

PRAY FIRST

THE HEIGHTS CHURCH

*21 DAYS OF PRAYER
AND FASTING 2023*

**KNOW GOD
FIND FREEDOM
DISCOVER PURPOSE
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Welcome

Life is so busy. There are so many distractions and challenges that come our way. How can we ever stop? How can we catch our breath? How can we hear from God with all of this going on? I want to ask you a few questions. How would you respond. What if God is trying to get your attention? Are you in a place where you can hear His voice? What if God is calling your name? What if God is trying to turn your life in His direction? What if He is trying to take our Church on a journey that we never thought possible? In these 21 days of prayer and fasting, it is not only possible, it is God's desire to speak into our lives and into the life of our Church to use this time as a turning point in the direction of our church.

The purpose of these 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting is to seek God as He leads us into the future and as He guides us into where He wants us to be and what He wants us to do.

Our prayer is that God would move our hearts as a church to deepen our commitment to this body, to this community and globally. That we would be led to invest in the mission and vision He is putting before us to see this generation reached with the hope of the Gospel! We believe that our mission helping people Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose and Make a Difference happens more than just on a Sunday morning and it will take all of us working together to accomplish it.

We eagerly wait for what the Lord will do in us and through us during these 21 days that we are setting aside to seek His face and His plan for our church, our city and our world. Will you join us? I hope so. This guide is meant to aide you as you walk through these next 21 days.

**Love you church family,
Pastor Matt**

FASTING

WHY DO WE FAST? SIMPLY PUT, THE GOAL OF FASTING IS TO TURN OURSELVES FROM WORLDLY THINGS AND SET OUR MINDS AND HEARTS FULLY ON GOD. IT IS NOT A WAY TO MANIPULATE GOD OR COERCE HIM TO HEAR AND ANSWER OUR PRAYERS, BUT RATHER IT ACKNOWLEDGES OUR COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON HIM. FASTING AWAKENS US TO THE REALITY THAT WE ARE SO OFTEN DRIVEN BY OUR FLESHLY DESIRES AND APPETITES. IT HUMBLER US AND AWAKENS US TO OUR GREAT NEED FOR AND RELIANCE ON GOD. AS YOU CONSIDER FASTING, WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT. ASK GOD TO LEAD YOU IN THIS TIME OF SEEKING HIS FACE. WHETHER YOU CHOOSE TO FAST FOR ONE DAY, SEVERAL DAYS, OR THE ENTIRE 21 DAYS, THE POINT IS TO HUMBLE YOURSELF IN A NEW WAY AND DRAW NEAR TO GOD.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS OF WHAT YOU COULD CHOOSE.

+ YOU MIGHT CHOOSE A SELECTIVE FAST, ELIMINATING CERTAIN THINGS FROM YOUR DIET. EATING ONLY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, WHAT SOME MIGHT CALL A “DANIEL FAST,” IS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF FASTING.

+ ANOTHER OPTION IS A PARTIAL FAST, WHICH IS REFRAINING FROM EATING FOR A SET PERIOD OF TIME EACH DAY. YOU COULD CHOOSE TO FAST FROM A SINGLE MEAL OR FROM SUNUP TO SUNDOWN.

+ SOME OF YOU MAY FEEL LED TO ENGAGE IN A COMPLETE FAST, REFRAINING FROM EATING AND ONLY DRINKING LIQUIDS FOR PARTICULAR DAYS OR EVEN AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME.

+ IF FASTING FROM FOOD IS NOT POSSIBLE, YOU MAY FEEL LED BY THE LORD TO FAST FROM SOMETHING ELSE, SUCH AS SOCIAL MEDIA, TELEVISION, OR CERTAIN TIMES OR ACTIVITIES ON YOUR CELL PHONE.

PRAYER

PRAYING IS SPIRITUAL BREATHING, ESSENTIAL FOR OUR LIFE IN GOD. AS WE MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD, WE BREATHE IN THE PROMISES AND PURPOSES OF GOD. IN PRAYER, WE BREATHE OUT, RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD TO US. EACH DAY IN THIS GUIDE, THERE WILL BE ONE VERSE AND A FEW PRAYER RESPONSES FOR YOU TO GUIDE YOUR PRAYING. THROUGHOUT THE 21 DAYS, YOU WILL BE PRAYING FOR SPECIFIC AREAS IN YOUR LIFE, OUR CHURCH, AND OUR MISSION. TOGETHER, LET'S PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION, TRUSTING IN THE PROMISES OF GOD FOR US AND OUR CHURCH.

