

21 DAYS

Prayer & Fasting



Santa Claus Christian Church
January 1-21, 2026

Our First Response

We want to welcome you into 21 days of prayer and fasting as a congregation. As we give the first fruits of our year we are believing that God will take us into a deeper relationship with him and give us a clearer vision of what is to come. Our hope is that this guide will help you begin to look forward to that time set aside for him.



Fasting and prayer are spiritual practices and disciplines which keep us in connection with our God. With intentional prayer and faithful steps, we believe that the presence of God will continue to change your life.

Pray

Before the day begins –

Before you go to bed –

Before you go to work or school-

Before you send a text-

Before you react-

Before you eat, drive, or travel-

Before and during -

In every situation–

Pray first & Pray Continually

Use this as an optional guide for your prayers. There is space each week for you to record your response. These can be signposts you review at the end of the journey to see how God beckoned, prompted, held us in our struggles and carried us along the way.

In addition to this there is a beautiful guided prayer and scripture resource called Lectio 365 and can be downloaded on the app store or online at <https://lectio365.com/>. This can be listened to morning, mid day, and evening as well!

*If God answered all of your prayers from last week would your world change or **the** world change?*

Church,

We are starting 2026 with an invitation for any and all to join us at Santa Claus Christian Church in 21 days of prayer and fasting. We believe God is up to something here in Santa Claus and Southern Indiana, and we want to prepare ourselves for what is yet to come.

Your preparation does not mean you cannot eat for 21 days. If you have never fasted before, we suggest fasting for one day a week, maybe just one meal. Other possibilities include giving up a regular part of your diet for these three weeks (eg, soda, dessert, meat, ect.), or increasing your fast throughout this time. Below you will find many examples of types of fasts found in the Bible and throughout history.

Whatever you discern in your commitment to fasting for the season- stick to what you are convicted of. And regardless of whether you fast 1 day or all 21 days, or falter in between, please be intentional about praying these days through. Our hope is for all to grow closer to God, learn more of God's call in your life, and for our church to discern God's guidance for the days and year ahead.

God Bless you,

SCCC

We are all in this together!

1. Each Sunday, following service at 10:15, we will gather in the Connection to discuss how our week went, discuss fasting, encourage one another, pray, and share how God is moving.
2. January 21st we will have a meal at 5pm followed by a time of worship at 6pm to celebrate all God has done and where he is calling you individually and us as a church!
3. The church is open if you want to come and spend time in prayer on a lunch break, etc.
4. January 3th, we will have First Things First prayer at 8am here at the church. An hour of prayer for the month ahead!

Further down in the packet you will be invited to reflect each week on God's movement in your own life, our community, and our world.

Creating a Lifestyle of Prayer

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Mark 1:35 NIV

CERTAIN TIME

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with his Heavenly Father. Make a daily appointment with God. Whether it's first thing in the morning, lunch, or evening. Faithfully keep that time.

CERTAIN PLACE

Jesus had a specific place He went to pray. Having a designated place to pray helps us remove distractions and frees us to pray without distraction or interruption.

CERTAIN PLAN

When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He gave them an outline. We call it "The Lord's Prayer." This outline, along with several other tools, is available in this guide. As we pray each day, it can look differently each time. There is no formula. It can include worship music, Bible- reading, silence.

What is fasting?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline of abstinence. In a general sense, fasting can mean several things: abstaining from food and drink, abstaining from food only, or abstaining from certain foods for a limited period. While there can be some health benefits, fasting in the Christian sense, is abstaining from food to hear from/draw closer to God.

In our abundant times, the spiritual practice has been extended to other things we 'consume': television, social media, news, screen time, etc. This allows us to free our attention so that we can attend to God.

Biblical fasting always accompanies the fast with prayer. Essentially, fasting makes prayer more powerful and can also help us hear God's voice more clearly. It also prepares us for future trials and strengthens our spirits to act upon the word we receive from God.

Biblical fasting occurs for a selected period while focusing the resulting empty stomach, cleared attention, or free time on a deeper relationship with God, Jehovah-Jire – the Lord who provides. The Bible records that great men of faith such as Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Paul, and Jesus Himself fasted so that they might draw closer to God (Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8; Daniel 9:3; Daniel 10:2-3; 2 Corinthians 11:27; Matthew 4:2). Jesus knew that His true disciples, once He was no longer there in the flesh with them, at times would need to fast to regain and renew their zeal to serve Him (Mark 2:18-20).

Why Fast?

To discern God's will. To get a clear direction for the year. For spiritual growth in our lives. To direct our hunger towards God. To free us from carnal chains. To obtain personal breakthroughs. To see the supernatural hand of God released in our church. To focus our prayers and notice the hurting around us. For enrichment in the covenant relation of marriage. For our leaders to do God's will. To discipline the body to run the race God has set before us. The reasons are many...

