

# NEW HORIZONS COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GOD



## 40-DAY DISCIPLE'S JOURNEY

Transforming the world around me starts with  
transforming the person within me.

“I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.”

Ephesians 3:16

“I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship Him.”

Romans 12:1-2

March 7th – April 15th, 2022 (Good Friday)

WEEK 1

**For hundreds of years, Christians have been** participating in a special season preceding Resurrection Sunday. Traditionally, it's a time to prepare our hearts for Easter by fasting, praying, and repenting of sin as we get ready to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. The 40 Day season is called, "Lent."

You may have heard of Lent, maybe you've even participated in it before. It's not just an empty tradition or a meaningless ritual. Christians all over the world observe Lent as a way of removing clutter from our lives so that we can see Jesus more clearly.

Those who'll join in the practice of observing a Lenten season, give up something to spend more time with God and be in His Word. What you fast from could be just about anything—food, TV, social media, even choosing to drink only water. Removing physical things from our lives for this period of 40 days can help us focus on the deeper parts of ourselves, allowing the Truth of the gospel to transform us. For more information see the 40 Days of Fasting & Prayer Guidelines.

It is my hope that this "*40 Day Disciple's Journey*" might be the start of a deeper walk with Jesus for you and a means to help you grasp **the value of daily quiet time with the Lord.**

(Psalm 63:1)

Being disciples and making disciples of Jesus Christ go hand in hand, **yet it starts with one person loving Jesus enough to follow Him and His words wherever they may lead.** (John 17:4; Luke 9:23)

As you read the daily entries, notice that most are written by those from our NHCC fellowship as S.O.A.P.'s: Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer. Our Small groups and "D" groups have been working on this practice the last few months as they prepare themselves to be, "Disciples making Disciples." As you take in these entries you will come to know that **Discipleship has transforming power!**

I challenge you over the next 40-days to a daily time in God's word, opening yourself up to whom the Holy Spirit is leading you to encourage.

"Transforming the world around me starts with transforming the person within me."  
(Ephesians 3:16; Romans 12:1-2)

Pastor Jerry  
New Horizons Community Church

# 40 DAYS OF FASTING & PRAYER GUIDELINES

## WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that is taught in the Bible. Jesus expected His followers to “fast” and said that God rewards fasting. Fasting, according to the Bible, means to voluntarily reduce or eliminate your intake of food for a specific time and purpose.

*“When you give up eating, don’t put on a sad face like the hypocrites. They make their faces look sad to show people they are giving up eating. I tell you the truth, those hypocrites already have their full reward. So when you give up eating, comb your hair and wash your face. Then people will not know that you are giving up eating, but your Father, whom you cannot see, will see you. Your Father sees what is done in secret, and he will reward you.”*  
Matthew 6:16-18

## WHY FAST?

There are many good reasons, and even health benefits, for fasting. The primary reasons for this season of fasting are as follows:

1. Fasting gives you more time for prayer. You can use the time you’d normally spend eating (watching TV, scrolling through social media, playing video games, etc) as time in prayer for what God wants to do among us during this season. In the Bible, fasting is always connected with prayer.

*“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. So, after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.’”*  
Acts 13:2-3

2. Fasting demonstrates the depth of your desire when praying for something. It shows you mean business with God – that you are serious enough about your prayer request to pay a personal price. God honors deep desire and praying in faith.

*“Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord.”*  
Joel 1:14

*“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”*  
Joel 2:12

3. Fasting releases God’s supernatural power. It is a tool we can use when there is opposition to God’s will in your life and in the church. Satan would like nothing better than to cause division, discouragement, defeat, depression, and doubt

among us. United prayer and fasting has always been used by God to deal a decisive blow to the enemy!

