**<br>Did I take my breaks? Did I use vacation? Am I treating rest as optional or essential? What helps me recharge? |



PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLNESS

## Gratitude and Positive Psychology

Gratitude is not pretending life is easy. Gratitude is the practice of noticing what remains good, meaningful, supportive, or hopeful even when life is difficult. It helps train attention toward what is working, who supports us, what we have learned, and what we can still enjoy.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Why gratitude helps**<br>Gratitude practices are connected to positive emotions, mental wellbeing, social wellbeing, and a more balanced outlook. | **Daily November prompt**<br>• One thing I am grateful for<br>• One person I appreciate<br>• One moment that gave me peace<br>• One challenge that taught me something<br>• One thing I can look forward to |
| **Positive psychology reframe**<br>Instead of only asking “What went wrong today?” ask “What helped me get through today?” | **Gratitude challenge**<br>Write one gratitude note, send one appreciation text, or tell one person why they matter. |

SOCIAL WELLNESS

# Acts of Appreciation



Appreciation strengthens relationships. It helps people feel seen, valued, and remembered. In workplaces, appreciation supports connection and belonging when it is specific, sincere, and timely.

### This month, try one act

- Thank a coworker
- Call someone who shaped your life
- Write a gratitude note
- Share a positive memory
- Thank a man who made a difference
- Acknowledge someone's quiet contribution

### Conversation prompt

Who is someone who helped shape who you are today?

### Team huddle idea

Invite staff to name one quiet act of kindness they noticed this week.

### Small recognition matters

A simple "I noticed" or "thank you" can reinforce dignity, encouragement, and belonging.



FINANCIAL WELLNESS

# Financial Gratitude: Appreciating What We Have

Financial gratitude is the intentional practice of acknowledging and appreciating the money, material resources, and financial stability we currently have, rather than focusing only on scarcity or what is missing. It shifts attention from wealth as only a measure of net worth to wealth as a tool for security, freedom, choice, peace of mind, and supporting loved ones.

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| **Appreciating utility over status**<br>Value money for what it provides in peace, safety, health, care, and choice rather than prestige or comparison. | **Acknowledging growth**<br>Recognize how far you have come financially, even if goals remain ahead. |
| **Intentional stewardship**<br>Manage, spend, and save with care as a sign of respect for the work required to earn those resources. | **A holistic bridge**<br>Financial gratitude can calm scarcity thinking, support constructive money conversations, and connect daily work to life priorities. |

## 10-Minute Weekly Money Check-in

| Step | Prompt |
|---|---|
| 1. Begin with gratitude | List three financial wins from this week. |
| 2. Review without shame | Look at account balance, upcoming bills, recent spending, savings goal, and upcoming seasonal expenses. |
| 3. Ask three questions | What did my money support? What spending aligned with my values? What did not support my wellbeing? |
| 4. Choose one stewardship action | Cancel one unused subscription, delay one purchase, use what I already have, set aside a small amount, or plan one low-cost gathering. |
| 5. End with perspective | Complete: “I am grateful that my current resources allow me to _____.” |

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

# Living a Legacy Every Day



Legacy is not only money or possessions. Legacy is the way our values continue through others. In a Christian organization, legacy is built through compassion, service, forgiveness, encouragement, humility, and faithful care in ordinary moments.

### Small ways we build legacy

- Encourage someone
- Teach a skill
- Mentor a coworker
- Share wisdom
- Volunteer
- Pray for others
- Practice forgiveness
- Give generously
- Speak words that heal

### Legacy reflection

I hope people remember me as someone who _____.

One value I want to pass on is _____.