- Fasting empowers the believer to obtain deliverance, spiritual breakthroughs, answered prayers, and victory. (Isaiah 58:6, 2 Chronicles 7:14, 15, 2 Chronicles 20:1-30)
- Fasting prepares the believer to receive a fresh outpouring of the Spirit and the blessings of God. (Joel 2:12-29)
- Fasting has medical benefits. (Isaiah 58:8)
- Fasting will bring peace to our land. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

What Biblical Fasting is NOT.

A Public Display of Spirituality-- it is between you and God alone. In fact, Jesus instructs us to let our fasting be done privately and in humility, or else we forfeit the benefits

A Way To Earn God's Favor-- the purpose is to produce transformation in us resulting in a clearer and focused dependence upon God.

A Weight Loss Plan – while weight loss will occur, Christian fasting is about the spiritual discipline and the resulting deeper connection with God

Scriptures on Fasting:

Matthew 6:16-18 “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Joel 2:12, 15 “Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly.

Acts 13:3 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

Esther 4:16 “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

Nehemiah 1:4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Ezra 8:23 So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Isaiah 58:6 "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?"

10 Fasts In The Bible

THE SAMUEL FAST - 1 Samuel 7:6 To recognize and acknowledge your bondage to sin, pray for God's presence among His people, and, ensure God's leaders are in place

THE WIDOWS FAST - 1 Kings 17:16 This fast is to meet the needs of others in caring for them physically with food, clothing, and housing.

THE EZRA FAST - Ezra 8:23 A fast for problem-solving and to lift the load and barrier that keeps us from walking joyfully with the Lord

THE ESTHER FAST - Esther 4:16, 5:2 For God to show His glory as He delivers His children from the evil one.

THE ELIJAH FAST - 1 Kings 19:4,8 To break the chains of emotional problems that seek to control our lives and returning control to God.

THE DANIEL FAST - Daniel 1:8 To gain a healthier life through reliance on God for healing. To seek God's direction, purpose, and vision.

THE DISCIPLES FAST- Matthew 17:21 This fast is to free ourselves and others from all wickedness.

THE PAUL FAST - Acts 9:9 Purpose: To allow for a clear perspective and direction for crucial decisions.

THE JOHN THE BAPTIST FAST Luke 1:15 Purpose: For our witness and testimony to influence others as we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE JESUS FAST Matthew 4:2 Purpose: For spiritual power and victory over temptation, the flesh, and the devil.

What is the Wesley Fast?

For a portion of John Wesley's ministry, he advocated fasting on both Wednesday and Friday each week as a regular spiritual discipline. It's well known that Wesley would not ordain anyone to the Methodist ministry who was unwilling to fast those days.

But as time passed, Wesley fasted mostly on Fridays, which was the Anglican norm. (Actually, as early as August 1739, he advocated Friday fasting for Methodists in his journal, according to the Anglican rule.)

Wesley usually began a Friday fast at sundown on Thursday. This was in continuity with Jewish and early Christian tradition, which both marked the beginning of the day at sundown, not midnight. Wesley typically ended his fast at 3:00 p.m. on Friday – the hour Jesus died upon the cross.

Guidelines for observing the Wesley Fast

1. Be flexible and listen to the Holy Spirit. Don't get so caught up with the act of fasting itself that you forget why you're doing it in the first place.
2. Decide whether you're going to do a complete fast (water only), a no-solid-food fast that allows milk, juice, coffee and tea, a no-meat fast, or some other kind of fast. There are no fixed rules here but it's always good to try to keep the fast you set out to do. Some fasts are more difficult than others, and there will be times you may feel led to switch things up.
3. Plan on Friday as your regular fasting day but use Wednesday and other days for additional fasting when you feel called to a time of deeper and more intense prayer. Remember, there's nothing "magic" about Friday. It's simply a historical day for fasting in many Christian traditions, largely because Jesus was crucified on a Friday. If for some reason another day of the week makes more sense for you, then fast on that day.
4. Only fast for more than one consecutive day after you've consulted with your doctor and only if you're sure you're physically able to handle it.
5. Make sure you drink plenty of water while fasting, no matter what kind of fast you choose.
6. The default Wesley Fast is observed from sundown Thursday till 3:00 Friday afternoon. Some Christians go till sundown on Friday. Do whichever you feel led to do in any given week.
7. Remember, there will be times when it makes sense to skip your Friday fast or move it to another day of the week. For example, if you have an opportunity to have lunch on a Friday with someone you've been wanting to connect with for a while, don't feel compelled to create an awkward situation by sticking to your fast. Just change your fast day that week. Guideline #1 applies here.

