

MOUNT CARMEL BAPTIST CHURCH

2024

PRAYER & FASTING

GUIDE



2024 The Year Drawing Closer to God



Mount Carmel Bpatist Church
5732 Race Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
Rev. Dr. Donald D. Moore, Pastor
Rev. Dr. Albert F. Campbell, Pastor Emeritus

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Mt. Carmel Baptist Church Family,

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that positions us to better connect with God. Fasting aims **to align ourselves with Who God is, what God desires for us, and what God can make possible through us.** As a church family, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church will be fasting together to deepen our relationship with God and get in step with God's plan and purpose for us this year.

We will be fasting for 21 days from Wednesday, February 14, through Friday, March 8, 2024. During these 21 days, we will replace part of our regular food intake with spiritual disciplines that help us better connect with God—reading and meditating on the Bible, praying, and journaling. **We want to cultivate a genuine hunger for spending time with God.** Let's be determined to focus more on the details of connecting with God rather than focusing on the details of the food menu we may be sacrificing during the fast — then we will discover the blessings of fasting! No matter what you have assumed in the past about fasting, try to remember that fasting is about **SEEKING GOD; changing our eating pattern by fasting is one of the ways God designed for us to seek and submit to God's will and God's way.**

February is often known for being a month dedicated to and all about love. But February is not only about valentines and sweethearts; it can also be a month for self-love and self-care, fostering relationships with family and friends, and loving others. Fasting is a way of praying in the Spirit in order to experience the fullness of God's love toward us as we seek direction in our lives. **I believe that as we fast, pray, seek, and give God our best, God's love will be powerfully manifested through our lives as we continue serving.** And God will honor the sacrifice and bless our individual and collective efforts!



A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Biblical fasting can occur on a variety of different daily or weekly schedules. Select a method you can commit to amid your work schedule, lifestyle, social obligations, and health profile. You can:

- Fast all day for a particular day of the week each week or
- Fast during specific hours during a particular day each week or
- Fast during specific hours every day; or
- Fast from a particular meal each day; or
- Choose to sacrifice a particular food group(s) [like meat and/or sweets] for the entire 21-day fast.

However you choose to fast, **BE SURE TO DRINK PLENTY OF WATER THROUGHOUT EACH DAY!!** Fasting triggers a beautiful response in the human body—it causes your body to get rid of toxins, so you will want to help your body flush those toxins out!

Fasting is, of course, challenging for the human body. **If you have any medical conditions or health concerns, please consult your healthcare provider BEFORE beginning this Mt. Carmel Family Fast or making any significant dietary changes.** In our 2024 Prayer and Fasting Guide, you will find a Daily Devotional Schedule for our church family's fast, including a suggested **Prayer Focus** for us to share daily. Some **biblical examples of fasts** and **more details on the various biblical ways you can do your fasting.** You will find a Fasting Covenant form on the guide's last page. **Please fill it out and turn it in at the church;** we would like to know that you are among those actively fasting in the family!

I pray that God will hear from heaven, forgive our sins, and heal our land.

***Rev. Dr. Donald D. Moore, Pastor
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church***

DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Day 1 Feb 14: Pray in this manner: — Matthew 6:9-13



Enter 21 Days of “Drawing Closer to God” through Prayer and Fasting by reflecting on the Lord’s Prayer, the basis of each prayer we pray through the next three weeks.

As we enter the next 21 Days of Drawing Closer to God with our MCBC family, hundreds are gathering daily in God’s name. Ask the Lord to do abundantly more than we could imagine. Read through the Lord’s Prayer three times. Take time to intentionally meditate on God’s Word today and ask God for a fresh anointing. What do you have on your heart today that you need to hand to God? Receive the Lord’s grace as you set an intention for the next 21 days.

Day 2 Feb 15: Do not worry — Matthew 6:25-32

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 7:7-11 Romans 8:14-30 Psalm 42:1-2

We can learn a lot about God’s provision and care for the small details of our lives just by observing the natural world. Reflect on Jesus’ words in today’s reading and repent for allowing your worry over present troubles and suffering to displace God in your heart and mind. Ask the Lord to remove any stronghold of the enemy rooted in doubt or self-sufficiency. Thank God that God’s Scriptures are true, and that you are a child of God and co-heir with Christ. Receive and give thanks for your Heavenly Father’s provision—both received and yet to be seen— and hold fast to God’s promises and faithfulness.

Day 3 Feb 16: Praise the Lord—Psalm 97

Additional Scriptures: Revelation 21:1-7 Psalm 50:1-15

Spend special time worshipping today and always remember God’s goodness. Worship God with reverence. Thank God for God’s sovereignty. Surrender control and release your own will to God. Embrace your God-given limits in daily life and ask God to use God’s power in your life where you are powerless. Breathe deeply in the assurance of God’s perfect strength amid your own weakness. Exhale out your anxiety, fear, or dread. Proclaim God’s goodness throughout the day.

