

A Word About Fasting

There are many ways to fast. For instance, Wesley fasted twice a week on Wednesday and Friday. He followed what some call an “ordinary fast,” abstaining from all food and drinking only water. He also followed the ancient church practice of fasting, beginning his fast after his evening meal the night before and breaking it at 3 PM.

As we embark together on a Lenten fast, we are encouraged to fast at least one meal a week. Of course, people are different; what is safe for one person may not be safe for another. You should not fast at the expense of your health. Those who cannot fast completely could consider a “partial fast” if they cannot do an ordinary fast of abstaining from all food. A partial fast means abstaining from certain foods and drinks. For instance, Daniel and his friends refused to eat rich foods and fine wine (Daniel 1:8, 10:3). In a partial fast, you might refrain from eating meat or processed foods, eat only fresh fruit and vegetables, or drink only water or juice. However you choose to fast, this practice can be compelling, and we pray it will help you grow in love with God and others!

Reading Scripture Devotionally

Most forms of Bible reading focus on information and ask questions such as: What does the text mean? How can we apply it today? The ancient discipline of sacred reading, sometimes called *lectio divina*, centers on personal transformation and poses different questions: What does the text mean to me? How is God guiding me? What must I do in obedience?

Here are some simple directions for developing this practice of reading Scripture devotionally:

- **Center your thoughts on Jesus.** Ask the Holy Spirit to breathe through the Word and speak into your heart.
- **Read slowly.** Take time to listen for the Spirit’s voice. Remember, you aren’t reading to understand what the verses mean, but to comprehend what God might want to say to you.
- **Read, re-read, and wait.** Read the passage slowly at least three times. Pause between each reading and wait for the Spirit to illuminate some words or phrases until they stand out.
- **Ask Jesus to speak.** Let the Spirit reveal the heart of Jesus through the Scripture for the particular circumstances of your life. Take note of what you observe, write it down, and resolve to obey.



2026 FAST-A-MEAL GUIDE TO PRAYER

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

For centuries, Christians have observed fasting and prayer during Lent. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed that fasting helps us remember Christ’s sacrifice and connect our sacrifices with His. It prompts us to turn away from darkness and focus on the light of resurrection. Additionally, it helps us wait for God’s guidance and recognize His promises of hope. Wesley encouraged Christians to “fast, give alms, and pray.”

The initial section of the Guide to Prayer provides daily Scripture readings and reflections to help you through this sacred period. The back page offers additional details on fasting, particularly if you are new to it, and tips for reading Scripture more profoundly.

We will post messages daily during Lent on Social Media (@RHMTulsa). However you connect, we hope this guide will help during this holy time!

Scripture Readings

Week of Ash Wednesday (Feb 18-21)

During this opening week of Lent, we fast from a meal as a shared spiritual practice, offering what we save as a gift of compassion and hope for our neighbor.

- Wed: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
- Thu: Isaiah 48:1-9a
- Fri: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
- Sat: Psalm 51:1-17

Meditation: Lent begins with an honest look at our lives before God. The call to repentance is not about outward display but inward turning. God desires hearts shaped by mercy, justice, and reconciliation. Even from dust, God is already creating something new.

Prayer: God of mercy, as we begin this season, we come to you aware of our need—and the needs around us. As we fast, remind us that our hunger can open our hearts to compassion. May what we set aside become a gift of hope for our neighbors. Amen.

First Week in Lent (Feb 22-28)

As we fast this week, we remember those who live with hunger and uncertainty every day and turn our sacrifice into support for Restore Hope Ministries' work.

- Sun: Genesis 2:15-17
- Tue: Romans 5:12-19
- Thu: Matthew 4:1-11
- Sat: Psalm 32:8-11
- Mon: Genesis 3:1-7
- Wed: Psalm 32:1-7
- Fri: Hebrews 4:14-16

Meditation: From the garden to the wilderness, Scripture reminds us how easily trust can break and how faithfully God restores. Christ meets temptation with obedience, opening the way for forgiveness and grace.