BELOW ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS GUIDE.

+ COMMIT TO A SPECIFIC TIME EACH DAY TO DEVOTE TO PRAYER. FIND A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN BE FREE OF DISTRACTIONS AND BE ALONE WITH GOD.

+ USE THE PRAYER POINTS AND SCRIPTURE IN THIS GUIDE TO FOCUS AND FUEL YOUR PRAYING. WRITE THE SCRIPTURE AND PRAYER POINT ON A CARD AND CARRY IT WITH YOU, POST IT ON YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA, MAKE IT THE SCREENSAVER ON YOUR PHONE—WHATEVER YOU CAN THINK OF TO KEEP THESE PROMPTS IN FRONT OF YOU. USE THEM THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN YOU IN PRAYING.

+ YOU CAN TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER BY JOURNALING YOUR PRAYERS EACH DAY, SIMPLY WRITING OUT YOUR PRAYERS TO GOD. IT'S A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO HIDE GOD'S WORD IN YOUR HEART, WORKING TO MEMORIZE THE VERSES AS YOU MEDITATE AND PRAY.

+ IN ADDITION, YOU MAY CONSIDER WAYS TO PRAY WITH OTHERS DURING THIS SEASON. SET UP A TIME TO MEET WITH FRIENDS OR MEMBERS OF YOUR SMALL GROUP. PRAY TOGETHER AS A FAMILY.

HEIGHTS CHURCH FAMILY, LET'S EARNESTLY SEEK THE FACE OF GOD WITH GREAT EXPECTATION AS WE WAIT FOR HIS REVELATION AND INSTRUCTION THROUGH THESE 21 DAYS OF FASTING AND PRAYER.

Day 1

“THEN MOSES SAID, ‘NOW SHOW ME YOUR GLORY.’ AND THE LORD SAID, ‘I WILL CAUSE ALL MY GOODNESS TO PASS IN FRONT OF YOU, AND I WILL PROCLAIM MY NAME, THE LORD, IN YOUR PRESENCE. I WILL HAVE MERCY

ON WHOM I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I WILL HAVE COMPASSION.’” - EXODUS 33:18-19

Pray that God would reveal himself and his glory as we seek him over the next 21 days. Ask him to speak to you as you read his Word. Pray for understanding and faith as you consider the character of your God. Pray that the people of God at The Heights would be drawn to worship and adore him. Ask God to show you how you can encourage those around you to seek after him with all their hearts.

Day 2

““BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES ON YOU; AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.””
- ACTS 1:8

Pray for the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit to be known among us, because without him, our efforts are useless. Pray for courage and boldness to serve as witnesses to the power of the gospel. Pray for an increase in Heights members making a difference in our community, nation, and world. Ask God, in this season, to send many from our church, so that the good news is preached all across the world.

Day 3

““I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES. IF YOU REMAIN IN ME AND I IN YOU, YOU WILL BEAR MUCH FRUIT; APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING.” - JOHN 15:5

Pray for effectiveness in making disciples. Ask God to cause us to be fruitful. Pray for a renewed commitment to being disciple makers. Ask God to lead you in investing in the lives of others. Pray especially for our student and kids' ministries. Ask God to redeem our students and children and raise them up to be his servants in the world. Pray that we would see students and kids grow in their walks with Jesus.

Day 4

“BUT BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US, GOD, WHO IS RICH IN MERCY, MADE US ALIVE WITH CHRIST EVEN WHEN WE WERE DEAD IN TRANSGRESSIONS—IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED.”

- EPHESIANS 2:4-5

Pray that we would remember God's great love poured out for us on the cross. Ask God to continually cause us to be amazed by his grace. Rejoice today that you have been saved by God's grace and not by your own efforts. Pray for those around you who have yet to respond to the grace of God. Ask God to stir their hearts and draw them to himself. Pray that we would see a record number come to faith and be baptized in 2023.

