



FASTING SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions of what to do and not do when fasting:

1. Consider medical issues – Do not fast if you have a medical condition or lifestyle demand that would make fasting harmful to your wellbeing.
2. Start small – Begin with skipping one meal. Do not try an extended fast until you have experience with smaller fasts.
3. Incorporate Bible Reading & Prayer – Consider using the time you would have spent eating to read your Bible and pray. Set aside time to be in the presence of God. This is a great time to engage with our Bible Reading Plan and Daily Devotionals and our Prayer Guide.
4. Do not draw attention to yourself, as noted in Matthew 6:16-18. Do not post on social media about fasting.

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:16-18



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FASTING

LENT 2025

WHY WOULD WE FAST?

Lent is a forty-day season observed by Christians which begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes the Saturday prior to Easter. Lent does not include Sundays, which are sometimes referred to as “little Easters”. The focus of this season includes intentional focus on God through such spiritual practices as prayer, fasting, and serving others.

We often hear of “giving something up” for Lent. Concord UMC will focus on fasting during Lent in conjunction with prayer. Fasting means abstaining, particularly from food, for spiritual purposes. This is not a diet plan. This is a spiritual practice. Our motive for fasting and while fasting is God, God-centered and God-dependent.

Jesus experienced fasting in the wilderness, going without food for forty days, (Luke 4:1-2). Jesus also spoke about the spiritual practice of fasting. Fasting is part of Jesus’ words to his disciples in what we know as The Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew 6:16-18). Jesus taught to not draw attention to ourselves, but to be seen by our Heavenly Father.



REMEMBERING THE CRUCIFIXION

The founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley, believed fasting to be a “means of grace”. “Means of grace” are reading scripture, prayer, The Lord’s Supper, fasting and fellowship. Wesley believed, through practicing these spiritual practices, God’s grace becomes more and more aware to us. He in no way believed that by engaging in these spiritual practices we earn grace. Wesley encouraged early Methodists to fast on Fridays as a remembrance of the crucifixion.



FAST ON FRIDAYS

As we journey from Ash Wednesday to the cross and the empty tomb, we encourage fasting. Just as Wesley instilled in the first Methodists, we invite you to fast on Fridays, March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28, April 4, April 11 and April 18. It is a Christian tradition to fast on Friday, as it represents the day Jesus was crucified and sacrificed for us.

We recommend one of the three options for fasting weekly during Lent:

- Fridays from 9am-3pm (The hours of the crucifixion.)
- Fridays until 3pm
- Fridays until Sundown

As mentioned, fasting means abstaining. Abstaining from food is one method of fasting. We can also fast from other items, such as screens and social media.

