

**Weirton Church of the Nazarene
Fasting & Prayer - September 2024**

Our community has been experiencing heavy concerns, current events, illness, and circumstances this week. We are inviting our faith family to join us in a set apart time of prayer and fasting this week.

If able to do so, you are invited to set a day this week, or a significant portion of a day, to abstain from eating food. During this fast, consider spending extra time dedicated to prayer and meditating on Scripture. You may choose a modified fast for health reasons. You may choose to fast other items too, like screen time for example.

It is understood that John Wesley (1703-1791) made it a habit to fast one day every week. He preached a sermon on why believers must fast. You can read the text of his sermon, which includes numerous scripture references, here: tinyurl.com/fastwesley. In his message, Wesley acknowledges how instances of deep affliction, apprehension, or sorrow can naturally result in one abstaining from eating. What might cause a person to intentionally engage in a fast? The reasons may include: developing virtues, humbling before God, obtaining his blessing, seeking direction, or simply because God commands and directs it.

On the following pages you will see some suggested prayers and scriptures that may assist you. They have been compiled quickly, so please forgive me for any typos. Slowly and carefully read through them, pausing and reflecting on what is being said as you go. Feel free to modify them, or follow your own prayer methods as we join together in seeking God's help for our community.

God bless,

Pastor Bennett Briles

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Scripture passages: W. Hall Harris III et al., eds., *The Lexham English Bible*
(Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012)

Confession

*I made known my sin to you, and my iniquity I did not cover.
I said, "I will confess concerning my transgressions to Yahweh,"
and you took away the guilt of my sin.
PSALM 32:5*

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, so that he will forgive us our sins and will
cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
I JOHN 1:9*

Prayer

You are the eternal Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

We come before you recognizing your power and might. You alone are God. You are holy love and light.

Thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who died for our sins, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven and intercedes for us.

As you have provided in the past, I know you provide today.

Be merciful to me, o God, as I acknowledge now any ways I have acted against you in sin. Please forgive me. I commit now, by your grace, to turn away from sin and toward you.

Lord please heal me of my shame. The things that I have done and that have been done to me weigh heavily on me. Please, by your grace, give me relief.

Thank you for your mercy.

Thank you for your Holy Spirit, who is ever present and active in and with the Church.

Holy Spirit please dwell among us and convict us, empower us, transform us, sanctify us, and guides us.

Holy Spirit Come. Help, please God.

Salvation in the Community

Scripture

*Therefore, I urge first of all that petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgiving
be made on behalf of all people,
on behalf of kings and all those who are in authority,
in order that we may live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.
This is good and acceptable before God our Savior,
who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
I TIMOTHY 2:1-4*

Prayer

I am surrounded by people who do not know your peace. I think of people I know very close to me that do not know you or follow you. I think of people that are mere acquaintances or that I cross paths with. I think of neighbors. I think of friends and enemies.

Please speak to them. Please get their attention. Please compel them.

Please send messengers into the moments in their lives. Please send workers into the harvest field. Please help us keep things of eternal importance at the forefront of our hearts and minds.

Speak to me and move in me that I might boldly be a witness to your faithfulness and love.

May I share truth effectively, humbly, confidently, yet not condescendingly. Cast out any self-consciousness and fear within me.

I wonder at what it would be like for more and more people to know your salvation in our valley.

To take up a cross and follow you.

To be filled with your Holy Spirit. Would we not see so much good news?

Please let it be so.

Cultural Issues

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does Yahweh ask from you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?
MICAH 6:8*

*Therefore I exhort you, brothers, through the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you may approve what is the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God.
ROMANS 12:1-2*

Prayer

The erosion of godly morals in our culture concerns me God.

Corruption seems to be everywhere.

Help me to focus how my life should be lived in the midst of it.

Help me to know what it looks like to be “in the world but not of the world.”

Help me and those in my community to protect our hearts and minds from popular myths and lies about what is right and wrong.

Expose the wolves in sheep’s clothing who lead the vulnerable astray either by their own ignorance or wicked motives.

Let truth be known more and more. Give your people wisdom and insight as we seek to influence culture in living out our faith.

Help your people to live out compassion and accountability. Help us to defend the weak.

Help us to live not for ourselves but for our neighbors and for the children you have entrusted to our care..

May the Scripture come to life within me and may it be compelling to those who encounter me.

Spiritual Warfare

*Our struggle is not against blood and flesh,
but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness,
against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.
EPHESIANS 6:12*

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from
God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.
By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the
flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God,
and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming,
and now it is already in the world.
You are from God, little children, and have conquered them,
because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world
1 JOHN 4:1-4*

*And the seventy-two returned with joy, saying,
“Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”
So [Jesus] said to them, “I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven.
Behold, I have given you the authority to tread on snakes and scorpions,
and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will ever harm you.
Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you,
but rejoice that your names are inscribed in heaven.”
LUKE 10:17-20*

Prayer

You have given your Spirit-filled people authority. Give me power and go with me Lord.

Please give your people discernment, boldness, and grace when encountering spiritual forces of darkness.

Be with your people as we cast out demons. Where the enemy prowls, may your people be alert.

Send rescuers to those who need rescued.

Bring those who need delivered to the places in which they can find deliverance.

Make our church a place of healing and deliverance.

Let me not be afraid to allow you to work through me against the powers of darkness.

It is not my strength, but yours. Whom shall I fear?

Safety of our Children and the most Vulnerable

*Judge on behalf of the helpless and the orphan;
provide justice to the afflicted and the poor.
Rescue the helpless and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”
PSALM 82:3-4*

*But they will sit, each under his vine and under his fig tree,
and no one will make them afraid,
for the mouth of Yahweh of hosts has spoken.
MICAH 4:4*

Prayer

Protect our children and those that work alongside them.

