

Dear Parents,

Elementary Kids, JHigh, and High School are joining our church-wide FAST!

It will run from January 7-28. I wanted to address the church-wide fast in terms of your kids and teens (1st – 12th grades). We will be studying the meaning of fasting and looking at stories from God's Word through the month of January. Kids and Teens are great candidates for participating in the fast.

Fasting simply means "going without." Spiritual fasting is "going without so that we can be filled within by God's Spirit." Because children are young and their bodies require a lot of good nutrients to function properly, we don't recommend that children fast meals. However, we do highly recommend that you discuss with your son or daughter what they could fast that would qualify as "going without." This could be candy, fast food, video games, a favorite toy, cell phone, social media, TV, etc. The key is, the item they choose to go without is important to them. It needs to be something that they think about every day or often enough to desire it.

Personal Story. Matt and I encouraged our own children/teenagers to stop and say a quick prayer each time they are reminded of what they have given up. We didn't expect them to spend extended time in prayer each day, like perhaps adults do, but rather to allow the desire for that item to bring to their mind their need for God. At the end of the fast, we always celebrated as a family by usually "feasting" on what we had given up! This helped our sons and daughters to look forward to the return of the item and to appreciate its presence in their daily life!

Sunday FASTING Teaching Series for 1st-12th Grades:

Theme: FASTING: Hungry on Purpose for God!

Kidropolis (Grades 1-4)

We will be providing a small Prayer Journal for this series and guiding the children each Sunday through the Journal activity beginning with the model of Jesus fasting in Matthew 4:1-4. On the last three Sundays, we will look at prophets that had the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting in their lives AND see that God spoke to them! We encourage the kids to take the journals home and continue the journey of fasting and prayer with their families. Have your child bring his or her journal and Bible each Sunday.

56 (Pre-teen Ministry | Grades 5-6)

56 Challenge - 12 weeks in the book of Mark using their Devotional Life Journal at home and combining that with the 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer Logs in their Life Journal. Should be life changing! We will be using the "Law of the Rubber Band" and Romans 12:2, "Be Transformed – the Responsibility of a Follower of Jesus." This law of growth happens only when there is tension between who you are and who you want to be. A vital component to spiritual growth! Kids need to bring their Life Journals each Sunday. (Think: PBJ – Pencil, Bible, Journal)

Elevate (JHigh Ministry | Grades 7-8)

JHigh will be focusing on four stories that lay the groundwork for prayer and fasting as a spiritual discipline in their lives. Each JHigher will be challenged to stretch and grow in their faith by choosing to fast something that potentially distracts them from Jesus. Go HUNGRY for Jesus! Students need to bring their Life Journals each Sunday. (Think: PBJ – Pencil, Bible, Journal)

January 7 – Jesus - “Hungry Body; Well fed Soul” Matt. 4:1-4
14 – Esther - “Seeking God’s Favor” Esther 4:4-16
21 – David – “Asking for God’s Mercy” 2 Samuel 12:15-17
28 – Disciples – “Preparation for Ministry” Mark 9:14-29

Solid Rock (High School | Grades 9-12)

High School will be walking through the fast with the adults. Pastor Jordan will be teaching on prayer and fasting in the main services. Encourage your student to bring their Life Journal and take notes. Each Wednesday, we would like to see one or two of our high schoolers share their experience with the rest of the youth. As high schoolers get older, they are ready to take on a more serious view of fasting. Discuss with your teen what God is calling them to sacrificially give up in order to be filled by the spirit of God. It may be a turning point in their walk with Christ!

Youth join church-wide Prayer Meeting on Wednesday, January 24
Church-wide “Break the Fast” in 8:45/10:30 Services on January 28

For RECALIBRATE | 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting info: newportmesa.org/recalibrate/

If I can be of any further help to you, please feel free to contact me at snoble@newportmesa.org

Partnering in leading our children and youth into a deeper relationship with Jesus!

Sharon Noble
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