

Serving faith by preparing strict vegetarian dishes

When it comes to picking a diet, Cathy Pethel weighs in with Scripture.



"'Whatsoever you do, eat or drink, do so unto the glory of God,' (Corinthians 10:31). We believe our bodies are a temple of God," said Mrs. Pethel, of Thomson, explaining her choice of a vegetarian diet.

To her, staying healthy and energetic is the best way to serve God, while eating meat and animal products opens the door to cancer, heart disease and stress, she said.

Mrs. Pethel will offer a nutrition seminar at 6:30 p.m. Thursday and Sept. 14, 21 and 28 at Augusta First Seventh-day Adventist Church. Participants will get to sample vegetarian dishes.

The seminar is based on the book *Diet & Stress, Simple Solutions: Is What You Are Eating, Eating You?* The book is published by Remnant Publications, based in Coldwater, Mich.

The Adventist Church urges vegetarianism but does not require it, said Mrs. Pethel, who grew into vegetarianism.

She became Adventist at age 17, then gave up eating meat at 22, though she still ate eggs, cheese and other dairy products. When she eliminated dairy about three years ago, the pain in her feet went away and she had more energy, she said.

"People eat very little meat or animal products in countries such as (in) Asia. It is just foreign to us, but not to the rest of the world," said Mrs. Pethel, whose children and grandchildren are vegetarian.

She serves fresh and cooked foods. Most items are easily found on the shelves in grocery stores or in a store's health food section.

"Organic would be the ultimate, but not everybody has that available," she said.

Mrs. Pethel pointed to several studies, including The China Study (www.thechinastudy.com), which link an increase in such diseases as diabetes, cancer and heart disease to animal products.

The Unified Dietary Guidelines, endorsed by the American Cancer Society and several other national health agencies, stop short of a meatless diet to advocate a plant-based one with limited sugar (www.cancer.org/docroot/NWS/content/NWS_1_1x_Unified_Dietary_Guidelines.asp).

People think that if they don't eat meat, dairy and eggs, they can't get enough protein, but hidden in broccoli, corn and other vegetables is all the protein they need, Mrs. Pethel said.

"It is not that we are not getting enough," she said. "We are getting too much."

Reach Virginia Norton at (706) 823-3336 or virginia.norton@augustachronicle.com.

DIET AND STRESS SEMINAR

WHO: Cathy Pethel

WHERE: Augusta First Seventh-day Adventist, 4301 Wheeler Road

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sept. 28

COST: \$20, includes book and food samples

TELEPHONE: (706) 651-0412