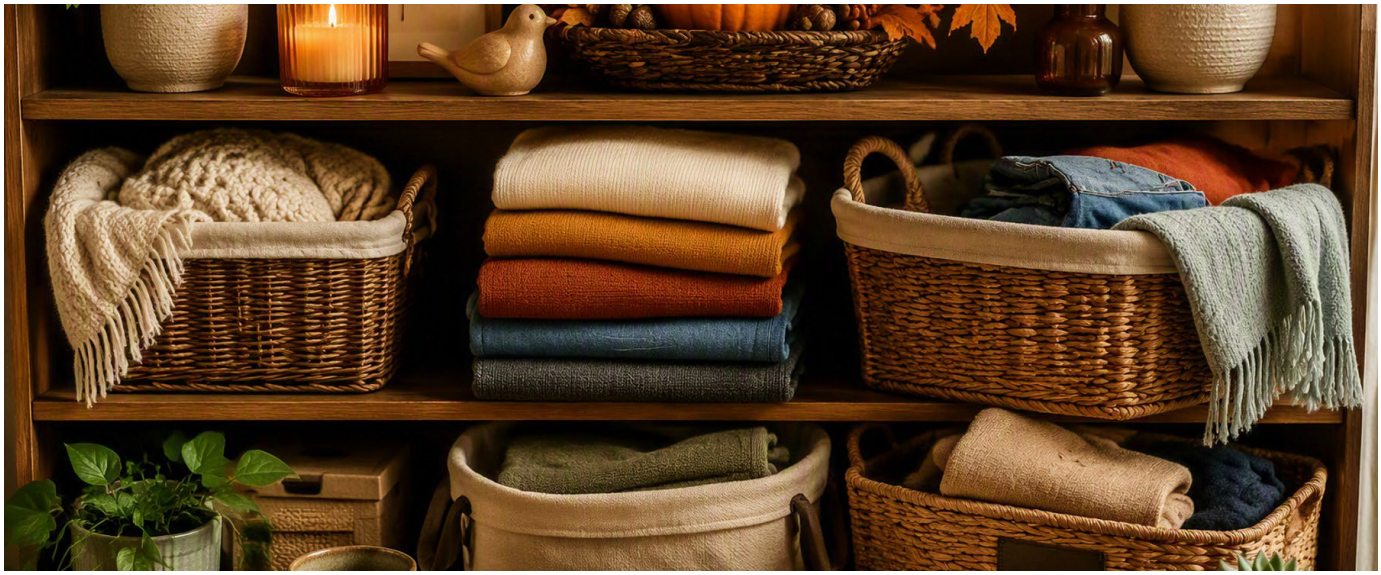
One person I can encourage this month is _____.

### Forgiveness as legacy

Forgiveness does not remove accountability. It releases bitterness so compassion, peace, and healing can grow.

### Faith in action

Christian values become visible through kindness, dignity, patience, service, and hope.

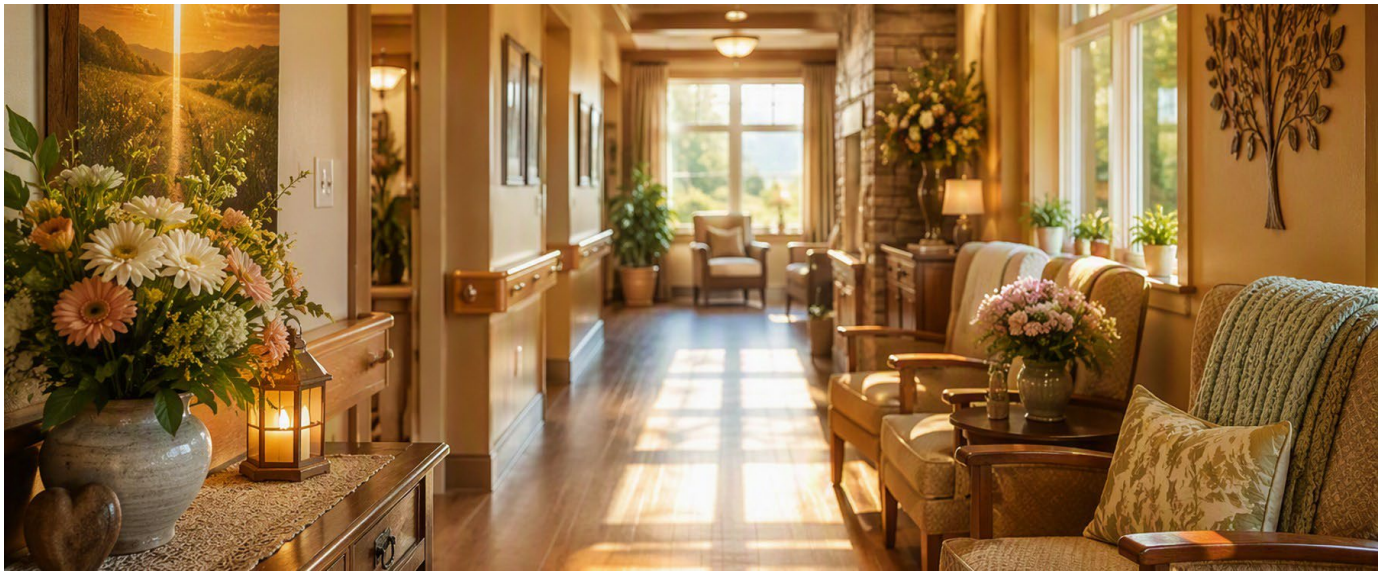


ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

## Decluttering to Make Room for the New

Decluttering is not only about organizing. It can help us reflect on what we carry, what still serves us, and what we are ready to release. Clutter can hold memory, guilt, obligation, grief, and unfinished decisions.