Other wisdom on fasting:

Make sure you consult your doctor prior to any fasting if you are taking any medication or have any ongoing health issues.

While it is good and spiritually edifying to fast from our other pursuits (social media, television, gaming, etc.), we are asking you to commit to fasting from food/drink during these 21 days as well.

Throughout Christian History, many fasts ceased on Sunday as this was considered the Lord's Day and a time to celebrate the resurrection.

Use the time you would have spent eating in prayer or reading scripture or journaling about what you have been learning about the Holy Spirit's power in your life.

While the Bible explicitly tells us not to boast in our fasting, it is good to have a small group of trusted encouragers (Barnabases) who you can share your experience with as you go through this journey.

The Law of Hospitality still applies – if you are out with people who have no idea you are fasting, sometimes it is good to break your fast to receive another person's intentional hospitality rather than insist on continuing in your discipline and sometimes politely declining will do. This is a case by case reality which comes from our call to share the gospel wherever we are called (Matthew 10, 1 Cor 8-10, etc.)

We are praying for you and for our church in this season. Shalom!

Before You Begin: Create a Plan!

What are you fasting from and when/how often?

What else are you giving up to create more time with God in the next 21 days?

Who is holding you accountable? (A leader, friend, church member?)

21 Days: Prayer Points

- Pray for the whole world to know Jesus
- Those in authority- government, parents in the community, your boss, our school teachers
- The poor
- The Church around the world
- Freedom for those in bondage
- Accomplishing His purposes in our lives
- Those grieving

- A deeper understanding of the Fathers love for you
- Each of your family members by name
- Someone in the community who doesn't know the Fathers love
- Your small group leader/ Pastor Joseph's continued leadership

- Wisdom
- Your marriage, relationship, singleness
- Unity in your family
- Work/ school
- Finances
- Social Life
- Your attitude/ mental health
- Physical health

- Where have I fallen short this week
- Do I hold any unforgiveness or bitterness? If so, for who?
- Pray for that person/s
- Ask God to forgive you of your sins

- Healing over your own mind, body, soul
- Pray healing over someone in church or the community

- Pray protection over your home
- Pray protection before you drive
- Pray protection over our schools, workplaces, community
- Pray protection over our country

- Pray for your kids, future grandkids, that they may know the love of Christ
- What breaks your heart?
- Where do you see brokenness in our community?

Week 1 Reflection:

Examine

This week you are encouraged to examine your walk with the Lord. May our dependance be fully on Him.

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

“This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your Kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

give us this day our daily bread.

and forgive us those who trespass against us.

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil

For thine is the Kingdom and the power and

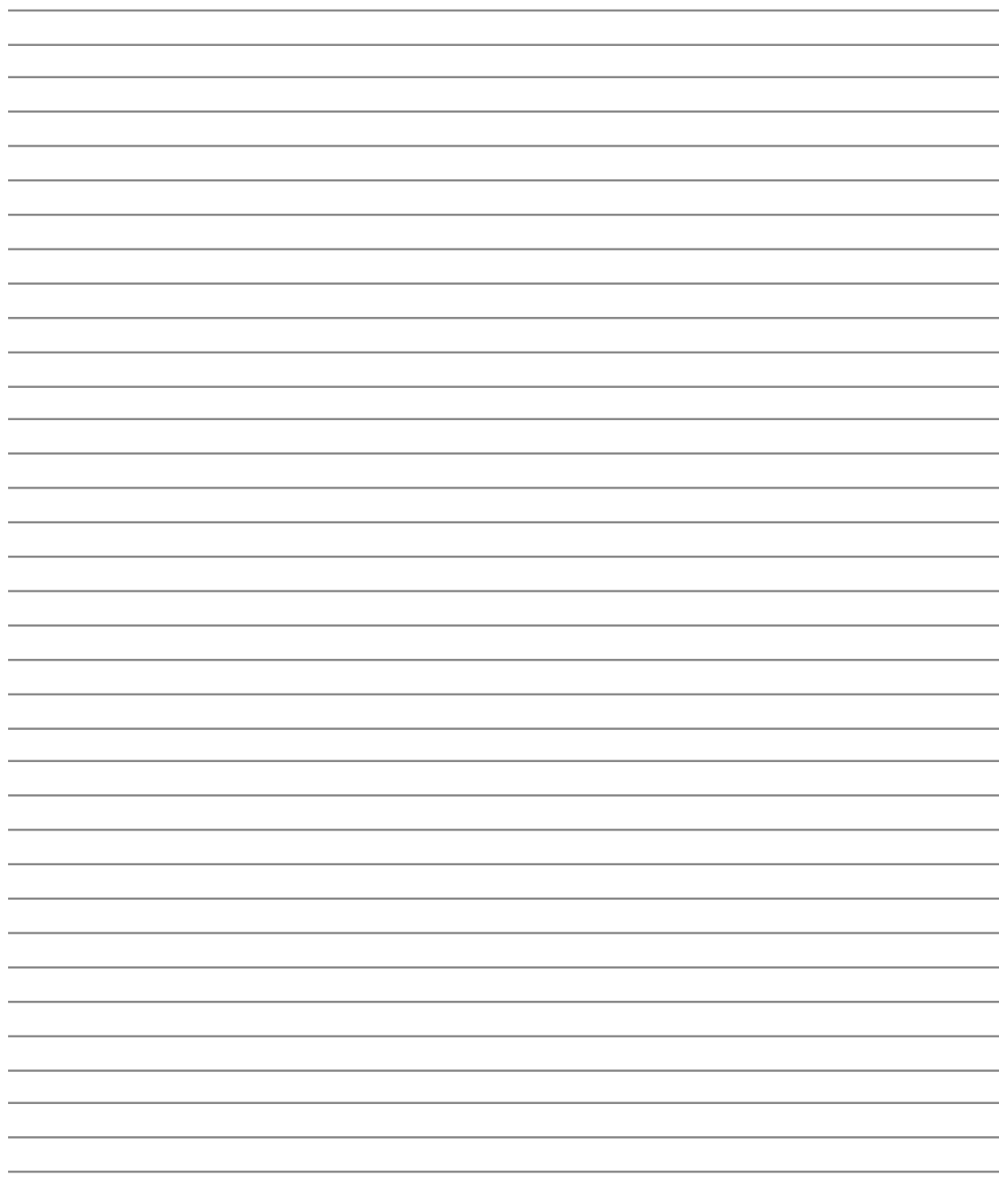
Glory forever.