Day 5

“I PRAY THAT THE EYES OF YOUR HEART MAY BE ENLIGHTENED IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY KNOW THE HOPE TO WHICH HE HAS CALLED YOU, THE RICHES OF HIS GLORIOUS INHERITANCE IN HIS HOLY PEOPLE, AND HIS INCOMPARABLY GREAT POWER FOR US WHO BELIEVE.”
- EPHESIANS 1:18-19

Pray that we would be people who are filled with hope because of the gospel. Ask God to help you see beyond the moment to all that he has in store for you. Pray that he would work in power in your own life, freeing you to live for his glory. Ask God to make you ready to share the reason for your hope with neighbors and friends. Pray specifically that people in your circle will come to faith in Jesus this year.

Day 6

“BUT NOW HE HAS RECONCILED YOU BY CHRIST’S PHYSICAL BODY THROUGH DEATH TO PRESENT YOU HOLY IN HIS SIGHT, WITHOUT BLEMISH AND FREE FROM ACCUSATION— IF YOU CONTINUE IN YOUR FAITH, ESTABLISHED AND FIRM, AND DO NOT MOVE FROM THE HOPE HELD OUT IN THE GOSPEL. THIS IS THE GOSPEL THAT YOU HEARD AND THAT HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED TO EVERY CREATURE UNDER HEAVEN, AND OF WHICH I, PAUL, HAVE BECOME A SERVANT.”

- COLOSSIANS 1:22-23

Pray that we would be steadfast in faith, holding on to the hope of the gospel. Ask God to fill you with confidence, knowing that he who began a good work in you will be faithful to continue his work in you until the day of Christ. Pray that today God would give you an opportunity to give witness to the power of the gospel. Ask God to use our Foster Care Ministry to bring the life-changing message of the gospel to many in our area. Pray for growth and fruitfulness in this ministry to those who are in need.

Day 7

“I KEEP ASKING THAT THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE GLORIOUS FATHER, MAY GIVE YOU THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION, SO THAT YOU MAY KNOW HIM BETTER.”

- EPHESIANS 1:17

Pray that we would be a people who grow in the knowledge and worship of God. Ask that we would walk in the fullness of the knowledge of God. Pray that God would lead you, by his Spirit, to know him better. Pray also that he would work through the Small Group of The Heights Church to grow men and women in their love and knowledge of God. Ask God for increased engagement in Small Groups at The Heights Church.

Day 8

“FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,’ DECLARES THE LORD, ‘PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND NOT TO HARM YOU, PLANS TO GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE. THEN YOU WILL CALL ON ME AND COME AND PRAY TO ME, AND I WILL LISTEN TO YOU. YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART.’”
- JEREMIAH 29:11-13

Pray that we would be people who seek God and his face more than any other thing. Ask God to stir us to pursue him in prayer and in his Word. Pray that he would teach you to seek the prosperity and blessing that comes from seeking and knowing him. Ask God to grow you in prayer this year, and pray that more people at The Heights would commit themselves to seek God in prayer.

Day 9

“TAKE DELIGHT IN THE LORD, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART.” - PSALM 37:4

Pray that we would find our delight and joy in God. Ask him to satisfy us and teach us to be content in him. Pray that your heart would be drawn to him more than anything else. Pray that, at The Heights Church, we would be passionate worshipers of God, demonstrating our delight in him by our service and our giving.

Day 10

“MY PRAYER IS NOT FOR THEM ALONE. I PRAY ALSO FOR THOSE WHO WILL BELIEVE IN ME THROUGH THEIR MESSAGE, THAT ALL OF THEM MAY BE ONE, FATHER, JUST AS YOU ARE IN ME AND I AM IN YOU. MAY THEY ALSO BE IN US SO THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE SENT ME.” - JOHN 17:20-21

Pray for unity among the members of The Heights Church. Ask God to give us a gospel love that transcends all our differences. Pray that God would give you a heart of compassion for those who are unlike you and ask him to lead to actively bridge the divide. Ask God to increase our salvations and baptism at The Heights Church in 2023. Pray also that our church would be effective in reaching our community, region, nation, and world with the gospel message of hope.

