

# CHURCH AND CITY WIDE FAST FOR THE YEAR 2023

The year of 2023 is upon us! As we plan to enter the new year, I am challenging each of you to participate in a church and city wide fast to begin the year 2023. I believe that there is no better way to ignite our commitment to God in 2023 than to begin with an extended period of fasting. Fasting, combined with prayer and the Word of God, allows us to draw closer to God by drawing us away from some of the things that we hold dear. Fasting gives you clarity and direction as it helps you to hear from the Lord more clearly. There are habits that need to be broken in 2023. There are bodies that need healing in 2023. Our communities and families need breakthrough. Some need the favor of the Lord, while others need an all-out revival. But whatever the circumstance, it happens when we make the commitment to God. One of the ways we do that is through the spiritual discipline of fasting. **We will begin a 31 day fast starting at midnight of January 1<sup>st</sup> and the fast will conclude on midnight of February 1<sup>st</sup>. The fast will last for the entire duration of the day during this time. We will also read selected Bible passages that I have prepared for our 31-day journey during the fast. For our fast, we will incorporate elements of the Ezra fast which is specifically designed to solve problems, to undo heavy burdens, to overcome barriers, and to receive God's divine protection (Ezra 8:15-23). Not only is it important to draw closer to God, but it is also important to pull away from certain things to hear Him more clearly. Now let's get a bit more specific about the purpose of fasting and the specific details of our upcoming fast.**

Fasting is essentially the giving up of foods or other things for a period to draw closer to God and to focus on Him. Fasting can be used to not only hear from God but to also receive divine answers to problems that we alone cannot solve. Fasting helps us to hear from God, to reveal sin, to strengthen us, to build our faith, and so on. Fasting is a tool that God gives us that we must use if we are to receive what God has for us.

**Now to the specifics about our fast for January 2023. As previously stated, the fast will begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and will conclude at midnight of February 1<sup>st</sup>. The fast will be for the entire duration of the day. We will eliminate one or more of the following foods for the fast: red meat, pork, and/or fried foods. We will also eliminate one activity of your choosing for the fast as well. Examples of this may be social media, television, etc. Finally, we will also incorporate prayer with our fasting period as well. I am asking**

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**that you devote 10 minutes of uninterrupted prayer per day for 31 days utilizing the ACTS model of prayer. ACTS stands for Adoration (praising the Lord), Confession (confess sins to God), Thanksgiving (giving God thanks), and Supplication (asking God for what you need). I have also prepared daily Scripture readings for the month.**

**I am excited for us to begin the year of 2023 in this way by doing it His way. 2023 will be the year that your focus comes into alignment. 2023 will be the year that you stop walking by sight and start walking by faith. This will be the year that your gift begins to make room for you, that your request gets answered, that your fire is lit again. I look forward to our journey together as we reach for the things that God has for us. May the Lord bless you!!**

Pastor Herb Fontnette

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## SELECTED BIBLE PASSAGES FOR READING

Jan 1 - Proverbs 3:5-6

Jan 2 - Philippians 1:6

Jan 3 - Philippians 4:4-7

Jan 4 - Philippians 4:10-13

Jan 5 - James 1:2-4

Jan 6 - Psalm 34:1-3

Jan 7 - Matthew 7:24-27

Jan 8 - Matthew 6:33

Jan 9 - Psalm 24:1-5

Jan 10 - Matthew 7:7-11

Jan 11 - Luke 1:37

Jan 12 - Romans 8:26-27

Jan 13 - Romans 8:28-30

Jan 14 - Romans 8:31

Jan 15 - Romans 8:38-39

Jan 16 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Jan 17 - 1 Corinthians 10:13

Jan 18 - Ephesians 3:20-21

Jan 19 - Hebrews 11:1-3

Jan 20 - Hebrews 11:6

Jan 21 - Romans 10:17

Jan 22 - Psalm 103:1-5

Jan 23 - Psalm 100

Jan 24 - 1 John 4:1-4

Jan 25 - Joshua 1:8-9

Jan 26 - Revelation 1:1-3

Jan 27 - Ephesians 2:1-9

Jan 28 - Philippians 3:12-14

Jan 29 - Romans 5:6-11

Jan 30 - 1 John 1:8-9

Jan 31 - Psalm 150:6