Day 4 Feb 17: A lesson in intercession —Matthew 18:19,

Additional Scriptures: Proverbs 31:8-9, Matthew 28:18-19 Matthew 9:38 Ephesians 6:10, 12

How do you begin to become a prayer warrior? By praying daily for your community and bearing witness to answered prayers. The miraculous power of God penetrates our human frailty and brings divine understanding. Ask the Lord for the Holy Spirit’s powerful presence and healing power to be prevalent. Ask God for justice and compassion for the poor and helpless, and that you will find tangible ways to help share God’s love with them.



DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Day 5 Feb 18: Prayers of petition—Psalm 27:4,

Additional Scriptures: 1 Peter 5:7, Matthew 9:36-38 Hebrews 13:16

God can provide all you need, and He knows better than you what that encompasses, so approach Him with the desires of your heart. God invites us to come to God, to know God, and to delight in God's presence. God is our Daily Bread. Take some time right now to let God fill you with God's presence. God is the giver of all good things. Take a moment to thank God, then ask for those things you (or someone you love) need that only God can provide.

Day 6 Feb 19: Repent—Acts 3:19,

Additional Scriptures: Matthew 4:17, NASB Proverbs 28:13

True freedom comes from the forgiveness of sins through Jesus' atonement, so start fresh today by coming clean before God. For God's kingdom to come into our lives, we must repent from building our own kingdoms. Ask God for forgiveness for any selfish actions in the past. God's Word calls us to repent from depending on our own strength to gain God's wisdom. Confess the ways you have relied on yourself instead of God.

FEB 20: SABBATH

Day 7 Feb 21: Reconcile and forgive —Ephesians 4:30-32

Additional Scriptures: Colossians 3:13 Matthew 18:21-22

To forgive can be a gargantuan task, as can asking someone to forgive our wrongdoing. Ask the Lord to forgive you for grieving the Holy Spirit in how you have treated people. Choose today to reconcile those relationships by being kind and considerate. Put on kindness, empathy, and compassion today. Ask God to make you an agent of grace and reconciliation to those around you.

Day 8 Feb 22: Susceptible to temptation —Matthew 6:13

Additional Scriptures: Luke 4:1-13 1 Corinthians 10:13

The Lord's Prayer offers a communal plea against temptation that we can use to think about and safeguard against the ways we might be tempted from day to day. How can we safeguard ourselves before temptation presents itself? Ask the Lord for discernment and insight as you interact with others as well as in your private thoughts.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Day 9 Feb 23: Conversations with God--- Matthew 6:9

Additional Scriptures: Romans 8:14-17, Ephesians 1:3-14



The Lord's Prayer begins like a conversation with the Father, which broke years of custom and tradition, so let's approach God as our Divine Parent today. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus identifies with us as fellow members of God's family. He prays for us and as one of us. Spend some time praying together as a family unit as well as on your own for each member of your family. What is your family tree like? Are there members God has placed in your life in love, if not in blood? Thank God that God gives us the gift of community and "family," and that we are free to speak to God as family, too.

Day 10 Feb 24: Magnify God—Revelation 4 1-2; 6-11

Additional Scriptures: Psalm 145

Spend some time today simply in worship and reverence for who God is and what God is doing. Worship by praying together the words from Rev. 4: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come. ... You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For You created all things, and they exist because You created what You pleased" (vv. 8, 11). Think of some attributes of God you can worship and write lines of praise to God. Spend time in silent worship, as well, letting God put God's word in your heart.

Day 11 Feb 25: Putting on God's armor —Ephesians 6:14-18

Additional Scriptures: 1 Peter 4:12-13 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

God's Word gives us all the tools we need to withstand temptation and to shine as a light in a dark world. Think about different hardships you face daily that putting on the armor of God would help. Ask God specifically to put each piece on you as you go about your day. The darkness of the world can be overwhelming at times. How can God's armor protect you against feeling overcome with sin and death? Intercede for those suffering around you.

Day 12 Feb 26: Loaves and fish —Matthew 14:13-21

God grants the ability to provide for the needy around us, if we look, listen and are obedient to God's leading. Ask God to fill you with compassion for the needs of the multitudes, whether healing, provision, wisdom, direction, or forgiveness. Pray for the people of God to be moved to generosity, bringing their resources to Jesus to participate in God's miraculous provision for others.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Feb 27: SABBATH



Day 13 Feb 28: Prayer for the whole world —Hebrews 4:12-16

Interceding for the entire world seems overwhelming, unless we begin locally, then pray for our country, and finally focus on all of creation. Ask God to give you God's eyes to see things the way God sees them. Ask God to show you areas in your own life, community, and the world that you should pray for.

