

First United Methodist Church
Prayer Journal
Lent 2010



Fasting

Ben Jennings (The Arena of Prayer, pp. 159-170)

When to Fast

To honor God's law of rest (Isaiah 58:13-14)

To humble yourself before God (Jonah 3:5, 10)

When you face impossible situations
(2 Samuel 12:22-23)

When you need God's guidance for decisions
(Acts 13:2-3)

When you need healing from a serious affliction
(Isaiah 58:8)

Benefits of Fasting

It is a Biblical way to intensify prayer

It helps us transfer attention from the world to
God

It strengthens our faith

It deepens our seriousness about spiritual realities

It can strengthen us to deal with human
oppression & need

Motivations for Fasting

Authority to remove chains of evil

Power to lift sickness, suffering, and sin

Hearts of mercy for those in need

Compassion for believers who suffer persecution

Different Types of Fasting

You can choose to fast from solid food, from meat, or even from all food and water for one meal or a longer period of time. In the Bible, there are fasts that occur in a wide range of time frames, including three days, a week, several days, and forty days.

It is possible to fast, not just from food, but from a variety of things. These include, but are certainly not limited to: text messaging, e-mail, shopping, television, fast food, internet use, and so on. You might want to ask God what kind of fast He is calling you to practice.

Be sure to consult with your physician if you have any questions about fasting as it relates to your health.

“Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.”

Psalm 62:8 NIV

“Prayer, Jesus says, is not a spectator sport. It is not something we are to engage in to give off signals of spirituality. When you pray, go into your room and shut the door. Find a closet, an empty office, the workshop out in the garage, some secret place away from people and alone with God.”

Bill Hybels (Prayer, p. 13)

We invite you to join us in prayer each day. Refer to the overview of fasting included on the following page. After meditating on each passage of Scripture and the accompanying quote, take a moment to write out a prayer that God places on your heart. Our prayer is that you will be blessed during this season of Lent, just as you are a blessing to us!

The First Church Staff

Week One

Lead Us...

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Psalms 91:1-2 & 9-16

Romans 10:8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

Day One—February 21st

“They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”

Acts 1:14 NIV

“They weren’t preaching, teaching, singing or planning—they were praying constantly just as Jesus had said. They were convinced of one thing—they dare not go out before they received the power Jesus had told them about!”

Dr. Terry Teykl (Fifty Days of Prayer to Invite the Holy Spirit, p. 32)

Day Two—February 22nd

“You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.”

James 4:2 NIV

“The refreshing and liberating fact is that God is not much concerned with how you pray; He’s more interested in what you pray about and what your attitude is while you pray...Certainly the most obvious benefit to prayer is that prayer changes things.”

Richard Wagner (Christian Prayer for Dummies, p. 12)

Day Three—February 23rd

“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”

John 7:38 NIV

“We are the womb of God upon the earth. We are not the source of life, but we are carriers of the source of life. We do not generate life, but we release, through prayer, Him who does.”

Dutch Sheets (Intercessory Prayer, p. 116)

Day Four—February 24th

“...and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:20 NIV

“Do you make yourself accessible to others? Would friends say that you are available, dependable, and near in times of trouble? Are you modeling your friendship after the example of our Lord.”

Terry Wardle (One to One, p. 136)

Day Five—February 25th

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Psalm 51:10 NIV

An intercessor is one with whom God shares His secrets to cover in prayer. The cleaner our hearts, the more welcome we can make Him. Then the more He shares, the more effective our prayers will be.”

Cindy Jacobs (Possessing the Gates of the Enemy, p. 40)

Day Six—February 26th

“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV

“In the Wesleyan worldview the threshold to the deeper spiritual life, to holiness, to Christlikeness for the born again believer is entire consecration, that is, complete and loving submission to God.”

Wesley Tracy (Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls, Gary Moon & David Benner , editors, p. 133)

Day Seven—February 27th

“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”

Ephesians 1:17 NIV

“The first principle and first step in beginning to listen to God is to take the sacred texts into our very spirits and souls by meditating on them prayerfully. His word then “abides in us,” burning as an inner light, and we just naturally cry out to God.”

Leanne Payne (Listening Prayer, p. 26)

Week Two

Challenge Us...

Genesis 15:1-12 & 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35

Day One—February 28th

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

1 Corinthians 3:13 NIV

“You may be so depleted that you feel you have nothing to give, or so overwhelmed by circumstances that giving of yourself seems monumental...As long as you have the Lord in your life, you will always have at least one thing to give—His love. People need someone to love them, to listen, to encourage, and to pray for them.”

Stormie Omartian (Praying God’s Will for Your Life, p. 158)

Day Two—March 1st

If a man shuts his ear to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.”

