



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

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Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Drew Morelock,

Pastor David



Biblical Fasting: Why, When, How, and How Not to Fast

The concept of fasting is pervasive in the Bible. The practice of fasting, for multiple reasons, was well known to people in the ancient world—from prophets and priests to princes and paupers. A discipline intentionally engaged in by millions of people throughout the centuries, it is still practiced today.

The practice of refraining from eating or drastically reducing our food intake for a certain amount of time can focus our thoughts and sharpen our responses to certain situations. When we break from our regular routines of eating at certain times of the day, we allow our bodies to assist our minds in understanding that, for a time, we are going to be denying ourselves one thing in the interest of pursuing or considering another, typically higher, question or goal.

Why Should We Fast?

Why do people fast? While in the modern world, fasting has become popular for weight loss and other purported health benefits, individuals and people groups in ancient times fasted to show their devotion to their deity, to demonstrate the depth of their sorrow over a sin or some situation in their lives, or to show their commitment to a certain cause—among other reasons.

Continued page 2.

“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” Walt Disney

“Don’t sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.” Madam C.J. Walker

Reminders

September 1st
Communion Sunday

September 2nd
Church Office Closed
Labor Day

September 4th
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir Practice – 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir Practice – 6:30 p.m.

September 5th
T.O.P.S.
Meals-On-Wheels Deliveries

September 8th
Sunday School Begins
PK-6 – After Children’s Message
Jr/Sr High – 10:30 a.m.

**Worship Assistants are needed for
September 29th

** Fellowship Volunteers needed
sign-up in Fellowship Hall

Biblical Fasting - Continued from page 1.

Author, editor, and Professor Joe Carter has collected ten reasons for biblical fasting¹:

1. To strengthen prayer (e.g., see Ezra 8:23)
2. To seek God’s guidance (e.g., see Judges 20:26)
3. To express grief (e.g., see 1 Samuel 31:13)
4. To seek deliverance or protection (e.g., see 2 Chronicles 20:3 – 4)
5. To express repentance and a return to God (e.g., see 1 Samuel 7:6)
6. To humble oneself before God (e.g., see 1 Kings 21:27 – 29)
7. To express concern for the work of God (e.g., see Nehemiah 1:3 – 4)
8. To minister to the needs of others (e.g., see Isaiah 58:3 – 7)
9. To overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God (e.g., see Matthew 4:1 – 11)
10. To express love and worship for God (e.g., see Luke 2:37)

Christians who want to pursue a fast will benefit from studying other instances in the Bible where fasting was practiced. To pursue this kind of topical study, a simple internet search will bring up many different resources.

But the prophet Isaiah provides us with perhaps the clearest explanation and understanding of fasting in the Bible. Portions of Isaiah 58 (emphases mine) will serve as a framework for studying why, how, when, and why Christians today should pursue fasting:

“Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins. For day after day, they **seek me** out; they seem eager to know **my ways** as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They **ask me** for just decisions and **seem eager for God to come near them.** Isaiah 58:1–2

Here we see that fasting is good for multiple reasons: to seek God out; to know his ways; to pursue answers to decisions that are coming into play in one’s life; and to intentionally draw closer to him. All of these reasons are wonderful goals to pursue for individuals whose hearts are right and whose motivations are pure. Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Continued page 8.

The Fifteenth Sunday After
Pentecost

Matthew 6:31-34
September 1, 2024



Volunteers Needed



LAST PERSON LEAVING
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS
AND LOCK DOORS

First United Methodist Church
Please wear your name tag on Sunday mornings



Church Ad Board Members

- Michelle Morelock - Chair*
- Mary Peterson - Secretary*
- Margaret Brady - Vice Chair & Trustee*
- Gary Milstead - Trustee*
- Roger Jones - SPRC*
- Robin Hensen - Finance*
- Dave Lashier - Treasurer*
- Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference*
- Connie Anderson - Memorials*
- Linda Haldane - Membership*
- David Clark - Pastor*

Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High Sunday School – Starting September 8th. PK-6 during service, Jr/Sr High 10:30 a.m.**

****Choir – Sept. 4th, 5:30 pm**

****Bell Choir – Sept. 4th, 6:30 pm.**

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Monday

9:00-11:00

12:00-3:00

Tuesday

9:00-11:00

12:00-3:00

Wednesday

CLOSED

Thursday

9:00-11:00

12:00-3:00

Friday

9:00-11:00

12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



Who was eaten by dogs?

