

Prayer and Fasting Guide 2024



January 8th – 28th

“Let the River Flow” is my heart’s desire for this upcoming year. What does that mean? To me, it means allowing the Spirit of God to flow in and through our lives anytime and anywhere whether in a church service, on the job, in the marketplace, or in our personal times with God. It means speaking life over people and circumstances we face. It means lifting up the name of Jesus, the Giver of Life, every opportunity we get. It means that we become a conduit through which God Almighty impacts this world for His glory and His glory alone! As we enter into our 21 Day fasting and prayer time this year, my prayer is that the River of God’s Presence will flow through our church like never before and will impact the church, community, and the world. I do not want River of Life simply to be the name of our church, but a reality that can be experienced!

Pastor Mike



Table of Contents

Word from Pastor	Page 2
What did Jesus say about fasting?	Page 4
Why Do We Do 21 Days of Fasting and Prayer at ROL?	Page 4-5
Your WHEN, WHERE, WHAT, and WHY for This Year's Fast	Page 6
2024 Fasting and Prayer Guide	Page 7-11
How to Pray for the Lost	Page 12-13
Current Missionaries/Ministries Supported by Our Church	Page 14-15
How to Pray for Our Missionaries and Ministries	Page 15-16
Suggested List of What to Pray for Your Church Family	Page 17-18
Suggested List of What to Pray for Your World	Page 18-19
Suggested List of What to Pray for Yourself	Page 19-20
Ministry Leader's Prayer	Page 21
Suggested Reading for Your Fast and Beyond	Page 22
What is Fasting?	Page 23
Different Types of Fasting	Page 23
Tips for a Prolonged Fast	Page 23-24

What does Jesus say about fasting?

***"When you fast, stop looking sad like hypocrites. They put on sad faces to make it obvious that they're fasting. I can guarantee this truth: That will be their only reward. When you fast, wash your face and comb your hair. Then your fasting won't be obvious. Instead, it will be obvious to your Father who is with you in private. Your Father sees what you do in private. He will reward you.
(Matthew 6:16-18 GW)***

1. "When you fast" - **expected**
2. Don't do it to be seen - **motive**
3. Concentrate on God your Father - **goal**
4. Expect God to hear and answer your prayers - **reward**

Why do we do 21 days of fasting and prayer each year at River of Life?

Daniel 10:1-3 *In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision. 2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. 3 I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.*

Daniel was seeking the Lord on behalf of God's people and His future plans for them. **We also are seeking for God's blessing and guidance for our church this year.**

Daniel broke away from his normal routine of living in order to set himself apart to focus on really seeking God. **We as River of Life Church are doing the same.**

Daniel was heard because of his humble and intense desire to know God's will and plans for His people. **We desire the same.**

Daniel 10:12 - Then he said to me, “Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.

It is very possible Daniel would have done a normal fast (no food, just water) but perhaps due his duties in the kingdom he needed to eat enough to keep his strength up in order to perform his everyday responsibilities. So, this is basically the definition of what many refer to as **the Daniel Fast**.

In our culture today we definitely have duties and responsibilities to perform yet we also want to seek God intently. It is for this reason that our church provides this type of fast each year so that together we can seek the Lord for His will in order to discover His plans and purposes for us.

People also have fasted what Daniel referred to as “**delicacies**” which in our culture would probably be fried food, meat, sweets, soft drinks, etc. Test have proven that the average American consumes and assimilates 4 pounds of chemical preservatives, coloring, stabilizers, flavorings, and other additives each year.

People have also been known to fast various forms of media. If there is anything that has a greater stronghold on your life than God, it is probably a good indication you need to fast it in order to keep it from dominating your life.

So, however the Holy Spirit leads you, remember this is between you and God. The thing to remember is that if it doesn't mean anything to you, it will not mean anything to God.

I would encourage you to read “What is fasting?” in this booklet on pages 23-24 for more information about actual fasting and its purposes and blessings. Also, a great book on fasting is “***Fasting***” by ***Jentezen Franklin***.

Your WHEN, WHERE, WHAT, and WHY for This Year's Fast

In preparing yourself for this year's fast, ask the basic questions, when, where, what and why.

- When will be your time to get alone in prayer?
- Where will you go to have the least number of distractions in your prayer time?
- What will you be fasting? What's my reading plan going to be or listening to (audio Bible) for those who aren't big readers?
- Why will you be fasting?
 - (In this case we as a church are fasting in order to seek God's will for this coming year and to have maximum impact through our church to this world for 2024! So that's our why as part of ROL, but I'm sure you have some personal reasons to pray and fast about as well. Include those in the "why?"