Proverbs 21:13 NIV

“God is committed to developing a people who will reflect his character in the world, and his character always expresses concern and compassion for the afflicted...As just one person, you may not be able to change the world. You can, however, look for a small way to care.”

Bill Hybels (Too Busy Not to Pray, p. 93)

Day Three—March 2nd

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

1 Corinthians 10:31 NIV

“It often happens...that so called “pious souls” take their “spiritual life” with a wrong kind of seriousness. We should certainly be serious in our search for God—nothing is more serious than that. But we ought not to be constantly observing our own efforts at progress and paying exaggerated attention to “our spiritual life.””

Thomas Merton (Spiritual Direction & Meditation, p. 30)

Day Four—March 3rd

“The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.”

Isaiah 50:4 NIV

“In the gospels, there are seventeen recorded instances of Jesus praying...Maybe the disciples got used to waking up to find Jesus’ bed already empty...As weeks and months went by, they continued to wonder at this strange phenomenon—a person who actually enjoyed praying!”

Andrew Knowles (Discovering Prayer, p. 38)

Day Five—March 4th

“pray continually;”

1 Thessalonians 5:17 NIV

Praying with a burden is probably the most neglected aspect of prayer. As a result, we often pray burdenless prayers. We repeat the same old requests over and over, but with no heart or sense of urgency.”

Charles Stanley (Handle with Prayer, p. 43)

Day Six—March 5th

“The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep...But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”

John 10:2 & 5 NIV

“When the Lord is speaking to us, an answer from within our hearts will cry, “Yes, that is God speaking to me.” We will resonate with the word. That is what I mean by a witness in your spirit.”

Cindy Jacobs (The Voice of God, p. 79)

Day Seven—March 6th

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

John 10:10 NIV

“The goal of the Christian spiritual journey is not to become less human and more divine; it is to become more fully human. Salvation is not to rescue us from our humanity; it is to redeem our humanity.”

David Benner (Sacred Companions, p. 35)

Week Three

Heal Us...

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:10-13

Day One—March 7th

“We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. But how he can see, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself”

John 9:20-21 NIV

“We know we were meant to be whole, and we have a deep memory of lost wholeness. We yearn for it. And we know—but perhaps deny—that we are broken...It is tempting to read gospel accounts of healing as “happily-ever-after” stories: the story ends with the restoration of health and wholeness. It is easy to forget that healing can be difficult, frightening, and challenging.”

Margaret Guenther (Toward Holy Ground, pp. 80 & 82)

Day Two—March 8th

“And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.”

Matthew 13:58 NIV

“Here was the Son of God standing in their midst with the power to heal them, and they saw only a carpenter—just Mary’s boy. So most of them went away unhealed and unaware that God had just spoken to them...Unbelief can stop our ears from hearing the voice of God and limit our experience of his power.”

Jack Deere (Surprised by the Voice of God, p. 270)

Day Three—March 9th

“Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”

Ephesians 6:19-20 NIV

“When we talk about prayer as a ministry, we are affirming John Wesley’s belief in prayer as a “means of grace.” If we are willing to be available to God by simply praying with someone who is hurting, he will use us as conduits of his mercy and love.”

Dr. Terry Teykl (Blueprint for the House of Prayer, p. 60)

Day Four—March 10th

“The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.”

Matthew 8:8 NIV

“Faith is more than merely knowing something to be true. It is entrusting yourself to a person or object in which you have confidence. You trust anything to the degree to which you understand its nature...How much do you trust God?”

Ben Jennings (The Arena of Prayer, p. 113)

Day Five—March 11th

“And the prayer offered up in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”

James 5:15 NIV

“Inner healing prayer focuses attention on emotional wounds, needs, lies, vows, and dysfunctions...Many of our dysfunctional coping mechanisms are ways of addressing our longings to be significant and loved.”

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun (Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, p. 228)

Day Six—March 12th

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Mark 11:25 NIV

“When we forgive, we unleash the dynamic and powerful blessings of God upon our lives...Simply put, in our search for healing, forgiveness is a vital key.”

Dr. Richard Lee (The Healing Touch of Jesus, pp. 40 & 41)

Day Seven—March 13th

“Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse may befall you.”

John 5:14 NIV

“In an authentic relationship with God, we trust God enough to let Him probe us. In fact, God purposes to disturb us. We know this because Jesus told disturbing, shocking stories to awaken people from their self-satisfied spiritual lull.”

Jan Johnson (When the Soul Listens, p. 165)

Week Four

Forgive Us...

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3 & 11b-32

Day One—March 14th

“if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV

“Fasting does not make one a member of the spiritually elite. One does not have to fast to be used of God...But there is no doubt in my mind—gained from Scripture, history, and experience—that those who fast with pure motives will be drawn closer to the great heart of God and experience a quality of life in the spirit that is not possible apart from fasting.”