Prayer: Faithful God, as we give up a meal this week, help us remember those who face hunger and uncertainty every day. As we feel the pangs of hunger, we turn our hearts toward trust and generosity. Use our sacrifice to bring hope to others. Amen.

Second Week in Lent (Mar 1-7)

This week's fast encourages us to trust God as our provider and to turn what we surrender into concrete support and encouragement via Restore Hope Ministries.

- Sun: Genesis 12:1-4a
- Tue: Romans 4:13-17
- Thu: John 3:1-17
- Sat: Psalm 121:5-8
- Mon: Romans 4:1-5
- Wed: Psalm 121:1-4
- Fri: Ephesians 2:1-10

Meditation: God invites Abram to move forward in faith, trusting in promises that are not yet visible. New life starts not through effort but through surrender, as we rely on God's grace.

Prayer: God of promise, as we fast this week, remind us that you are our provider. Give us the courage to trust you and bless what we offer, so it may bring encouragement and new beginnings. Amen.

Third Week in Lent (Mar 8-14)

As we fast together this week, let our hunger remind us of deeper needs in our community and let our generosity bring relief through Restore Hope Ministries.

- Sun: Exodus 17:1-7
- Tue: Romans 5:1-11
- Thu: John 4:5-42
- Sat: Psalm 95:6-11
- Mon: Psalm 95:1-5
- Wed: Psalm 81:1-10
- Fri: Isaiah 55:1-9

Meditation: Imagine how God lovingly meets us in the wilderness, gifting water from the rock and offering us the refreshing living water through Christ. Only God truly satisfies our deepest thirst, filling our hearts in ways nothing else can.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, as we feel hunger this week, turn our attention outward. Fill us with your living water and use our gifts to satisfy the deepest needs of our neighbors.

Fourth Week in Lent (Mar 15-21)

By fasting from a meal this week, we open our eyes to how small acts of generosity can bring light, dignity, and care to others.

- Sun: 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- Tue: Ephesians 5:8-14
- Thu: John 9:1-41
- Sat: Psalm 146:6-10
- Mon: Psalm 23
- Wed: Psalm 146:1-5
- Fri: Isaiah 42:5-9

Meditation: God sees beyond appearances and brings light where there is darkness, sight where there is blindness. Christ calls us to live as people shaped by truth and compassion.

Prayer: God of light, open our eyes to see others through your love. May our fasting and giving reflect your compassion. Amen.

Fifth Week in Lent (Mar 22-28)

This week's fast calls us to trust that God can use even modest gifts to bring renewal and new life through the work of Restore Hope Ministries.

- Sun: Ezekiel 37:1-14
- Tue: Romans 8:6-11
- Thu: John 11:1-45
- Sat: Psalm 143:7-12
- Mon: Psalm 130
- Wed: Psalm 143:1-6
- Fri: Isaiah 43:16-21

Meditation: God breathes life into dry bones and speaks hope into graves. Even when change feels impossible, God is still at work restoring life.

Prayer: God of Life, breathe hope into places where we feel worn down. Use our gifts this week to restore dignity and hope to those who feel like dry bones. Amen.

Holy Week (Mar 29-Apr 5)

During this Holy Week, let our fasting be an act of love and remembrance as we offer our sacrifice to support healing and hope for those served by Restore Hope Ministries.

- Sun: Matthew 21:1-11
- Tue: Psalm 71:1-14
- Thu: John 13:1-17, 31b-35
- Sat: Matthew 27:57-66
- Mon: Isaiah 50:4-9a
- Wed: Matthew 26:14-25
- Fri: John 18:1-19:42
- Sun: John 20:1-18

Meditation: Holy Week invites us to walk with Christ through love, suffering, and silence. Even in waiting, God's redemptive work continues.

Prayer: Jesus, as we walk through this Holy Week, unite our sacrifice with your love. Use our sacrifice to remind those served by Restore Hope Ministries that they are seen and not alone. Amen.