Protect the most vulnerable among us from physical danger.

Help your servants to identify threats and act accordingly. Protect individual's minds in our community. Please keep them from descending into violence.

Help us to be a people who value life from its very beginning to end. You are the sovereign Lord. No one else is god.

Shine your light in minds and hearts on paths toward justice and peace.

Grief Ministry

Yahweh is near to those who are heartbroken and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

PSALM 34:18

*Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies
and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction,
so that we may be able to comfort those who are in all affliction
with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

*For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us,
thus through Christ our comfort overflows also.*

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-5

Prayer

I pray for those who attend our Grief Share program who are dealing with heavy, heavy sadness.

I pray for others in our church and in our community that I know are grieving.

Be especially near to those who are mourning.

Where there is anguish, please provide relief.

Where there has been shock, please hold them close and calm the storm.

Where there is numbness, please awaken individuals to understand their experiences in a healthy way.

Help them to see You.

Show those who are wandering or feeling aimless the new, good things you have in store for them.

Where there is loneliness give companionship and opportunities for deep, meaningful fellowship in the family of God.

Give hope to these friends.

Family Dynamics

*Therefore, as the chosen of God, holy and dearly loved,
put on affection, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience,
putting up with one another and forgiving one another.*

*If anyone should have a complaint against anyone,
just as also the Lord forgave you, thus also you do the same.
And to all these things add love, which is the bond of perfection.*

*And the peace of Christ must rule in your hearts,
to which also you were called in one body, and be thankful.*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another with all wisdom,
with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,
singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God,
and everything you do in word or in deed,
giving thanks for all things in the name of the Lord Jesus to God the Father through him.*

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

Prayer

I know there are people in difficult parenting and family life situations.

Please lead them into the right sources of help.

Show me if there is a way I can love and support them.

Guide parents as they continually seek to learn and grow as they relate to their children and discipline them.

I know of strained relationships between adult parents and their sons or daughters.

I bring before you broken or tense relationships between brothers and sisters.

Fill these friends with your love and guide them into humility, health, understanding, and, in the right measures, accountability.

Those serving

*And let us not grow weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap, if we do not give up.
GALATIANS 6:9*

Prayer

Thank you for those who serve in our community.

For the leaders, volunteers, and those who serve with skill.

Bless the police officers, the firefighters, the EMTs, and any and all who respond in moments of trauma and distress. Bless those serving in the armed forces. Protect them and keep them close to you. Let the light of your face shine on them and may they trust you.

Bless those who serve in hospitals. Those in government and community roles. Those who take care of the food supply and distribute food and other goods. Those who tend our streets and parks. Those who guide and counsel. Those who help guide in financial and insurance matters. Those who work in energy and various utilities. Those who repair and help maintain. Those in a number of vocations that serve others with integrity and trustworthiness, working toward the good of the community.

Bless those in leadership in our church. Grant them vision, discernment, and grace. Let them be motivated by your love. Bless those who serve in our church. And stir within those who are not yet serving that they may be assured of their calling in the body of Christ and rise to action.

Lord, be our vision.

Financial Strain

*And [Jesus] lifted up his eyes to his disciples and said,
"Blessed are the poor, because yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are those who are hungry now, because you will be satisfied."
LUKE 6:20-21*

Prayer

Many individuals and families are experiencing stress due because of personal circumstances, inflation, unemployment, and other economic factors.

Please provide for their needs. Please sustain them.

Guide their steps so they might be able to have financial peace.

Reward them as they give generously despite their circumstances.

Health Concerns

*Blessed is the one who has regard for the poor;
in the day of disaster, Yahweh delivers him.
Yahweh protects him and keeps him alive;
he is blessed in the land,
and you do not give him into the will of his enemies.
Yahweh sustains him on his sick bed.
In his illness, you restore to health.
As for me, I said, "O Yahweh, be gracious to me.
Heal me, for I have sinned against you."
PSALM 41:1-4*

Prayer

Send your help o God to those whose bodies are suffering.

Protect hearts and minds of those who are struggling, so that their whole body may become strong. So that our whole church body may be strong.

Encourage and drive away any depression and anxiety.

For all those who are sick with a virus or infection this week. Please be near them. Please heal them.

For all who are hospitalized. Please be near them. Please sustain them.

For all who are injured or in pain. Please give them relief. Please make them strong.

For all who are seeing a specialist or have a consultation this week for a concern. Please give them knowledge, wisdom, guidance, and confidence.

For all who are having tests and scans done - let the results be clear. Let the treatments determined be right.

For all who have surgeries and procedures - please guide and protect. Remove our anxiety.

For all who are recovering from a procedure - please help heal. Protect wounds. Strengthen and renew.

We know you can do all things. Please help and heal our people. May we bring glory to you even in our suffering.

Thanksgiving

*Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything;
for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.
Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but examine all things;
hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.
Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely,
and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete,
blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The one who calls you is faithful, who also will do this.
I THESSALONIANS 5:16-24*

Prayer

I give you thanks.

I will give you thanks even when I am weary.

I will give you thanks even when darkness surrounds me.

I will give you thanks when I have plenty and feel secure.

I will give you thanks when I am in need and feel insecure.

Thank you Lord for the many ways you have been showing your face to your people through your word as they spend time together.

Thank you for the new friends that are engaging in our church family.

Thank you for the way you continue to show me new mercies day after day.

Thank you for hearing me.

Great is your faithfulness.

Amen.