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| **Step 1: Choose one small space**<br>Start with one drawer, shelf, bag, or corner. Do not start with the whole house. | **Step 2: Notice your emotions**<br>As you sort, notice guilt, nostalgia, grief, relief, anxiety, attachment, or hope. |
| **Step 3: Sort gently**<br>Keep: useful, meaningful, or loved.<br>Release: no longer serves me.<br>Donate: could bless someone else.<br>Decide later: revisit soon. | **Step 4: Ask values-based questions**<br>Does this support the life I am living now? Am I keeping this from love or guilt? What would I make room for if I let this go? |
| **Step 5: Invite the new in**<br>Add one meaningful item: gratitude journal, candle, photo, plant, clean surface, prayer card, or space for quiet reflection. | **Reflection**<br>What am I ready to release so I can make room for peace, purpose, or joy? |



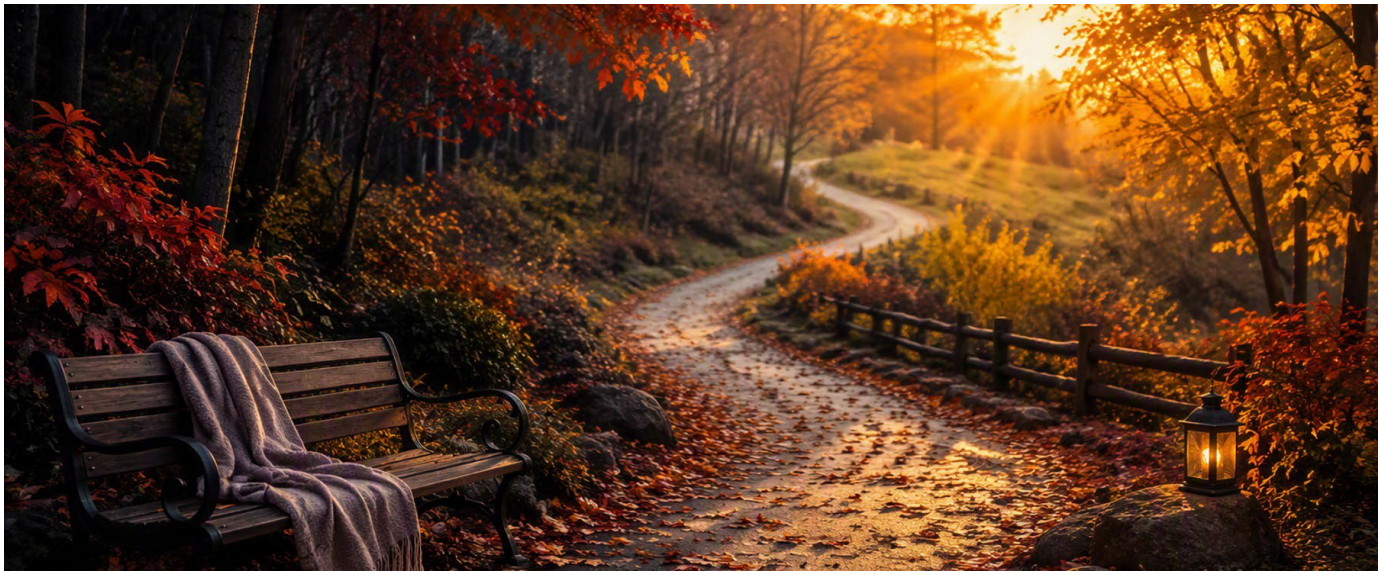
CAREER WELLNESS

# Purpose in Our Work: Why Christian Values Matter

Christian Values is one of Menno Place's four strategic priorities. It is not simply a statement on paper. It is a genuine commitment that solidifies our foundation in care and strengthens our shared purpose. It is one of the ways Menno Place remains special and unique.