Amen.

What do you carry into 2026 that could be left in the hands of God for a fresh start?

Who is God to you? Father, provider, protector, friend?

- God is Righteousness—He makes me clean
- God is Sanctifier—He has called me and set me apart
- God is Healer—He heals all my diseases
- God is Banner of Victory—He defeated my enemies
- God is Shepherd—He speaks to me and leads me
- God is Peace—He is my peace in every storm
- God is Provider—He supplies all of my needs



Week 2 Reflection:

My World

- Pray His Agenda First

God what is your will? In my life? My family? My community?

This week you can be in prayer over your family, your community, your Church, and the lost near us. What would you like to hear from God, our Father, in this time of fasting? What have you already heard?

We know God's will is perfect, and we acknowledge His wisdom and sovereignty when we pray His agenda first.

“He will always give you all you need from day to day if you will make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.” Luke 12:31

God promises to supply all our needs, and He wants us to trust Him to provide.

“I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? My help comes from the LORD, who made Heaven and earth!” Psalm 121:1-2

Prayer Points:

- God what is Your will for my life? Do my desires align with Yours?
- Your family
- The Lost in our Community
- SCCC to be faithful with all that God has entrusted to us
- Local leaders, first responders, policeman, teachers, ect



Week 3 Reflection:

The World

We live in a fallen and broken world. We build up walls and hide behind lies and create shadows for sin to thrive. Taken together, this can lead to many not seeing the light of the Kingdom setting things right.

Though we may not see it, our actions impact people around the world - our fellow image bearers.

Where do you see darkness in our country and world? What breaks your heart? Do you regularly pray for those needs? Famine, war, brokenness? You might not be able to physically do something but we all can do our part in prayer and intercession.

“Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.” Isaiah 58:10

“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

Prayer Points

- What do I see in the news that breaks my heart? What needs or people groups?
- Is God calling me to do something about it?
- Pray for his peace to sweep our nation and world



21 Days Later:

Santa Claus Christian Church -

A Community

Rooted in Christ

Grounded By Faith

Branching Out in Love

Where does your faith journey fit into this vision statement?

How is SCCC living this out faithfully?

Prayer

Pray for where you currently serve:

Pray for God to lead you to where you can serve within the church this year:

21 Days Later:

This need not be the end of your prayer and fasting for the year. We encourage you to find a rhythm for yourself. Monthly? Weekly? Schedule another 21 days mid summer?

What have you learned and done that you will continue to do?

What disciplines will you continue in 2026?

Who are the people you will walk with in this journey?

Today is always the first day of the rest of your life in your walk with Jesus, live it well in God's grace and peace.

Prayer

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21 Days Later:

Where do you see God's light?

Over the past 21 days how have you heard the Holy Spirit? Maybe for the first time, or in a fresh way? How has this intentional time with him changed your spiritual journey? Below we want to invite you to reflect and maybe write down where God is calling you to take a step to shine your light more strategically.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Bring your stories of experiencing God with you to our Wednesday night meal at the church (5-6) and time of worship and sharing (6-6:45)