Bill Bright (The Coming Revival, p. 28)

Day Two—March 15th

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts; See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead in the way everlasting.”

Psalm 129:23-24 NIV

“Sit silently before the Lord...As you wait before God, quietly ask Him if there is an attitude which needs to be confessed. Then wait for a few moments.”

Donna Leonard (Lord, I'm Listening, pp. 34 & 35)

Day Three—March 16th

“‘For in Him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’”

Acts 17:28 NIV

“God placed prayer in the scheme of things in a very unique way. In all his power and sovereignty, He has chosen prayer as the means for His interaction with His people. Jesus himself, in addition to teaching about prayer, modeled it as a radical dependence on the Father for everything.”

Dr. Terry Teykl (Pray the Price, p. 9)

Day Four—March 17th

“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Matthew 6:14-15 NIV

“Pray for those who mistreat us? We’d more naturally pray against them...From time to time, all of us face conflict and disappointment... Have you been hurt or offended by someone else? Assuming you have forgiven them, what are three ways you can begin to pray for them?”

Eddie & Alice Smith (Drawing Closer to God’s Heart, p. 105)

Day Five—March 18th

“As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.”

1 Samuel 12:23 NIV

“It is sin against the Lord to escape praying for others...Let us ask for grace to take up our place as priests with joy, and give our lives to bring down the blessings of heaven.”

Andrew Murray (Helps to Intercession, p. 36)

Day Six—March 19th

“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted among the earth.”

Psalm 46:10 NIV

Authentic Christians have strong relationships with the Lord—relationships that are renewed every day. Embarrassingly, few Christians ever reach this level of authenticity; most Christians are just too busy...Any way you cut it, a key ingredient in authentic Christianity is time...You can't become an authentic Christian on a diet of constant activity, even if the activity is all church related.”

Bill Hybels (Prayer, p. 30)

Day Seven—March 20th

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

“To forgive someone else is to be set free...Our anger and pain do nothing to our offenders, but they do disable us emotionally, spiritually, and sometimes even physically.”

Brant Baker (Teaching P.R.A.Y.E.R., p. 88 & 89)

Week Five

Remind Us...

Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126

Philippians 3b-14

John 12:1-8

Day One—March 21st

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Ephesians 5:19-20 NIV

“It is a fact of life that travelers cannot survive in comfort without hospitality. However prudent their planning and abundant their supplies, if the journey goes on long enough they will need the care of a host, someone who offers a temporary home as a place of rest and refreshment.”

Margaret Guenther (Holy Listening, p. 9)

Day Two—March 22nd

“‘Why have we fasted,’ they say ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.”

Isaiah 58:3-4 NIV

“While fasting, dedicate as much time as possible to communing with the Lord...Whenever possible, clear your schedule of any optional activities. Use meal times to worship the Lord and wait on Him. Pray during the night hours if the Lord awakens you. These quiet, undistracted times can open the way for you to hear His voice in a special way.”

Bill Bright (The Transforming Power of Fasting and Prayer, p. 30)

Day Three—March 23rd

“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

Romans 10:17 NIV

“Finding new power in prayer always means developing a new relationship with the Word of God, because God’s Word provides the right foundation for a life of asking and receiving.”

Jim Cymbala (Break Through Prayer, p. 127)

Day Four—March 24th

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Matthew 18:19-20 NIV

“Prayer is not a voice vote. God doesn’t suddenly bend his attention if a large enough assembly makes enough noise... When intercessors pray in agreement, they aren’t generating power by some mathematical formula. Jesus teaches that it is the Father’s prerogative to exert power... When Jesus is in the midst of agreeing pray-ers, we can be sure that the Father is doing his work by his power—because of Jesus.”

Steve Hawthorne & Graham Kendrick (Prayer-Walking, p. 37)

Day Five—March 25th

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”

Proverbs 4:23 NIV

“My whole life, in one sense, has been an experiment in how to be a portable sanctuary—learning to practice the presence of God in the midst of the stresses and strains of contemporary life.”

Richard Foster (Prayers From the Heart, p. xi)

Day Six—March 26th

“Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.”

Matthew 22:37-38 NIV

“The style of prayer used to talk with God will vary because it depends on the content of your prayer, the age of those with whom you are praying, each person’s personality, and even each person’s favored way of learning.”

Delia Halverson (Teaching Prayer in the Classroom, p. 39)

Day Seven—March 27th

“See that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”

Colossians 2:8 NIV

“When doubts come...don’t try to hide them or pretend they don’t exist. Take them to God in prayer and ask Him to help you resolve them...He cares for you and will help you.”

William Lane Craig (No Easy Answers, p. 33)

Week Six

Deliver Us...