Day 14 Feb 29: Ministers of reconciliation —2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Additional Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Ephesians 4:32 Hebrews 12:14 Colossians 1:21-23

We are called to be peacemakers and to reconcile the world to Christ, so let's encourage one another in that work. Ask God to reconcile your relationship, to reveal any areas in your life that prevent you from being at your best, and to make you whole as you approach God with no barriers. Pray for your family, society, and world to experience God's love as you serve as a minister of reconciliation.

Day 15 March 1: Resist evil —1 John 4:1-4

Additional Scriptures: 1 Peter 5:8-9 Luke 10:18-19 2 Corinthians 10:4

In confusing times with contradictory voices, it's hard to know what is and is not from God, so we must continually pray and be in God's Word. Evil and darkness are in the world, and we must stand against them as Christians. Ask the Lord to give you discernment and the power to make the right choices. Pray for leadership over your community, schools, city, state, and country. Ask God to raise up godly leaders who are wise and lead with righteousness. Ask God to stop evil that is happening over which you have no control (e.g., crime, natural disasters), and pray you will find ways to help minister with righteousness in your community.

Day 16 March 2: Count your blessings —Matthew 6:33-34 Additional Scriptures: Psalm 1:1-3

To worry is second nature, but God's Word tells us to stay in God's presence, keep busy with God's work and delight yourself in God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal and break down those things that compete with God for your attention and foster anxiety in your soul. Ask God to rekindle a fresh hunger to abide in God's Word and presence, to buffer against the pressures of life. Invite God to reveal God's plans and promises for you so that you become preoccupied with the things most important to God.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Day 17 March 3: Exalt the Lord—Job 36:22-26

Additional Scriptures: Psalm 34:3 Proverbs 21:30 Psalm 75:6-7 Philippians 2:8-10



Spend time in worship today individually or with family/friends, and keep a song of praise in your heart. Pray for spiritual discernment about the personal strengths, gifts, or experiences that can become idols and impair your perspective of God's sovereignty. Take authority over negative thoughts and lies from the enemy that contradict the truth of God's Word and God's promises. Confess them to God and pray for deliverance. Ask God for a fresh revelation of God's grandeur to eclipse any problems or anxiety you are facing.

Day 18 March 4: Pray for unity —1 Timothy 2:1-2

Additional Scripture: Proverbs 29:1-14 Matthew 20:26, John 17:21

Intercede for the leaders God has placed in your life, and ask God for peace, justice, and mercy to flow. Read John 17:21. Pray for unity among the church that brings alignment with God and intercede for our leaders. Pray that leaders' hearts would be united with Jesus in humility and wisdom (as in Matthew 20:26). Ask the Lord for peace, justice, and mercy to flow from our leaders always.

March 5: SABBATH

Day 19 March 6: Lift each other up —Philippians 4:19

Additional Scriptures: Acts 17:26-27 Acts 14:3 Philippians 4:7

Pray for your friends, loved ones, and members of the community daily, and ask God to reveal himself to each of them. Pray for daily revelation through the Scriptures, communion, and relationship with Christ, for you personally and for the body of believers collectively. Pray that the emotional, spiritual, mental, and physical needs of people around you will be marked by healing, signs, and wonders from the Lord. Ask God to make you a steward of God's power. As you spend time with Jesus, ask Him to bring joy, peace, and contentment into our communities and churches.

Day 20 March 7: Let God in —Revelation 3:19-20

Additional Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 7:10, Romans 2:4 1 John 1:9

We must submit ourselves to God's correction to enter into a deeper relationship with God. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas of disconnection, rebellion, willful sin or pride in your heart. The Spirit will lead toward grace and freedom, not shame or condemnation. Express your desire for deeper intimacy with Jesus. Open the door to His presence in your life, and move toward God who, in kindness, has not turned from you.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL SCHEDULE

Day 21 March 8: A new creation —2 Corinthians 5:17-18

Additional Scriptures: Galatians 5:13-18 Galatians 5:22-23

Prayer transforms our lives and—with our actions—makes us vessels of God's work on Earth, so let's allow God to use us. By faith, embrace your identity as a new creation. The old is gone, and you are now new. Listen for the Holy Spirit's promptings toward patience, humility, love, faith, and joy. In these days, where strife and division dominate, ask the Spirit to give you power, courage, and gospel-infused speech so that you might clearly proclaim the gospel to whomever you are led. Think of ways that, as a new creation with the help of God, you would like to be able to do.

Day 22: Thank you for praying together!!

AMEN: As we wrap up 21 Days of "Drawing Closer to God" through Prayer and Fasting, let's take our renewed focus on God's provision and the Holy Spirit's power into the rest of our year.

