

Fasting For Spiritual Power

**We are not just another church, but a culturally-conscious,
Christ-centered church committed to the community!**

**We are asking each member of the church to commit to a period of
prayer and fasting from February 17th to April 4th.**

"But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." Mark 9:27-29

Fasting has been a spiritual method used throughout the ages to prepare God's people for spiritual clarity and strength. We are asking that each family member of our congregation engage in a season of fasting for our church family growth, our ministries, our pastor, evangelism, leadership and healing. As God takes us to a higher level we all need to renew ourselves for the journey ahead and for all the **Great Things** that God has in store for us.

Gradual Food Fast - Fasting to confront destructive forces:

Week 1	February 17 -20	Eat all meals before 6pm
Week 2	February 22-27	Eat all meals before 6pm
Week 3	March 1-6	Eat only 2 meals and they must be consumed before 6pm
Week 4	March 8-13	Eat only 1 meal and it must be consumed before 6pm
Week 5	March 15-20	No solid foods; drink only juices, water, coffee and tea
Week 6	March 22-27	Eat only fruits and vegetables and they must be consumed before 6pm
Week 7	March 29-April 3	Slowly begin to add meat to your diet; all meals must be consumed before 6pm

Modification #1 – Removing certain foods from our diet*; such as, fried foods, sweets, snacks, sodas, refined sugar and /or flour.

Modification #2 –Removing certain things we enjoy doing from our everyday activities; such as Facebook, television, shopping, video games, smoking, napping.

*** Please consult your doctor before proceeding with fasting. If you have health challenges, take medications or have any particular ailment it is important to first talk with your physician.**

Blessings from the Prayer and Fasting Ministry of TUCC-Gary
(Sala - Saumu)

What is Lent?

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a time for reflection and taking stock. It is a time for serious, disciplined self-examination, a time spent in intensive prayer and repentance before the cross of Calvary. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. The forty-day period before Easter begins on Ash Wednesday Feb. 17, 2010 and ends on April 3, 2010. Traditionally the Western Church (*Protestant, Catholic, and Anglican*) skips Sundays when we count the forty days, because Sundays commemorate the Resurrection and decorates using purple, the royal color, to prepare for the King.

Why Ash Wednesday?

Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the "official" full moon on or after the official vernal equinox. The official vernal equinox is always the 21st of March. Ash Wednesday is calculated by counting backwards from Easter Sunday forty days (not including Sundays) representing the time of Christ's temptation in the wilderness.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and a conversion journey to turn away from sin and be faithful to the teachings of God. It is a symbolic call for movement away from sin's trappings and toward Christ through the dusting of ashes upon the forehead.

The origin of the custom of using ashes in religious ritual is lost in the mists of pre-history, but we find references to the practice in our own religious tradition in the Old Testament. The prophet Jeremiah, for example, calls for repentance this way: "O daughter of my people, gird on sackcloth, roll in the ashes" (Jer 6:26). The prophet Daniel pleaded for God to rescue Israel with sackcloth and ashes as a sign of Israel's repentance: "I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes" (Dan 9:3). When the prophet Jonah finally obeyed God's command and preached in the great city of Nineveh, his preaching was amazingly effective. Word of his message was carried to the king of Nineveh. "When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in the ashes" (Jon 3:6).

In the New Testament, Jesus refers to the use of sackcloth and ashes as signs of repentance: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes" (Mt 11:21, Lk 10:13).

The focus of personal penance is symbolized through the celebration of Ash Wednesday as the beginning of a season of self denial and repentance as we reminisce of the suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in preparation for the glory of his resurrection. We take the journey of Lent in symbolizing the renewal of our commitment to Christ.

References

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