WHEN? _____

WHERE? _____

WHAT? _____

WHY? _____

King David said, ***"I will not offer God anything that costs me nothing."***

What does that mean practically for you and me when it comes to fasting?

- It means don't think you are offering God anything if you say you are going to fast breakfast when you don't even eat breakfast anyway or I'll sacrifice lunch but then eat twice as much for dinner.
- You get my drift, right? Like don't give up one form of media just to replace it with another form of media. So, what are you willing to sacrifice to make God's will a priority during these 21 days?

Fasting Guide

- ***We have included space for you to make notes under each day's prayer focus to help you pinpoint specific things to pray for as the Holy Spirit leads you.***

Day 1 – Jan 8

Pray for your family (Immediate and extended)

Day 2 – Jan 9

Write down the names of any people that you work with or come in contact with regularly that are not saved and pray for them during this fast. (NOTE: See guidelines on pages 12-13 of this booklet that can help you pray for the unsaved.)

Day 3 – Jan 10

In what areas of your life do you feel like you are struggling spiritually? Write them down and pray over them.

Day 4 – Jan 11

List some ways you can pray for Pastor and the leadership of our church and then pray these things for them throughout this fast.

Day 5 – Jan 12

Pray about what you believe is your biggest hindrance in being a better witness for Christ.

Day 6 – Jan 13

Pray for current and future ministries of ROL

Current ministries:

- *Preaching and teaching*
- *Ministry training classes*
- *Small groups*
- *Men's Ministry*
- *Women's Ministry*
- *Children's Ministry*
- *Royal Rangers*
- *Girl's Ministry*
- *Youth Ministry*
- *Young Adult Ministry*
- *Senior's Ministry (Young at Heart)*
- *Nursery Ministry*
- *Food Pantry*
- *Outreach ministries*

Day 7 – Jan 14

Pray for God’s vision and provision for us to do what He desires us to do this year and for faithfulness from God’s people to financially support the vision through tithes and offerings.

Day 8 – Jan 15

Pray for America and its leaders and the upcoming election.

Day 9 – Jan 16

As you pray today, close your eyes and ask the Holy Spirit to place people, places, ministries in your mind and heart to pray for.

Day 10 – Jan 17

Pray for Strong Christ centered marriages and families in our church as well Godly Christ centered parenting.

Day 11 – Jan 18

Pray for our community (unchurched, local leaders, area development, schools, first responders)

Day 12 – Jan 19

Pray for our missionary families. (List of missionaries and how to pray for them on pages 14-16)

Day 13 – Jan 20

Pray for the church as a whole around the world.

Day 14 – Jan 21

Pray for mighty moves of God in our church services where people are saved, rededicated to God, spiritually renewed, baptized in water, healed, delivered, baptized in the Holy Spirit, and called to ministry.

Day 15 – Jan 22

Pray for continual love and unity in our church family that those who come to our church can see and feel.

Day 16 – Jan 23

List those people you are aware of right now going through some difficult times (spiritual, emotional, financial, social, or physical) and pray for them.

Day 17 – Jan 24

How is your personal health? Ask the Lord to help you with maintaining good health and an action plan to maintain good health throughout this year.

Day 18 – Jan 25

In what area is your faith tested the most? Write down a prayer concerning this asking God to show you how to overcome this weakness.

Day 19 – Jan 26

Pray for our church that we will increase in effectiveness in outreach efforts to our community as well as discipleship of believers.

Day 20 – Jan 27

Pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ like you would want them to pray for you.

Day 21 – Jan 28

Ask God to help you be a conduit for the Holy Spirit to flow through this year like never before!

Praying For Those Who Need God

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.***

1. Ask the Father to draw them to Jesus.

*No one can come to me **unless the Father who sent me draws them...** John 6:44*

Think about the people you know who are far from God. Let your heart be open to God and anyone He may bring to your mind. It may help to write down their names as you focus on praying for them.

PRAYER: “Father, I pray for the people around me (list specific names), that you would supernaturally draw their hearts to you. Send your Holy Spirit to convict them, and give them the desire to give their lives to You. Open their ears to hear your voice.”

2. Bind the spirits that blind their minds.

The truth can be right in front of some people, and they still can't see it because something is in the way blocking their view of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (NIV) *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. [4] **The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.***

We can pray against whatever is in their way so that they can see the light of God. We can pray that they would see the truth without any obstacles or distractions interfering.