Scripture: Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. —Philippians 4:8.

Thank You: For joining with us in adoration, supplication, confession, thanksgiving, and praise for our great God the past 21 days. Going forward into the rest of 2024, we hope you will make the effort to continue in prayer with your family and that the conversations and activities that have sparked from this guide have been a holy time of growth and love. May you feel the deep love of God, the guidance from Jesus, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in everything you do.



BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

1. THE DISCIPLES FAST

Fasting to break addictions. [Matthew 17:20-21](#)

2. THE EZRA FAST

Fasting to solve problems and seek protection. Ezra 8:21-23

3. THE SAMUEL FAST

Fasting to win people to Christ and petition God to pour Himself out on Mankind. 1 Samuel 7:1-8

4. THE ELIJAH FAST

Fasting to break every yoke. 1 Kings 19:2-18

5. THE WIDOW'S FAST

Fasting so that others' needs will be met. 1 Kings 17:12

6. THE SAINT PAUL FAST

Fasting for wisdom and insight from God. Acts 9:9-19

7. THE DANIEL FAST

Fasting for good health and obedience towards God. Daniel 1:12-20



BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FASTING

8. THE JOHN THE BAPTIST FAST

Fasting for a stronger testimony and influence. Matthew 3, Luke 1 :159.

THE ESTHER FAST

Fasting for protection from the evil one. Esther 4:16



ADDITIONAL FASTING IDEAS

Option #1: Abstain from all foods and drinks EXCEPT WATER. Focus: For wisdom and insight from God. (St. Paul Fast)

Option # 2: Fruits and Vegetables Only. Focus: For good health and obedience towards God. (Daniel Fast)

Option #3: Abstain from all sodas and sweets; Natural sweeteners and fruits are okay. Focus: To solve problems and seek protection from the evil one. (Ezra Fasts)

Option #4: Abstain from all types of fried foods and bread. Focus: To win people to Christ; Fasting so that others' needs will be met; for stronger testimony and influence. (Samuel, Widows , and John the Baptist Fasts)

Option #5: Abstain from meats and sweets. Focus: Fasting to break addictions and every yoke. (Disciples and Elijah Fasts)

Option #6: Abstain from all Social-media platforms (Streaming Worship is permitted)



HEALTHY FOODS TO TRY

WHOLE GRAINS: Brown rice, barley, black rice, rolled oats, popcorn, quinoa, millet, farro.

LEGUMES: Beans (lima, northern, garbanzo, pinto, red, black, kidney, navy, peas, lentils, black-eyed peas, etc.)

NUTS: Almonds, cashews, pecans, peanuts, walnuts, etc.

FRUITS: Apples, apricots, avocado, applesauce, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, currants, dates, figs, grapefruit, grapes, guava, honeydew melon, nectarines, kiwi, lemons, limes, mangos, Mandarin oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapples, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangerines, watermelon.

VEGETABLES: Artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chili peppers, collard greens, corn, cucumbers, dandelion greens, eggplant, endive, garlic, ginger root, green beans, kale, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsley, peas,



HEALTHY FOODS TO TRY

potatoes, peppers (bell, sweet or hot), pumpkin, radishes, rutabagas, scallions, spinach, sprouts, squash (yellow/summer, zucchini, acorn, spaghetti, etc.), sweet potato, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, wax beans, yams.



LIQUIDS: Spring water; distilled water
100% all-natural fruit juices; 100% all-natural vegetable juices.

OILS: Olive Oil; sesame oil; grape seed oil;

SALAD DRESSINGS: Homemade vinaigrette using vinegar, olive oil, and herbs; homemade French, Italian, Ranch, etc.

SWEETENERS: Honey, real maple syrup, organic agave nectar, organic sucanat (whole cane sugar).

PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY INFORMATION



Monday Morning Meditation Mondays @ 10:00 AM

DIAL IN: 605 472 5520 ACCESS CODE: 989 604

Noon Day Bible Study Wednesdays @ 12 :00 PM

**MEETING ID: 822 2751 6189 PASSCODE: 511 118
DIAL IN: (646) 558 8656 PARTICIPANT ID: HIT "#"**

Evening Bible Study Wednesdays @ 6:00 PM

**MEETING ID: 8492884 0482 PASSCODE: 196 583
DIAL IN: (646) 558 8656 PARTICIPANT ID: HIT "#"**



2024 MCBC FASTING COVENANT

“So, we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.” —Ezra 8:23

I believe that God is the only answer to my prayer and that fasting will draw me close to God.

Therefore, God being my strength and grace being my basis, I commit myself to the MCBC2024 Fast.

2024

THE YEAR OF DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD

