
Wisdom and Power for Mission: Participation in God's redemptive restoration of the world.

Why pray and fast?

FPC mission committee chairs along with Prayer Committee desire to lead our congregation in seeking the Lord's direction and power for local and global mission in and through First Presbyterian Church. We desire to revive our gospel HERITAGE, renew our gospel HOPE, and have the gospel change our HEARTS as we corporately pray for mercy for faithful participation in God's mission of redemptive restoration.

Where will we pray?

You can pray wherever is easiest for you (in your home, office, classroom, car, etc.) but we encourage you to join your FPC family in prayer any time from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in Westminster Hall. We will have a guided time of prayer together and hope to have 30-50 covenant partners join us to pray in Westminster Hall!

How will we pray and fast?

This fast is an opportunity to respond to God's grace as God's people by humbling ourselves before the Lord and prioritizing our hunger for the Kingdom of God over the hungers of our lives and culture. Jesus said "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness..." (Matthew 5:6) and "Seek first the Kingdom of God..." (Matthew 6:33) Our prayer and fasting will orient our hungers toward righteousness as we focus on petitioning the Lord for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done in the local and global missions of FPC as it is in Heaven. We will do this by abstaining for 24 hours from something we hunger for more than the kingdom of God: food, email, social media, news or whatever the Lord leads you to fast from. When we experience hunger for our personal and cultural priorities, we will petition the King for His Kingdom to come and replace our normal hunger and priorities with a hunger for the King and Kingdom priorities as we petition for His mercy.

We hope you will commit to fast for 24 hours, praying often, and we encourage you to join us in Westminster Hall for corporate prayer between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. if you are able to.

What does God's Word have to say about fasting?

Here are a few appropriate examples:

- Jesus offers both an expectation and reward for prayer and fasting in **Matthew 6:5-15**.
- Through history, God's people have been impacted by the devastation of the city and culture of where they lived. God's people have turned to God through fasting and prayer to petition the Lord for mercy, wisdom, provision, and direction for restoring what had been ruined. See especially **Nehemiah 1:3-4 & Ezra 9:4-5**.
- Read the story of **Jonah** and note the role of fasting and prayer in Jonah returning back to God's mission and the repentance of the citizens of Nineveh.
- God's people mourned the state of the world by fasting (**Esther 4:3**) as the Lord was raising up someone who would lead "at such a time as this" (**Esther 4:14-17**). We will mourn the state of our world and make ourselves available for "such a time as this!"
- The early Church fasted and prayer for mission: **Acts 13:23**
- Anna worshipped the Lord in fasting: **Luke 2:37**

- The prophet Isaiah speaks of true fasting the Lord desires from his people and the healing arising from depending on the Lord in these ways. May God's grace work God's priorities into our congregation!

Isaiah 58:5-12

Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord?

⁶ "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

⁸ Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

¹⁰ if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

¹¹ And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

¹² And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

Let us PRAY!

Structured after Nehemiah's prayer in Nehemiah 1:4-11 after he heard of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.

- **Begin in worship by focusing on the character of God:** Spend time focusing your hearts through worshipping the Lord for His character, thanking Him for who He is, how you have seen His character through His work, and for the beauty/majesty of His character.
- **Confession to God:** When we focus on God's goodness, love, holiness, light, justice, and righteousness, we see our need to confess our sins, both personally and corporately. Take time to confess your sins personally, and to confess the sins of our church (and the Church in the world). Note in Nehemiah how he states the consequences of his sin and the sin of God's people. Be honest with your need and the need for our Church to receive the steadfast love of the Lord; His grace, mercy, and forgiveness displayed in His covenant love!
- **Call on the Covenant promises of God:** Ask the Lord to make real His covenant promises for you, our church, city, and the countries of the world. Pray for His grace to flow in the streets of our neighborhoods to the nations of the world. Ask for His mercy to flow through us, His Spirit to blow through us, and His love to show through all we do!

**Specific Prayers for participation in God's mission of redemptive restoration
in our church, neighborhoods, and nations (a guide, not a script... follow the Spirit's lead!):**

The City

- Wisdom for our Mayor, city council, and civic leaders and for shalom through their leadership.
- San Antonio Schools - safety for students, teachers, and staff as well as God honoring, character building, required literature in public schools and private schools.
- Parents and mentors to pour into children to raise up a generation of youth who want to follow Jesus in a real way. Specifically for mentors at Healy Murphy and Washington Elementary.
- Marriages in San Antonio to be strengthened by Jesus and His design for marriage.
- Care for and ministering to divorced people that they might know Jesus, His redemption, and His love.
- For the Church in the city to be educated, equipped, and empowered to love and serve the mentally ill, homeless, and addicted in our city.
- More prayer warriors in the churches in San Antonio.
- Unity in the body of Christ within San Antonio – may Christ's Body build Christ's kingdom in unity!

Global

- More long-term missionaries in the field – partnering with a mission agency that puts Jesus first and understands the culture of the people being served.
- A growing awareness in our congregation of God's work across nations and cultures in our city and among the nations as we are deepened in desire to participate in God's global mission. The Allen family, FPC Covenant Partners, sent to China to participate in mission through teaching.
- For the global Church to have a faithful response to the refugee crisis and for individuals and families fleeing conflict, desperate poverty, and violence for asylum.
- New opportunities to send Covenant Partners on short term mission trips, especially those going on a trip for the first time, as we seek to cultivate partnerships with global ministry partners.
- Protection for mission partners who work in dangerous areas and are threatened for their witness:
 - Rev. Farouk Hammo in Iraq with the Outreach Foundation
 - Pam in the Middle East with Antioch Partners
 - Ashraf Abdou with YWAM in Spain and North Africa
 - Chris McReynolds with AMO in Mexico
- Particular protection for new followers of Jesus in the Muslim world who pay a price for their decision to accept Christ into their lives as well as for other Christians suffering persecution around the world.
- Evidence that changed hearts among individual believers begin to bear fruit in changed cultures.
- For wisdom among our WMC and LMC committee members and Spirit power in our congregation.

Local

- For FPC to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we meet and establish relationships with our homeless neighbors at our monthly Loaves and Fishes and weekly Bible studies in partnership with FBI.
- For neglected, abused, and unloved teen moms in our neighborhood to see the unconditional love of Christ through their Young Lives mentors. Also for FPC to serve schools in our neighborhood and their children, especially Healy Murphy and Washington Elementary. May the Lord raise up laborers!
- Through South Texas Alliance and churches, including FPC, the 2,900 foster children in Bexar County will receive the care they need, & the 1,300 children waiting for adoption will find a Christian home.
- Pray that the 49,000 grandparents raising grandchildren in our county will receive much-needed support and care from churches like ours.
- That our poor and homeless neighbors will be served, cared for, and feel the love of Christ through partners such as Haven for Hope, CAM, SA Christian Dental Clinic, Chrysalis Ministry, FBI, and others.
- That churches will learn how to care for the 1 in 5 families in our city that have someone with a mental illness through our partner, NAMI, and the Pathways to Hope Conference.
- For our FPC family to love and serve our downtown neighbors faithfully.
- For revival of FPC and the Church in San Antonio, that we may Love the Lord and our neighbors faithfully.