*“So we fasted and prayed to God about this, and He answered our prayer.”*  
Ezra 8:23

*“God says, ‘Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?’”*  
Isaiah 58:6

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING

*Often in the Bible, God’s people fasted immediately before a major victory, miracle, or answer to prayer. It prepared them for a blessing!*

- **Moses fasted before he received the Ten Commandments.**

*“Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant--the Ten Commandments.”* Exodus 34:28

- **The Israelites fasted before a miraculous victory.**

*“Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, ‘A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from the other side of the Sea. It is already in Hazazon Tamar’ (that is, En Gedi). Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the Lord, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.”*

2 Chronicles 20:2-3

- **Daniel fasted to receive guidance from God.**

*“So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.”* Daniel 9:3

*“While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, ‘Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding.’”*  
Daniel 9:21-22

- **Nehemiah fasted before beginning a major building project.**

*“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.”* Neh. 1:4

- **Jesus fasted during His victory over temptation.**

*“For forty wilderness days and nights he was tested by the Devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when the time was up he was hungry.”* Luke 4:2

- **The first Christians fasted during-decision making times.**

*“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”*  
Acts 13:2-3

### **A FEW CAUTIONS & WHAT TO DO’S**

1. Remember that fasting is not “earning” an answer to prayer. God cannot be blackmailed by human effort. God wants to answer our prayers and He answers out of grace. Fasting simply prepares us for God’s answer.
2. Fast only if your health allows it at this time. If you are able **only** to do a partial fast - do it in faith and God will honor your intentions. (Changing your diet or eliminating a specific meal(s).
3. Those who suffer from any form or degree of eating disorder should NOT engage in a fast.
4. Your goal is not to “try fasting”, but to cultivate a lifestyle of prayer and intimacy with God. This includes a growing dependence on God to fill any holes in your heart. As you fast, you begin to notice that you repeatedly reach for things like salt, sugar, or snacks, to not just fill the void in your stomach, but the emptiness in your heart. If you choose to only eat 1 or 2 meals a day, eat healthy meals and avoid the stuff that satisfies and doesn’t fuel your hunger for MORE! Drink plenty of water. Let the discipline and heart posture of fasting and prayer continue to keep you in communion with God.
5. Don’t Give Up! If you slip up, or lapse on any given day, don’t be defeated, and don’t feel you have to go back to square one! Pick up where you left off and re-engage your heart, mind, and body with the Lord! Remember, start your fast with a commitment to follow-thru and belief in your heart that God can and will bless your dedication.
6. Keep a Journal and do the daily devotional that is provided. A journal is a good way to record your journey. It will help you keep track of your spiritual progress. Just use an inexpensive spiral notebook (Dollar Store, Dollar General). Ask: What is God saying to me today? What is God telling me to do today that I need to obey? What struggles or temptations am I experiencing today? In what way did I think more like Christ today? In what way did I act, speak, or respond more like Christ today? Who or what is the Lord telling me to pray for? How has God answered prayer today? **Make it a priority to pray for people to come to Christ – be specific of who – thank God for their lives – let God know your desire for them to come to know Him.**

# 40 Days of Prayer & Fasting

March 7th – April 15th, 2022 (Good Friday)

## Focus on

- **Open & repentant hearts ready to listen and obey God's will:**
  - in our individual lives & in our corporate fellowship
  
- **Vision of how God can work through us:**
  - to minister & meet needs in our community
  - to foster fresh enthusiasm and hunger for growth @ New Horizons
  - to bring a thirst for new spiritual maturity
  
- **Salvation of:**
  - unsaved loved ones, neighbors, friends & classmates
  
- **Deliverances:**
  - Spiritual healing for those with unresolved emotional hurts & addictions
  - Physical healing for those dealing with chronic pain and ailments of all kinds
  
- **Leadership Roles:**
  - Pastors and their families
  - Disciplers – to help “new believers” grow in their faith
  - Elders – spiritual leadership & vision
  - Worship Leader – primary vocal and lead instrumentalist
  
- **Resources**
  - Financial – an increase of those who would give a tithe of their income
  - Ministry Volunteers – partners in children & outreach
  - Facilities – wise use of space to meet primary ministry needs

*\*\*The above list is not exhaustive, but will serve as a guide to stimulate prayer and seeking God's will for each person and the church as a whole.\*\**

**Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Day 1**

## **God's Blessing In Your Life**

### **Psalm 119:1-8 NKJV**

Do you desire God's blessing in your life? These first 8 verses in Psalm 119 are very clear on how to receive blessings:

VS 1 – "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord!"

