

**2025 is upon us! As we enter the year 2025, I am challenging you to participate in a church and city wide fast to begin the new year. I believe that there is no better way to ignite our commitment to God than to begin with an extended period of fasting. Fasting allows us to draw closer to God as we pull ourselves away from things that we desire. Fasting gives us clarity and direction as it helps us to hear from the Lord more clearly. Fasting, combined with the Word of God and prayer, are spiritual disciplines that all believers should develop in our walk with God. We will begin a 26 day fast starting at midnight of January 6<sup>th</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. We will also read selected scriptures each day 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 and/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 6<sup>th</sup> and will conclude at midnight of February 1<sup>st</sup>. The fast will be for the entire day. We will eliminate the following food and drinks for the fast: red meat, pork, fried foods (air fryer use is permitted), fast food, and sodas. Please consult your physician to ensure proper health and food requirements prior to the fast. We will also eliminate one form of technology from 6 pm-6 am (aside from school and work). Examples of this may be social media, television, iPad, gaming, iPhone, etc. This will be of your choosing. I am asking that you devote 10 minutes of uninterrupted prayer per day for 26 days. I have prepared Bible chapters for us to read each day. The Word will strengthen us spiritually as we walk with the Lord.**

**I am excited for us to begin the year of 2025 with fasting, prayer, and consecration. 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 6- Genesis 1 (In the beginning)
2. Jan 7- Luke 2 (The birth of Jesus)
3. Jan 8- Mark 1 (Jesus' ministry begins)
4. Jan 9- Mark 9 (A Day in the life of Jesus)
5. Jan 10- Matthew 5 (Sermon on the Mount)
6. Jan 11- Matthew 6 (Sermon on the Mount)
7. Jan 12- Luke 15 (Parables of Jesus)
8. Jan 13- John 3 (A talk with Jesus)
9. Jan 14- John 10 (The Good Shepherd)
10. Jan 15- John 14 (Jesus offers comfort)
11. Jan 16- John 15 (Abiding or remaining in Jesus)
12. Jan 17- John 16 (The work of the Holy Spirit)
13. Jan 18- John 17 (Jesus prays for the disciples)
14. Jan 19- Matthew 26 (Betrayal and arrest of Jesus)
15. Jan 20- Matthew 27 (Jesus and the cross)
16. Jan 21- John 20 (The Resurrection of Jesus)
17. Jan 22- Luke 24 (His appearance after the Resurrection)
18. Jan 23- Romans 5 (Peace with God)
19. Jan 24- Romans 8 (Freedom in the Spirit)
20. Jan 25- Ephesians 1 (Blessings of redemption)
21. Jan 26- Ephesians 2 (Made alive in Christ)
22. Jan 27- Ephesians 3 (Stewardship of Paul)
23. Jan 28- Ephesians 4 (Unity in Christ)
24. Jan 29- Ephesians 5 (Be imitators of Christ)
25. Jan 30- Ephesians 6 (Be strong in the Lord)
26. Jan 31- Revelation 21 (The New Heaven and Earth)