Luke 19:28-40

Psalm 118:1-2 & 19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56

Day One—March 28th

“If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 NIV

“Our first priority is to know God, but if we are really at war with a clever, experienced enemy, we need to know as much as we can about him. One of the first laws of warfare—any kind of warfare—is to know your enemy.”

Neil Anderson & Timothy Warner (The Beginner’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare, p. 27)

Day Two—March 29th

“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”

Romans 6:8 NIV

“That great offer and assurance belongs to every believer.

No matter how far Satan has come in deceiving and controlling us, we can have gold tried in the fires of refining; white clean garments; and salve of healing to remove our spiritual blindness...Satan is not invincible, but Christ is, and the believer is invincible in Him.”

Mark Bubek (Overcoming the Adversary, p. 26)

Day Three—March 30th

“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.”

Psalms 73:25 NIV

“Doubts assail every believer. They arise from our circumstances, our intellectual pursuits, from skeptics, and from Satan. Doubts themselves are not dangerous, but if we cherish them, or refuse to face them, we are headed for trouble.”

James & Martha Reapsome (Spiritual Warfare, p. 18)

Day Four—March 31st

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 10:5 NIV

“Demons are like little invisible germs looking for someone to infect. We are never told in Scripture to be afraid of them. You just need to be aware of their reality and commit yourself to live a righteous life in spite of them. Should you come under attack, deal with it and go on with life.”

Neil Anderson (The Bondage Breaker, p. 77)

Day Five—April 1st

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.”

Romans 8:26 NIV

“What is prayer, it is communication with God by which we express our dependence on Him. God knows what we need in our battle with the powers of darkness, and He is more ready to meet our needs than we are to ask. But until we express our dependence on Him in prayer, God will not act.”

Neil Anderson (The Bondage Breaker, p. 86)

Day Six—April 2nd

“The he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.””

Mark 8:34 NIV

“Following Jesus requires that we deny ourselves. Prayer is not just adding more on to an already full life. Prayer will involve subtraction...So our prayer must ask honestly and openly about what we need to get rid of, what needs to go.”

James Howell (The Beautiful Work of Learning to Pray, p. 80)

Day Seven—April 3rd

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”

Philippians 2:12-13 NIV

“Christ alone can build a great church. He will first use you and others to build a praying church that accesses endless resources from our amazing God. When He has built that church, let us not forget the One who did the building.”

Ben Jennings (The Arena of Prayer, p. 201)

Week Seven

Redeem Us...

Exodus 12:1-4 & 11-14

Psalms 116:1-4 & 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17 & 31-35

Day One—April 4th

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.”

John 15:11 NIV

“We can learn two things from Jesus’s teaching and prayer concerning joy. The first is that Jesus is full of joy over us.

His prayer is that we would be filled with “the full measure” of his joy. Though we don’t ordinarily think of God or Jesus in these terms, Scripture makes it clear that we give God a great deal of joy!...The second point we need to learn from Jesus’s teaching and prayer is that the Lord desires us to share in his joy.”

Gregory Boyd (Seeing is Believing, pp. 160 & 161)

Day Two—April 5th

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV

“There is healing in our wounds, for only through our hurts are we able to help others be healed.”

V. Gilbert Beers (Finding Purpose in Your Pain, p. 135)

Day Three—April 6th

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

James 5:16 NIV

“Jesus taught that there is great power in agreement. An individual is not to engage in spiritual warfare on his or her own. None of us are called to be an army of one. We are to live and work and give witness and engage in warfare against our enemy as the Body of Christ.”

Charles Stanley (Overcoming the Enemy, p. 60)

Day Four—April 7th

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV

“When many people think of wholeness, they automatically turn to matters of health, sickness, injury, or death. Wholeness, however, is a matter of harmony—body, soul, and spirit. It is living in such a way that all facets and aspects of our lives are interrelated in a health-giving, sound, and resilient way.”

Charles Stanley (The Blessing of Brokenness, p. 54)

Day Five—April 8th

“The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.”

Isaiah 58:11 NIV

“When God breaks us, he does so with the purpose of putting us back together again—better than before, and ultimately, so that we might be whole.”

Charles Stanley (The Blessing of Brokenness, p. 54)

Day Six—April 9th

“Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.”

Isaiah 58:12 NIV

“Sin and its effects cannot be eradicated, but redemption can bring an even greater strength to a relationship or a heart than existed before...God’s passion is to weave glory out of the broken shards...”

Dan Allender, Ph.D. (The Healing Path, p. 144)

Day Seven—April 10th

“I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.”

Psalms 34:1 NIV

“Worship is really a gift God gives us. It’s the means by which we find our purpose in life and then see it realized according to His will. In worship, we not only acknowledge God and who He is, but we begin to understand who we are in relation to Him.”

Stormie Omartian (The Prayer that Changes Everything, p. 22)
