

Mount Pisgah African Methodist Episcopal Church
The Rev. Jay Broadnax, Pastor

LENTEN FASTING GUIDE

1. What is FASTING?

Fasting is refraining from fulfilling an appetite or desire for a specific time for a spiritual purpose. The point of fasting is to apply the time, energy, and attention that you would give to fulfilling the appetite to activities that will make your relationship with God stronger. Fasting is a way to empower the spiritual you to take authority over the physical and emotional you, and to open the door to the supernatural in your life.

Scripture readings about Fasting: Esther 4:16, Daniel 10:3, Jonah 3:5, Matthew 4:2 (Jesus fasted), Matthew 6:16-18

Scripture References for Corporate Fasting: 1 Samuel 7:5-6; Ezra 8:21-23; Nehemiah 9:1-3; Joel 2:15-16; Jonah 3:5-10; Acts 27:33-37

2. Fasting Goals: Fasting should be PURPOSEFUL. We should fast with both collective and personal goals in mind. We are asking people to FAST with the following Collective Goals in mind (not an exhaustive list).

- a) The growth of God's kingdom and the spreading of the gospel
- b) An end to the violence and killing in Philadelphia.
- c) A move toward justice and sanity in our nation
- d) The elevation of Philadelphia communities out of poverty.
- e) Transformation of The Criminal Justice System and an end to the warehousing of Black and Brown people.
- f) Equal access to adequately funded educations for ALL Pennsylvanians.
- g) Equal access to adequate health care for all.
- h) Cures and treatments for the afflictions that plague us.
- i) Increase for our church and the completion of our church projects.

Also consider some clear **Personal Goals** such as the need for direction, healing, financial breakthrough, personal and professional growth and/or restoration of relationships. Prepare spiritually by confessing your sins to God and asking forgiveness.

3. **HOW TO FAST:** Lenten fasting typically excludes Sunday, however, do not use Sunday as an opportunity for self-indulgence. You may end up defeating the purpose of the fast. Restrictions are eased on Sunday, but it is not healthy to just return to your pre-fast behaviors.

People may fast in a number of different ways during Lent.

a) Food Fast

1. **A 40 Day Daniel Fast** – See guidelines below:
2. **A 21 Day Straight Daniel Fast** (that INCLUDES Sundays)
3. **One Day Per Week Fast** (6 am – 6pm)
4. **A Skipped Meal Fast** – Skip one meal per day.

b) Lifestyle Fast

1. **A Social Media Fast** – refraining from social media during Lent or limiting it only to specific times.
2. **A Television Fast** – choosing not to watch TV during Lent.
3. **An Activity Fast** – not engaging in some usual activity or form of entertainment during Lent such as games on your phone.
4. **A Personal Spending Fast** – Determining not to spend money on “wants,” only on “needs” during Lent.
5. **A Negative Speaking Fast** – Determining to use only positive language for 40 days, even when giving constructive criticism.

Things to Keep In Mind

1. Pray often!
2. Do not be too legalistic! The point is not to show how strong or dedicated you are, but to increase your dependence on God and to give you a way to prioritize God in your life. If you blow it, just continue where you left off! Conquering the flesh is difficult, but God will give you the strength if you faint not!!
3. Please keep in mind that fasting is designed to be a sacrifice. If it is not a challenge, it does not require faith, and thus is not really fasting.

Food Guidelines for a DANIEL FAST

If you choose to do the Daniel Fast, you have chosen a fast that will give you a wonderful dietary BALANCE and help you to avoid some foods for a time that tend to cause health problems. It is so named because it mimics the diet that Daniel and his fellow Hebrews lived on, after which they were healthier than those who were on the king's diet (see Daniel 1:1-16). It will be a sacrifice, and an adjustment, particularly for those who tend to consume a lot of sugar, caffeine, and meat products. If you choose this fast, make sure that you incorporate the LEGUMES (for protein) and GRAINS (for carbohydrates). This Fast can be modified if medically necessary.

Foods You May Eat

Whole Grains: Brown Rice, Oats, Barley

Legumes: All peas, lentils, and beans

Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon

Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini, Veggie burgers

Liquids: Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices. You may also drink protein drinks. (In all, please read labels and watch for added sugar)

Others: Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts

Foods to Avoid

Meat, White Rice, Fried Foods, Caffeine, Carbonated Beverages, Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives, Dairy, Refined Sugar, Sugar Substitutes, Honey, Syrup, White Flour and All Products Using It, Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products

DRINK LOTS OF WATER