VS 2 – "Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with the whole heart!"

VS 3 – "They also do no iniquity; They walk in his ways."

VS 4 – "You have commanded us to keep your precepts diligently."

VS 5 – "Oh, that my ways were directed to keep your statutes!"

VS 6 – "Then I would not be ashamed, when I look into all your commandments."

VS 7 – "I will pursue you with uprightness of heart, when I learn your righteous judgements."

VS 8 – "I will keep your statutes, Oh, do not forsake me utterly!"

Are you being obedient to God in all areas of your life? Are you seeking Him with your whole heart? Are you asking God Daily to strengthen you to seek Him?

Our fallen nature takes us away from God. We need to seek Him daily and ask Him to change our hearts. Ezekiel 36:26 NIV "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." We also can see that we need to ask for strength to obey God's word. We must be in His word every day so we can have guidance from Him and it will increase our faith in Him.

Romans 18:17 ESV "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." Notice by the exclamation marks in PS 119 verses 5 & 8 how desperate the Psalmist was for God's help to be obedient. Do you have that urgency in your life to be obedient?

James 4 tells us the reason we do not have the spiritual help and blessings we need is because we don't ask for it. Ask God today to show you an area of your life where you need to trust him more, and then ask for the strength to follow through in obedience.

Prayer: Lord, I pray that you will make me Holy as I live my life for you to the best of my ability. I have seen how your favor is upon the saints who trust in you fully. Thank you for reminding me repeatedly how to live my life for you. Thank you for being firm in showing me that I need to follow your ways carefully. Your word is showing me that I cannot be obedient to You unless I ask for and depend on You to supply the power, I need to be obedient. I have felt the shame many times when looking at Your word because I tried to obey it on my own power. Help me to live a righteous life so that I can praise You freely. Lord, I resolve to look to You for my strength to live my life for You, do not leave me when I fail but show me my errors and strengthen me. Amen.

**Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Receive His Holy Spirit**  
**Acts 19:2 RSV**

**Day 2**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” Acts 19:2

**OBSERVATION:**

Paul is indicating that there is more to receive after you believe. Belief is the first step on the journey with Christ. Then comes the desire to tell others. Then the Holy Spirit gives boldness and power to speak and the strength and endurance to continue.

**APPLICATION:**

I need the Holy Spirit every day to keep me focused on telling others about Jesus. I need strength and help to put others first over my seemingly urgent activities.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, please fill me with your Holy Spirit. I need you. Please love through me, please speak through me, please draw others to yourself through me. Amen.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, write out the things the Holy Spirit opened your eyes to today:**



**Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Day 3**

**Live Worthy of the Gospel of Christ**

**Philippians 1:27 RSV**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“Only live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are: Standing firm in One Spirit striving side-by-side with one mind for the faith of the Gospel and no way intimidated by your opponents [enemies].”

**OBSERVATION:**

The 4 points Paul mentions: 1) Standing firm in One Spirit, 2) Striving side-by-side, 3) With One mind for the faith of the Gospel, 4) No way intimidated by your opponents. Reveal Paul’s SOP! He is admonishing that everyone do the same. The Gospel must be preached and spread across the world. This is how Paul is resilient and unstoppable through Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit.

**APPLICATION:**

It’s GO Time! Paul’s life demonstrates that nothing should stop me. I need to adopt his creed.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, fill me with your Holy Spirit and make me unstoppable in the spreading of your Gospel.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, think about how you are standing firm, working side-by-side with other believers to spread the Gospel.**

**Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Day 4**

**Fellow Heirs**

**Ephesians 3:6 RSV**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“The Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”

**OBSERVATION:**

The unclean have been washed white as snow. The Gentiles – formally a dirty word – now are brothers! Heirs of the same inheritance.

