

Fast The First (2023)

Prayer and fasting, as taught by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 6, are central practices in the lives of His disciples. Believers are called to implement regular fasting into their lives and relationships with the Lord. In the context of Matthew 6, just as believers are expected to pray daily and regularly give financially, so too are they to practice regular fasting:

“And **when you fast**, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But **when you fast**, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And **your Father who sees in secret will reward you.**” (Matthew 6:16-18 ESV)

While believers can and should regularly commit to fasting individually, it is also biblical and powerful to fast together in community with others. (Acts 13:2). At Joy Church Medford, we want to incorporate the spiritual practice of regular corporate fasting into the monthly and yearly rhythm of our church. For this reason, we are introducing, “**Fast the First!**”

Starting this year, we will be dedicating the first **Monday-Wednesday** of each month to corporate fasting. Whether you can participate for all three days, one day, or just one meal, we would encourage you to prayerfully consider the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the prompting of the Holy Spirit to join us in not only being a house of prayer but also a church community who fast regularly!

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14 ESV)

In addition to this and our regular rhythms of prayer, our church family also dedicates two extended periods of time a year to focused prayer and fasting. These are our 21 Days of Prayer in January & August. During these seasons of prayer, the dates for “Fast the First” may shift. Below you will find our 2023 calendar for corporate fasting!



2023 Dates: Monday - Wednesday

- January (16th-18th)
- February (6th-8th)
- March (6th-8th)
- April (3rd-5th)
- May (1st-3rd)
- June (5th-7th)
- July (3rd-5th)
- August (14th-16th)
- September (4th-6th)
- October (2nd-4th)
- November (6th-8th)
- December (4th-6th)