Day 11

“LOVE MUST BE SINCERE. HATE
WHAT IS EVIL; CLING TO WHAT IS
GOOD. BE DEVOTED TO ONE
ANOTHER IN LOVE. HONOR ONE
ANOTHER ABOVE YOURSELVES.”
- ROMANS 12:9-10

Pray that we would be devoted to one another. Ask God to show us how to serve each other and honor one another. Pray that God would show you where and how and to whom you can demonstrate his reconciling love. Pray that our small groups and men's and women's Bible studies would grow deeper in their commitment to care for each other and ask God to increase the number of small groups at The Heights.

Day 12

“BUT YOU ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, GOD’S SPECIAL POSSESSION, THAT YOU MAY DECLARE THE PRAISES OF HIM WHO CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS WONDERFUL LIGHT.” - 1 PETER 2:9

Pray that we would faithfully declare the gospel to all men. Ask God to fill your heart with wonder as you remember how he rescued you. Praise him today for rescuing you from darkness and bringing you into the light. Ask God today to give you an opportunity to share the good news with someone around you. And pray that he would give them faith to believe. Ask God to save your neighbors and co-workers, our children, students, and college students.

Day 13

“DO NOTHING OUT OF SELFISH AMBITION OR VAIN CONCEIT. RATHER, IN HUMILITY VALUE OTHERS ABOVE YOURSELVES, NOT LOOKING TO YOUR OWN INTERESTS BUT EACH OF YOU TO THE INTERESTS OF THE OTHERS.” - PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

Ask God to give us humble hearts, seeking the welfare of others above our own welfare. Ask God to uncover any selfish ambition or vain conceit in you. Pray for alertness to the opportunities you have to actively look to the interests of others. Pray that we would be a church that faithfully engages our community and seeks the welfare of the city. Ask God to cultivate this kind of selfless love in the families of The Heights.

Day 14

“FOR BY THE GRACE GIVEN ME I SAY TO EVERY ONE OF YOU: DO NOT THINK OF YOURSELF MORE HIGHLY THAN YOU OUGHT, BUT RATHER THINK OF YOURSELF WITH SOBER JUDGMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FAITH GOD HAS DISTRIBUTED TO EACH OF YOU. FOR JUST AS EACH OF US HAS ONE BODY WITH MANY MEMBERS, AND THESE MEMBERS DO NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION, SO IN CHRIST WE, THOUGH MANY, FORM ONE BODY, AND EACH MEMBER BELONGS TO ALL THE OTHERS.” - ROMANS 12:3-5

Pray that we would see ourselves as belonging to one another. Ask God to show you what your role and function is in the body of Christ. Pray that we would be a healthy body, each member humbly doing their part. Ask God to help each of us at The Heights to guard our hearts against pride and self-serving. Pray that each ministry of our church would have an abundance of Dream Teamers.

Day 15

“INSTEAD, SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, WE WILL GROW TO BECOME IN EVERY RESPECT THE MATURE BODY OF HIM WHO IS THE HEAD, THAT IS, CHRIST. FROM HIM THE WHOLE BODY, JOINED AND HELD TOGETHER BY EVERY SUPPORTING LIGAMENT, GROWS AND BUILDS ITSELF UP IN LOVE, AS EACH PART DOES ITS WORK.” - EPHESIANS 4:15-16

Pray that we would actively build each other up in love. Ask God to show you how you can encourage and spur others on to love and good works. Pray that we would grow to become the mature body of Christ at The Heights Church. Ask God to use our Heights Kids and Heights Students ministries to equip parents and raise up a generation of fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Day 16

“OFFER HOSPITALITY TO ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT GRUMBLING. EACH OF YOU SHOULD USE WHATEVER GIFT YOU HAVE RECEIVED TO SERVE OTHERS, AS FAITHFUL STEWARDS OF GOD’S GRACE IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS. IF ANYONE SPEAKS, THEY SHOULD DO SO AS ONE WHO SPEAKS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD. IF ANYONE SERVES, THEY SHOULD DO SO WITH THE STRENGTH GOD PROVIDES, SO THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE PRAISED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. TO HIM BE THE GLORY AND THE POWER FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.” - 1 PETER 4:9-11

Pray that God would lead us to be faithful stewards of all that he has entrusted to us. Ask God to show you how to use the grace and gifts he has given you to advance his kingdom and bring praise to Jesus. Pray for strength and joy to serve and love others. Pray that missionaries and church planters around the world would not grow weary in well-doing, but would faithfully serve the body of Christ and their communities.

