



# Country Hills Church

*People Helping People Follow Jesus*

## Days of Prayer and Fasting 2021

As followers of Jesus fasting is a form of prayer and a discipline we use throughout the year. However, this year at Country Hills Church, we would like to take an extended period during Lent to pray and fast together. We are also encouraging people to participate (if you are able) in a church wide 3-day food fast February 17 – 19. This season is a wonderful opportunity for us to seek God together with one heart and voice as many parts of one family. We also encourage everyone to include personal and/or family prayer requests. Preparing ahead of time for this season is helpful in creating a sense of spiritual and physical preparedness. The following are a few ideas to help you prepare and participate.

### Spiritual Preparation

During the weeks leading up to fasting begin asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you about the personal/family prayer requests He wants you to focus on during this time. Express your willingness to pray for the things He leads you to pray for. Decide how and when you will fast and what extra time you will spend with Jesus during this time. The church will be praying for some requests together as well.

### Physical Preparation

About one week prior to a food fast begin to taper off of caffeinated beverages and refined sugars. Cut back on meal amounts a few days prior to fasting to help your body prepare for the fast to come and avoid foods that are processed and/or salty. At least one day prior to fasting make sure you drink enough water (See the “Guide to Fasting” for more information). Note: If you have a medical condition or are pregnant make sure to consult with your medical Doctor before fasting.

### Weekly Prayer

For the first four weeks we are asking you to pray for some general requests for our church and community.

**Feb. 21-27 Focus** - Pray for direction and focus for CHC in 2021. Each January the Elders and Staff provide a theme verse and some key prayer points for following year. These help to direct our prayers, clarify what we are asking God to do in and through us, and helps to shape our growth, connection, and service opportunities for the year. This year we would like to invite you into the process. During this week as God to lay on your heart passages of scripture or areas of prayer that we might focus on. Please contact the church office during the first few weeks of Lent with these so that the elders and staff can consider these as we pray and plan for the rest of the year.

**Feb. 28-Mar. 6 Growth** – please pray for our spiritual growth. Pray that we would continue to grow in our spiritual maturity and strength as individuals and as a church family.

**Mar 7-13 Connection and Care** – please pray for our connectedness and care. Pray that we would care deeply for one another during this difficult pandemic season, and to help people get more connected who are new or disconnected in our church family.

**Mar. 14-20 Serving** – pray for our impact in our world. Pray that we would continue to find opportunities to bless and serve our world with the love of Jesus through practical ways.

### Prayer Exercise

Below is an exercise to help you determine some of the ways you might fast and some of the things you might focus of for prayer during these Days of Prayer and Fasting.

**Invitation:** Spend time in prayer inviting Jesus to work in the hidden areas of your heart.

**Thanksgiving:** Write down all the things that come to mind that you should be thankful for

**Listening Prayer:** Ask God to lead you to the kind of fast(s) that you and your household will take. Use the “Guide to Fasting” resource to help you as you do this. Write down the key things that the Lord is impressing on you about the kind of fast(s) you should take, how long, and who should participate.

Listen to God for potential theme verses or prayer points (areas of focus) for this year.

List some of the things in your life you need God to work in and some of the areas you need breakthrough. Nothing is too small and nothing is too great.

Consider and ask God if you are harbouring any personal sin or unforgiveness towards another person. If there is any unconfessed sin - confess it to Him and repent of it, then pray for strength and victory and consider asking for help/accountability from a trusted friend to help you walk in victory. If you are holding unforgiveness begin the process of forgiveness in your own heart by releasing him/her/them from the offense. Pray for that person, and consider if you might need to contact them to move towards reconciliation.

**Prayer:** In prayer surrender yourself fully to Jesus and what He wants to do in your life. Ask for an expectant heart, and for strength as you fast. Ask Him reveal a word of affirmation to you about the commitment you are making to fast. Ask Him for any additional words, verses, or wisdom you might need as you go through this time. Commit to the leading of Jesus throughout this time of prayer and fasting.

Remember that there may be spiritual opposition to discourage you. Satan sometimes intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16-17). Just because you face opposition during this time does not mean that you are doing the wrong thing, it may mean the exact opposite.

## Prayer and Fasting Plan

We encourage anyone who is able to join in a 3-day food fast from February 17 - 19 (breakfast – supper each day). Join us Sunday February 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am for a special time of prayer for our church as we begin Lent. Many people have experienced amazing answers to prayer and a deeper relationship with God following extended time of fasting. Consider writing down your plan during this season (see the Guide to Fasting for information and ideas)

I will fast Feb. 17 – 19 by fasting in the following ways -

I will fast during Lent in the following ways –

My household will fast in the following ways during Lent –