- a) Ahaz
- b) Saul
- c) Jezebel
- d) Ahab

Which man slayed more people in his death than he did in his entire life?

- a) Samson
- b) Cain
- c) Joab
- d) Abihu

Who said that Lazarus will have an odor?

- a) Mary
- b) Martha
- c) Jesus
- d) Peter

Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.



1st – Sandy Bailey, Charles Hall, Kris & Jodi Anderzhon

2nd – Bob Burchett

3rd – Ed Bonefas, Dave Lashier, September McElroy

4th – Jim Brownlee

5th – Alex McIntosh

6th – Bruce Johnson

7th – Dixie Major

****See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to office@shen.church**

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new look at
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: Jesus tells us to consider the lilies, the birds of the air, and to not worry.

People: We are overly busy and exhausted with worry.

L: God calls you the Beloved. You are valuable.

P: God, give us the courage to trust.

L: God will provide all things.

P: God, help us to seek you first.

"Set Your Hearts"

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:31-34

Songs

Fairest Lord Jesus #189

Beautiful Things (screens)

As the Deer #2025

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship – 75

On-Line Worship – 17

Our Mission:

"Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love."

Our Vision:

"We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world."

**Answers for August 25th are c) Elijah b) Midians a) Pride of heart
Quiz hints – Q1) 2Kings Q2) Judges Q3) John**



September 2024

Spaghetti Sauce, Pasta (all varieties), Green Beans, Corn, Peas, Mandarin Oranges & Pineapple, Microwave popcorn, Ketchup, Mustard, any type of spices, Soup (any kind including chunky), Macaroni & Cheese, Jelly, Toilet Paper, Shampoo.

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Practices for Bell & Chancel Choirs will start September 4th. New members are always welcome and encouraged to join. Join the fun!

Bell & Chancel Choir
Practice, September 4th



Chancel Choir - 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir - 6:30 p.m.

The church elevator needs some state-mandated repairs. The repairs are costly but the elevator is also a necessity and vital for members of the congregation. If you would like to donate to help with the cost of the repairs you may drop your donation in the offering box or bring it to the office. Please make sure to indicate on your donation that it is for the elevator fund.





This year we will have a Confirmation program for students in 7th or 8th grade. We will have a parent meeting on Sunday, September 22 (time to be determined) and will begin on October 6. If you have any questions or would like to get your student signed up, please contact Pastor David.



This event is open to the public at the New Beginnings Church this Friday, September 6th.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday
to Deliver Meals**

**Sign-Up Sheet is on the
Welcome Center Counter**

Biblical Fasting - Continued from page 2.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30).

God desires that his people come to him in all situations to seek out his guidance and direction. He cares for us in all situations, because he knows us better than we know ourselves. David spoke the following truth in Psalm 139: "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (v. 16). Since this is the case, there's no better reason for Christians to turn to God for direction. And during these periods in our lives, fasting can sharpen the urgency and intensity of that search.

How Should We Fast?

The first imperative in deciding to fast is that we do so out of a sincere desire to seek God's guidance and direction. Fasting for the sake of making a show in front of others, or fasting to ask God for things that are clearly outside of his will, is an exercise in futility. More on that in a minute.

First, let's look at the physical aspects of fasting. Fasting comes in different forms and is done in different ways. The most important factors to consider in starting a fasting regimen include the following:

Your Personal Reasons for Pursuing a Fast.

If you're on the cusp of a major life change, are grieving the loss of a certain individual or period in your life, or are seeking answers from God for an upcoming decision, the reasons you choose to fast are unique to you. Consulting with others about their experiences can be instructive, but your choice to fast and the reasons for your fast are unique to your situation.

The Method of Fasting You Want to Pursue.

Fasting doesn't necessarily involve a complete cessation of eating; it can be done by cutting down the number of calories you ingest for a certain period of time as well. For many people, however, the time and focus saved on preparing and eating food work well to change their focus to the issue at hand. Still, if you try a complete fast and find that you're distracted by the lack of food, consider simply cutting your caloric intake back drastically and eat small amounts of food during your fast. Experts recommend 500 calories per day for women, and 600 calories per day for men.

The Duration of the Fast.

Fasting can be done on a daily, weekly, or annual basis. Many people who choose to fast do so intermittently, such as during a portion of their workday, to focus on seeking God for an hour or two, and then they go back to a regular eating schedule. Others find benefits in fasting during a certain time of the

month or year to pursue guidance and direction from God. Again, the duration and length of your fast are personal decisions only you can make.

