

### **Tune ups, maintenance and possible spare parts**

I never like the body as machine metaphor; rather I prefer the body as temple from which spirit flows. But any modern temple needs a mechanical system to help with air circulation, temperature regulation and access to water and sewer. So yes, in order to make possible the things we are called to do, we need some functioning systems through which to work.

Our body systems are both profoundly subtle and complex. But they also reduce to simple basics to which we need to commit our attention. In truth the miracle is that, while the body does accumulate wear and tear over the many miles we ride, it is designed to repair itself through the very activities by which it does all else it accomplishes on our behalf. That is to say, *it is work that helps us recover from work*. Delivering oxygen, flushing away debris with clean water and pumping the tired lymph, cerebrospinal and joint fluids with muscle and joint movement is what heals the damage that just using the body can accumulate. (Achieving quality rest, both mental and physical is a topic for another day)

I don't need to make the case for regular exercise, but few of us adequately accomplish our body's scheduled maintenance routine. That routine is really found in everyday habits of walking, challenging balance, twisting, and a variety of weight-bearing activities, all the while breathing deeply in and out. And have I stressed enough the constant essential of flushing away the exhaust from our engine's labors? Every fuel, every needed tool and all the waste flows in and out in the body's stream of water.

There are countless opportunities for Lathrop residents to support their body's maintenance needs. The Hampshire YMCA has facilities with specific senior fitness classes. Both the Northampton and Easthampton senior centers have affordable options. The Meeting House and the Mt Tom Room are sites of numerous resident directed activities. Walking trails and bocce courts are just steps away. An important initiative for us here at Lathrop is to strengthen both our fitness facilities along with the personalized support from a "trained mechanic" that fitness needs.

Much the way we take our cars for granted, so too do we under service this beloved vehicle in which we've grown and traveled over the years. By the way, spare parts for these miraculous machines we ride are rarely an option. We need to regenerate and renew our own with support, commitment and care.