Day 17

“REMEMBER THIS: WHOEVER SOWS SPARINGLY WILL ALSO REAP SPARINGLY, AND WHOEVER SOWS GENEROUSLY WILL ALSO REAP GENEROUSLY. 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. AND GOD IS ABLE TO BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY, SO THAT IN ALL THINGS AT ALL TIMES, HAVING ALL THAT YOU NEED, YOU WILL ABUND IN EVERY GOOD WORK.” - 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8

Pray that we would give and sow generously. Ask God to give you a heart of joy in giving. Pray that he would increase your supply so that you can be more generous. Pray that as a church we would “abound in every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8). Pray for our Serve Day efforts and ask God to provide people and resources to bless our city. Ask God to send workers and supply resources for our ministry efforts in Guatemala.

Day 18

“TEACH US TO NUMBER OUR DAYS,
THAT WE MAY GAIN A HEART OF
WISDOM.” - PSALM 90:12

Pray that we would remember that our time on earth is short. Ask God to help you live every moment for his purposes and his glory. Pray for wisdom to live for the eternal purposes of God. Ask God to use the uncertainty of these times to make people receptive to spiritual conversations and pray that our members would be faithful in having gospel conversations with unbelievers.

Day 19

“DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER, BEING WATCHFUL AND THANKFUL. AND PRAY FOR US, TOO, THAT GOD MAY OPEN A DOOR FOR OUR MESSAGE, SO THAT WE MAY PROCLAIM THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST, FOR WHICH I AM IN CHAINS. PRAY THAT I MAY PROCLAIM IT CLEARLY, AS I SHOULD. BE WISE IN THE WAY YOU ACT TOWARD OUTSIDERS; MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY. LET YOUR CONVERSATION BE ALWAYS FULL OF GRACE, SEASONED WITH SALT, SO THAT YOU MAY KNOW HOW TO ANSWER EVERYONE.”

- COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

Pray that we would be people who are alert and sensitive to the Spirit, making the most of every opportunity that we have. Ask God to open doors for the spread of the gospel. And pray that you would be faithful to share boldly the message of Christ. Pray that our kids, students, and college students would be bold and fearless in sharing with their classmates and ask God to bring a wave of salvation to all the campuses in Bolivar and the surrounding communities.

Day 20

“AND PRAY IN THE SPIRIT ON ALL OCCASIONS WITH ALL KINDS OF PRAYERS AND REQUESTS. WITH THIS IN MIND, BE ALERT AND ALWAYS KEEP ON PRAYING FOR ALL THE LORD’S PEOPLE. PRAY ALSO FOR ME, THAT WHENEVER I SPEAK, WORDS MAY BE GIVEN ME SO THAT I WILL FEARLESSLY MAKE KNOWN THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, FOR WHICH I AM AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS. PRAY THAT I MAY DECLARE ITM FEARLESSLY, AS I SHOULD.”
- EPHESIANS 6:18–20

Pray that God would make us all fearless and faithful in sharing the gospel. Ask God for the words you need to help others understand the wonder of all he has done. Pray that our church would see many come to faith in Jesus as they boldly declare the gospel in our communities. Pray for boldness for God’s people all over the world. Ask God to call many from The Heights to go to our communities and the nations with the message of Jesus.

Day 21

“AS FOR OTHER MATTERS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, PRAY FOR US THAT THE MESSAGE OF THE LORD MAY SPREAD RAPIDLY AND BE HONORED, JUST AS IT WAS WITH YOU.”

- 2 THESSALONIANS 3:1

Pray that the message of the gospel would spread rapidly through our nation and around the world. And ask God to open the hearts and minds of those who hear it. Pray that they would respond in faith and that a wave of salvation would cover the earth. Pray specifically for those you know who are lost. Ask God to be merciful and bring them to saving faith in Jesus. Pray that we would see many come to faith in Jesus and be baptized this year.