

YOUR PRAYER

Prayer and Fasting for the Georges River

WHY?

Why do Christians Fast?

Many people fast for many reasons. From religious duty to political protests to weight-loss, fasting is a common practice for many people. But why do Christians fast?

We fast because we want more of God; more of his presence, his heart, his word. When we fast we are making a powerful declaration that God means more to us than our comfort. We are worshipping him with our spirit, soul and body when we choose to engage in a fast. Fasting is always sacrificial and costly. In John Piper's words: "Ultimately, we fast simply because we want God more than we want anything this world has to offer us."

A fast is not just a turning from something dear to us; it is also a turning to God. We choose to be more intentional and intensive with our prayer and worship during a fast. We take the time we would be eating, or on social media, or drinking coffee and we use that time to seek God.

Why are we fasting?

We are praying and fasting for The Georges River. Purposefully shaping a season around seeing what God is wanting to transform in our Georges River Community. The prayer and fasting will prompt us and lead us to lean in further to hear God's heart for the people at our work, school, shops, streets and cities.

We are committing to this fast because we are committed to our community and the transformative work that God has planned to do through us. We believe that as we fast God will give us his heart for the community, and will show us, individually and collectively, how he is specifically calling us to be agents of transformation along the Georges River. So we trust that God is going to speak clearly to you through this time and we urge you to record what he is speaking and share it with the church.

HOW?

There are many ways to fast, and the way you engage in this fast will depend on how God leads you.

- A very common and popular fast is the Daniel Fast which is a restrictive diet; essentially raw vegan. See more information here: <https://ultimatedanielfast.com/ultimate-daniel-fast-food-guidelines/>.
- You may just give up one particular part of your diet, e.g. meat or coffee or sugar.
- You may choose to give up something else such as television or social media.
- Trade a normal habit in the day for prayer for example dessert, watching tv after dinner. This is a great one for families!

However you choose to engage in this fast the most important thing is that your fast is sacrificial (fasting is a costly endeavour) and that you accompany the fast with intentional and intensive prayer and worship.

WHEN?

We are going to be engaging in this two week fast as a whole church family. **The fast will begin on Monday 29 July and finish with a BREAKfast together on Sunday 11 August.**

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
29 Prayer + fasting begins!	30	31	1	2	3	4 Church services - chance to share!
Life Groups						
5	6	7 Prayer + Worship Gathering 7:30pm	8	9	10	11 BREAKfast at 8:30am before church

WHO?

We are encouraging everyone who calls our church home to consider how they can be a part of this intentional time of prayer. We would love to see all generations get involved, and see this as a wonderful discipleship shaping opportunity for those with children.

Families can do this together. When kids are involved, you should discuss with them what you will fast from, as it is important that our kids do not feel forced, but choose to do this because they understand the heart behind it. Go on this journey together, but it can look different. For example, the parent might go off sugar, but the kids only don't have dessert. Encourage them that they are an important part of our church and therefore it's vital that we hear what God is saying to them. If your kids do not end up fasting, you can still create intentional prayer times together using the experiences below.

WHAT?

You can shape your prayers during these two weeks around these prompts:

- Show me your heart for the Georges River and its people.
- How do you want to see your kingdom come through us?
- How can I/we be your vessel? Show me how you want me/us to be a part of what you are doing.

Furthermore, here are some prayer experiences that you can do during the two weeks. They can be done by yourself or with others, like your kids or friends:

1. Develop a Breathe Prayer

Part of the beauty in fasting is you are reminded of prayer constantly throughout your normal day routine.

Close your eyes, and take a couple of deep breathes and welcome Jesus. Picture Jesus calling you by name and asking you, 'What do you want?'. Write your answer down, eg to know my calling, to know your heart for us). Then, select the name that you are most comfortable calling God, or a name of His that matches what your prayer is. Combine the two. Lord, show me your heart. As you breathe in you say God's name, as you breathe out you say your prayer. This is your breathe prayer.

2. Map

Type in "Georges River" into google maps and zoom in. You can print it off and stick it up at work, the fridge, or the back of the toilet door! Take the time to see all the different suburbs on the river. If you are doing this with kids, you might want to show where you are currently living, where our church is located, and where Chipping Norton is. Pick a suburb and pray for those who live there. Let Holy Spirit guide you for what you pray for those people.

3. Prayer Walk

Go walking in Chipping Norton, Peakhurst or any suburb on the Georges River. Try find the river! Pray as

you walk. Ask Jesus to speak and pray for the people and businesses you pass. Before you go, you can even ask God to give you an encouraging word/prophecy for someone and write on a piece of paper. When you feel led, put it in someone's letter box.

4. Activation and Heart Art

One of our River Kids favourites! Go through this activation and record what Jesus says in words or a picture (heart art).

Imagine Jesus walking with you. He is taking your hand and walking in Chipping Norton. Picture where you are (does not matter if you have never been). Where does Jesus take you? Who do you meet?

Email and/or bring to life group or church what God shared with you.

5. Lives Made Whole

Brainstorm in a journal (or on paper if you are doing it with others) all the ways Jesus changes our WHOLE lives (examples might be gives us hope, helps us deal with anger, helps us be good friends, healing to addictions etc). Once you feel ready, stop and pray for some that stand out to you. Mark which ones stand out to you. Ask Jesus to highlight what our church might be called to particularly help with.