

The year of 2024 is upon us! As we plan to enter the new year, our 10th year as an established church, I am challenging each of you to participate in a church and city wide fast to begin the year 2024. I believe that there is no better way to ignite our commitment to God 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 pulling ourselves 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. 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 1st and the fast will conclude on midnight of February 1st. The fast will last for the entire duration of the day during this time. We will also read through the book of Mark during the 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). Now let's get a bit more specific about the purpose of fasting and the specific details of our upcoming fast.**

Fasting is the giving up of foods or other things for a period to draw closer to God and to focus on Him. 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 to use if we are to receive what God has for us. And this tool Jesus speaks on and did Himself. He tells the disciples that some things come only by fasting and by prayer (Matthew 17:21).

Now to the specifics about our fast in January. As previously stated, the fast will begin January 1st and will conclude at midnight of February 1st. The fast will be for the entire day. We will eliminate one or more of the following foods for the fast: red meat, pork, and/or fried foods (air fryer use is permitted). Please consult your physician to ensure proper health and food requirements prior to the fast if you so choose. We will also eliminate one activity of your choosing for the fast. Examples of this may be social media, television, etc. Finally, we will also incorporate prayer with our fasting period as well. I am asking 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). We will read through the book of Mark for our Scripture reading during the fast.

I am excited for us to begin the year of 2024 by starting with fasting, prayer, and consecration. 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. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me. Let's not only start well but finish strong!

Pastor Herb Fontnette

SELECTED BIBLE PASSAGES FOR READING

1. Jan 1- Mark 1:1-28
2. Jan 2- Mark 1:29-45
3. Jan 3- Mark 2:1-13
4. Jan 4- Mark 2:14-28
5. Jan 5- Mark 3:1-12
6. Jan 6- Mark 3:13-35
7. Jan 7- Mark 4:1-25
8. Jan 8- Mark 4:26-41
9. Jan 9- Mark 5:1-20
10. Jan 10- Mark 5:21-34
11. Jan 11- Mark 5:35-43
12. Jan 12- Mark 6:1-13
13. Jan 13- Mark 6:14-32

14. Jan 14- Mark 6:33-44
15. Jan 15- Mark 6:45-56
16. Jan 16- Mark 7:1-23
17. Jan 17- Mark 7:24-37
18. Jan 18- Mark 8:1-26
19. Jan 19- Mark 8:27-38
20. Jan 20- Mark 9:1-13
21. Jan 21- Mark 9:14-37
22. Jan 22- Mark 10:1-31
23. Jan 23- Mark 10:32-52
24. Jan 24- Mark 11:1-33
25. Jan 25- Mark 12:1-44
26. Jan 26- Mark 13:1-37
27. Jan 27- Mark 14:1-31
28. Jan 28- Mark 14:32-52
29. Jan 29- Mark 14:53-72
30. Jan 30- Mark 15:1-47
31. Jan 31- Mark 16:1-20