**APPLICATION:**

I am a Gentile. Jesus has made a way for me. I must make a way for others.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, you love all your creation. You desire all to live in freedom knowing they are loved and accepted by you. Please forgive me for thinking and acting otherwise. Please give me your Holy Spirit to speak your love to others.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, think about how you look at other people. Is it through the eyes of the love of God? Are there any attitudes about others you need to seek God’s forgiveness for?**

**Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Day 5**

**His Power**

**Ephesians 1:9 RSV**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“[That you may know] what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.”

**OBSERVATION:**

Power is mentioned two times. Greatness of power and working of his great power. We realize this power when we believe.

**APPLICATION:**

I need to believe. I need to know God and trust him that all power comes from Him. It is not a power to rule the world, but to overcome it, that I may pass through this world into the inheritance He has made possible for me – Eternal life in heaven with God.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, thank you for the power you give to overcome the world that I live in. I do not need anything this world has to offer. Please help me as I strive to know you rather than seek to gain what the world has to offer.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, think about what God has for you. How can you express your belief and trust in God today?**

**Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Day 6**

**Jesus Is Our Peace**

**Ephesians 2:15 RSV**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“He has abolished the Law with its commandments and ordinances, that He might create in himself ONE new humanity in place of the two – thus making peace.”

**OBSERVATION:**

This indicates that there were two sides before Jesus came. The Righteous and the Unrighteous. The good and the bad. The informed and those without a clue. Jews and Gentiles. Jesus created IN HIMSELF one new humanity – he brought peace.

**APPLICATION:**

Jesus is our peace. He has been our peace since his death on the cross. We continue to divide ourselves. Jesus only sees the ONE humanity which he died for. I need to allow Jesus to work through me to bring peace. To draw all men to himself – the only one who can calm the storms in our inner selves and show us that he truly loves us.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, you are peace. You have broken down every wall to make it possible for us to have communion with you and community with each other. Please help me to humble myself to allow you to do your work in and through me so that all may come to know you.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, think about how you can bring peace wherever you go. How did circumstances change when you approached them with the attitude of peace? Pray for Ukraine today. Pray for those in that area that are being peacemakers in the midst of their horrifying circumstances.**

***Don't forget to set your clock ahead one hour tonight!***

***Spring Forward!***

**Sunday, March 13th**  
**Law vs. Living for God**  
**Galatians 2:19**

**Day 7**

**SCRIPTURE:**

“For through the Law I died to the Law, for when I tried to keep the Law it condemned me. I stopped trying to meet all its requirements so I might live for God.”

**OBSERVATION:**

The Law condemns. It shows where I have missed the mark. To live to meet all the requirements of the Law keeps me enslaved to the Law.

**APPLICATION:**

When I live for God, I am no longer enslaved to the Law. Everything I do for God naturally follows the Law. I do not have to measure my obedience to Christ by the Law.

**PRAYER:**

Dear Lord, help me to love you and serve you with my life. Help me to obey you and your word out of love for you. Help me to live freely in you.

**As you continue to Fast and Pray, consider how much you follow the rules and why. Is it out of Love for Jesus, or to do things the right way? Do you do things for people out of obligation or out of Love? What would freedom look like if you lived for God and nothing else?**

## What's Happening this Week?!

You do not want to miss:



**SAT., MARCH 19TH, 2022—SOUTH CHURCH, LANSING, MI**

Call the office at: 517-783-4218 or email: [newhorizons.chog@gmail.com](mailto:newhorizons.chog@gmail.com) to let us know you would like to attend. Registration is \$20. The list of courses is in the Church foyer. Carpool available.

Go to: [micog.org/360lc.html](http://micog.org/360lc.html) for more information