The Time You Have to Focus.

Fasting requires intense focus on the reasons for your fast and on listening to God during this period of time. You'll want to clear your calendar of extraneous activities so you can calm your heart and mind as you seek God's face. Ideally, setting aside a specific time in your calendar to focus on prayer and study during your period of fasting will help. Spending an overnight in a location where you (or your group, if you're fasting with others) can get away from city lights and noise or the distractions of family obligations can increase the effectiveness of the fast.

Your Physical Space.

Selecting the right physical space is important for fasting. To reduce your temptation to eat and to sharpen your focus during your fast, consider setting aside space in your home or another familiar space for prayer and meditation. While you're fasting, move to that space to pray during the times you would normally be eating. If you can, during your typical mealtimes, move out of your food-related context by taking a walk, going for a drive, or sitting outdoors.

Your Own Personal Health.

While individuals in the Bible fasted for extended periods of time (see Matthew 4), before you fast for any period longer than twenty-four hours, please consult your doctor. Fasting for a longer period of time can lead to dehydration and have other detrimental health effects, especially if you suffer from conditions such as diabetes that may require you to eat at certain times and monitor your body's sugar levels. If during your fast you start to feel ill, stop fasting and ease back into eating.

Breaking your fast.

Experts recommend coming out of a period of fasting, not by feasting, but by starting slowly and being disciplined to eat only regular portions. While you may be hungry and inclined to overindulge after a fast, your goal should be to return to a normal eating pattern.

Remember, nowhere in Scripture are individuals encouraged to fast to the detriment of their health. When individuals and people groups called for fasting, it was typically for a specific period of time with a well-defined starting and ending point.

Now let's get back to the condition of your heart before you begin the fast. Again, let's look at Isaiah 58 as we consider this important factor:

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ Isaiah 58:3

This implies that the people who engaged in the fast did so for a certain period of time for a certain personal reason. At this point in the conversation, perhaps they had completed their fast and were frustrated with the results: they had gone into their fast period with a certain goal in mind, and their goals were not accomplished. Even though they had correctly pursued the “how” of the fast, their fast didn’t have its intended effect.

Before you start your fast, review the list above several times and dig deeply to understand your motivations. Be clear on what you’re fasting for, and why, before you decide on how.

How Not to Fast

The prophet Isaiah instructs his readers about pursuing a fast while one’s heart is not in the right place (again, emphases mine):

“Yet **on the day of your fasting, you do as you please** and exploit all your workers. **Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife**, and in striking each other with wicked fists. **You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.** Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, **only a day** for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? **Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?** Isaiah 58:4–5

This passage speaks to the heart and practice of people who fast to put on a show or whose motivations are not pure. Fasting is done with open hearts and hands to receive guidance and direction from God, not as a tool to manipulate God into conforming his divine will to one person’s plans.

Isaiah calls out the individuals in question, relating God’s desire for authenticity to those who seek him.

Fasting as a Worldview

Finally, let’s explore the prophet Isaiah’s words regarding the practice of fasting, pursuing answers from God, or showing one’s remorse over a certain life situation. In this, Isaiah clarifies what God wants to see in our lives when we fast—namely, a sincere devotion to himself and others without self-imposed blinders for the situations around us.

Individuals who fast to seek answers to their questions can’t ignore the other dictates of the Bible or the situations around them where they are called to become the hands and feet of God in their circle of influence. In short, fasting is futile if we’re asking questions for which the answers lie outside the will of God.

In the following passages, Isaiah calls out the people for their refusal to act in ways that would truly reflect their devotion to God and his purposes in the world (emphases mine):

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Isaiah 58:6–7

But the chastising we read in Isaiah 58 does not come without hope and a promise—a promise that was as true for its initial hearers as it is for us today.

When we pursue the purposes of God in our hearts and our lives, we connect more closely to the heart of God. When we change our practices—literally, when we change what we do and why—and when we go beyond merely external fasting and understand more clearly how God wants us to live, we can expect to experience more of the following:

Then your light **will break forth like the dawn**, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then **you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.** “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, **then your light will rise in the darkness**, and your night will become like the noonday. **The LORD will guide you always**; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. **You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.** Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. Isaiah 58:8–12

Adapted from the senior editor, Mike Vander Klipp, with the Zondervan Bible Group. HarperCollins Christian Publishing. NIV Weekly Blog, All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, August 26, 2024.