Menno Place's strategy identifies Christian Values as remaining rooted in faith-based care that reflects the organization's mission and values. The mission describes reflecting God's love through excellent resident and family-centred care that enables residents to live with hope and dignity. The SERVICE values include Stewardship, Excellence, Respect, Sanctity of Life, Innovation, Compassion, and Encouragement.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Why we ask about Christian Values in interviews**<br>We ask because skills are important, but values guide behaviour. We are looking for people who can support dignity, compassion, service, respect, and faith-informed care. | **You do not need to be Mennonite**<br>Staff do not need to be Mennonite to contribute meaningfully. Staff do need to understand and support the values that shape how we care for people. |
| **Purpose is found in small acts**<br>A kind greeting, a clean room, a warm meal, a family update, a repaired item, a prayer, a moment of patience, or a listening ear can reflect purpose. | **Reflection**<br>How does my work reflect compassion? How do I help residents live with dignity? How does my role contribute to hope? |



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

## Grief Is Not Linear: When Change Feels Like Loss

Grief does not move in a straight line. A person may experience acceptance one day and sadness the next. This does not mean grieving is being done incorrectly. It means grief is human, personal, and often non-linear.

**Five commonly named grief responses**

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

These are not a checklist. People may move back and forth or experience several at once.

**We grieve more than death**

People may grieve health changes, relationships, retirement, moving, role changes, lost opportunities, workplace change, or changes in identity.

**Change can feel like grief**

Change may include loss of routine, familiarity, certainty, control, confidence, or identity.

**Supportive reflection**

What am I losing? What am I learning? What support do I need? What can I control? What might become possible?



CLOSING ACTIVITY

## The Gratitude Tree

Draw a tree or create a small paper-leaf display. Use the tree as a November reflection activity for yourself, your team, or the Wellness Hub.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Roots**<br>People, faith, values, and experiences that shaped me. | **Trunk**<br>The values I carry today. |
| **Branches**<br>The people I influence. | **Leaves**<br>Things I am grateful for now. |
| **Seeds**<br>The legacy I want to leave. | **Closing reflection**<br>The most meaningful way to honour the past is to live well today. |

CLOSING REFLECTION

# What Will You Carry Forward?

### This November

- Remember what matters
- Thank someone who shaped your life
- Celebrate men who made a difference
- Take your breaks
- Use vacation time
- Practice gratitude
- Reflect on purpose
- Live Christian values
- Build your legacy

### Final thought

Gratitude does not change the past. It changes how we carry the past into the future. November reminds us to remember, reflect, renew, and live with purpose.

SOURCE NOTES

# References and Editorial Notes

These references support factual claims and should be retained for review. Staff-facing copy should not imply medical, legal, counselling, or financial advice. Employees should consult qualified professionals as appropriate. Visuals in this draft were generated with Microsoft Copilot and should be reviewed for publication fit and accessibility.


**Sleep Foundation: Benefits of Sleep:** Sleep supports energy, mood, muscle recovery, heart health, blood sugar control, cognitive function, immune function, stress relief, athletic performance, and weight management. Open source

**Healthline: Sleep and hormones:** Sleep and hormones affect each other through circadian rhythm; sleep affects cortisol, hunger hormones, melatonin, thyroid hormones, and growth hormone. Open source

**Sleep Foundation: Sleep and Weight Loss:** Sleep is linked with appetite hormones, metabolism, and weight management efforts. Open source

**Gratitude systematic review:** Gratitude interventions were associated with greater gratitude, better mental health, fewer anxiety/depression symptoms, and more positive emotions. Open source

**Harvard Health: Gratitude and health:** Gratitude has been linked to emotional and social wellbeing, better sleep quality, lower depression risk, and other health markers. Open source

**Veterans Affairs Canada: In Flanders Fields:** Poem context, John McCrae, poppy as symbol of remembrance. Open source

**Canada.ca: In Flanders Fields:** Government of Canada Remembrance Day resource with poem and history. Open source

**Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies:** Remembrance Day / Peace Sunday resources emphasizing remembrance and peace. Open source

**Mennonite Church USA: Peace, Justice, and Nonresistance:** Mennonite peace theology and reconciliation themes. Open source

**PositivePsychology.com: Grief stages:** Five stages of grief and non-linear grief context. Open source

**Whatfix: Kübler-Ross Change Curve:** Change curve adapted from grief model for workplace change and non-linear employee reactions. Open source


- Internal source note: Menno Place framework and Christian Values priority were drawn from the strategic planning documents found in Microsoft 365, including the Strategic Framework and Operational Plan 2025–2028 and MBS Strategic and Operating Plan files.
- Internal source note: the November starting framework was drawn from the user-provided NOVEMBER_Remembrance and Gratitude_Wellness_Content.docx.
- Editorial note: Diwali feature content was supplied by Loradonna Botter. Diwali visual was generated with Microsoft Copilot and should be reviewed for publication fit and accessibility.