YARD SALE
Fall City Wide Yard Sales,
Friday/Saturday
September 13th & 14th

Free Ad with donation of 3 or more food items for the local food pantry. Please call 712-246-3097 to set up a time to drop off food items or if you have any questions.

This week is photo number 5 in a series of unique pictures from all over the world. For some pictures, you may need to squint and then you will see what the picture represents, others you will see it right away. I have found these amazing and wanted to share them.

#5



This week you will need to squint about 85%



Begins On
September 8th

PK-6 After
Children's Message

Jr./Sr. High
10:30 a.m.



New Workgroups!

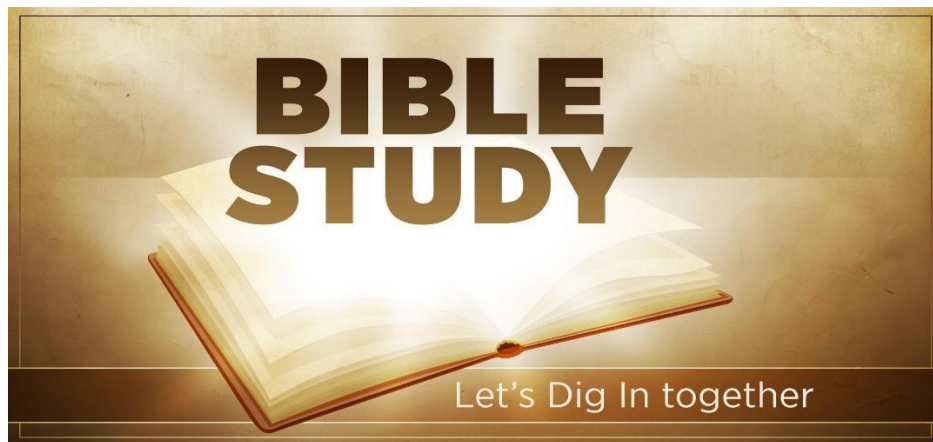
This year we as a church are leaning into three verbs: growing, connecting, and serving. Three new workgroups will form this fall that are great opportunities for you to grow, connect, and serve. These workgroups will learn, discern, design, and act on a "mini-experiment" that will help us to live into our missional values. The rhythm of these workgroups will be to gather in October to learn and discern, gather in November to design, and then together act on the "mini-experiment" following those two gatherings. We will then repeat this process in February and March. This means that you can come to one workgroup in October and November and decide if it is still a good fit for you. Then in February, you can try a different group. Or, you can stick with the one group for both the Fall and the Spring.

GROW
+
CONNECT
+
SERVE

Growing Young Workgroup: Connecting with and supporting children, youth, and families in new ways is a responsibility of the whole church. This workgroup is for both young and old who want to see young people discover and love our church. Together will help our congregation connect with young persons and families.

Congregational Care Workgroup: Developing new ways of fellowship, hospitality, and care. If you have the gift of visiting with folks, small talk, welcoming new people, and helping people feel like they belong and are connected, this workgroup is for you. Together we will help our congregation feel a sense of community.

Missional Workgroup: Listening to and discovering new ways of serving our community. If you are looking for a way to live your faith outside of our church walls, come join this workgroup. Together we will seek to love and serve our community.



Join Pastor David for Bible Study each Wednesday starting September 18th in Fellowship Hall. Bible Study will begin at 11:00 a.m. If you are interested in joining Pastor David for Bible Study but this time does not work for you, please contact Pastor David.

Bring Your Change to Make a Change

*Collected each Sunday after
the children's message*



“Each of you should GIVE what you have decided in YOUR HEART to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for GOD LOVES a cheerful GIVER.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The Noisy Offering is one more way to do ministry for those in need and teach your children the importance of giving and serving. Each Sunday a new opportunity for mission giving will take place after the Children's Message. Sunday School students will walk around the congregation, collecting your loose coins and currency in their colorful metal pails. This would be a good time to clean out the loose change from your pockets or purse. The money donated in September will go to the **Shenandoah Community Schools – School Nurses**.

GriefShare is a 13 week, Christ-centered biblical series that includes 30-minute videos, voluntary group discussions, and individual workbook study activities. You can join with other participants in finding useful tips, encouragement, fellowship, and hope in going through the grieving process.

When: Sundays, 2:00-4:00 p.m., September 8th through December 8, 2024

Where: Christ Point Baptist Church, 602 Maples St., Shenandoah, IA.

Contact: Marvin Freed, marvinfreed@yahoo.com, 712-246-9440.

Register: griefshare.org/findagroup