PRAYER: “Father, I bind the evil spirits that are blinding the minds of the people around me. In the name of Jesus, I pray that they would be able to see clearly, to recognize who You are, and to give their hearts to You. Remove all hindrances the enemy would use to distract them from Your truth. Open their eyes, Lord, that they might see You.”

3. Pray that they will recognize that nothing of this world will fulfill them like God can.

There is a hole inside of every person that only God can fill.

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 (NIV) *I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. [11] Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.*

PRAYER: “Father, I pray that people will come to the place in their life where they understand that the longings of their heart (innermost being) cannot be satisfied by what this world has to offer. Help them to recognize their longing for more in life is a spiritual thirst only you can quench. Please help them to see You are the only One who can fill the hole in their hearts.”

4. Pray for believers to cross their paths.

We can pray for other Christians to influence the people around them positively. God’s plan to reach people is worked through those who already know and love Him. Jesus asked us to pray for people to go into the world to be salt and light.

Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV) *Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. [38] Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."*

As his “spiritual farmers,” we should be attuned to opportunities to plant spiritual seeds in the lives of the people we encounter each day. We may have no idea who has already been praying for them and the culminating impact our kind word, compassionate act, or loving attitude can have to draw someone to Christ.

PRAYER: “Father, I pray for the lost around me to meet believers who will influence them in a positive way. Lord, let my life shine in such a way that people want to know the God I serve. Allow others to see my genuine love and concern for them in all that I say and do. Let me be Your hands and feet to serve them and let them know just how much You love them.”

List of Current Missionaries and Ministries Supported by Our Church

Conley, Rachael	Belize
Davis, Tommy & Barbara	Alaska
Duren, Jesslyn	Honduras
Entsminger, Steve & Tece	Spain
Ferguson, Kobi & Shana	Israel
Fowler, Jaimeson	Austria
Garrett, Jeff & Wendy	Tanzania
Griggs, Cody & Taylor	Ecuador
Harris, Michael & Jennifer	US
Hasselbring, Charles & Tammy	Africa
Henderson, Austin & Tsehaynesh	Spain
Henderson, Larry & Melinda	Europe
Hendon, Caleb & Brittany	Peru
Hendon, Ricky & Carol	Peru
Herring, Randy	Honduras
Hester, Nicole	Thailand
Hodges, Tracy & Pam	Alaska – Children
Hollingsworth, Jonathan & Brittany	Indonesia
Hoovey, Daniel & Krystal	Xian
Jacobs, Doug & Ramona	S Asia
Jones, Josh & Beka	Italy
Jones, Tim & Marcia	US – Children
Loper, Jason & Kristi	S Asia
Marbut, Joil & Leah	Ecuador
McCluey, Jon & DeDe	Columbia
McDonald, Seth & Kaitlyn	Ecuador
Miller, Caleb & Isabella	South Africa
Miller, Annie & Scott	US Children/Family
Norris, Kellie	Costa Rica
Ricketts, Susan	Japan
Rittermeyer, Mark & Mary	US Maps
Russell, Ben & Terra	US Youth
Stanley, Christian & Rachel	Human Trafficking
Temple, Joel & Kristen	France
Travis, Randy & Linda / Keith & Juanita	Mexico
White, Justin & Sarah	Romania

Williams, Jason & Jane
Wollner, Mitch & Tammy
Alabama District CP&D
Alabama Teen Challenge
BGMC
Light for the Lost
Speed the Light
Tallapoosa Christian Crisis Center
Woodham, Craig & April
Einhorn, Williams

Hong Kong
Indonesia

Chi Alpha – Auburn Univ.
Chi Alpha – Alabama Univ.

How to Pray for Our Missionaries and Ministries

- Pray that people will pray for our missionaries and ministries
- Pray for laborers in the harvest field
 - **Matthew 9:37-38** *Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”*
- Pray for research and revelation so that those organizing missions’ efforts around the world can know what areas of our world have not yet been reached with the gospel
- Pray for open doors and opportunities to get into the areas that have not been reached with the gospel whether through on the ground missionaries and ministries or through internet ministries
- Pray that the body of Christ as a whole will get mobilized to support missions’ efforts in order to fulfil the Great Commission
 - **Matthew 28:18-20** *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*
 - **Matthew 24:14** *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*
- Pray for effective training of missionaries and training of leaders in the countries where they are ministering

- Pray for any resources that are needed to do ministry
- Pray for harmony among missionaries and ministries so that they can work together to spread the gospel
- Pray the Holy Spirit will open the hearts of the people in the areas where missionaries are going
- Pray for persons of peace that will open their homes for the missionaries among unreached people
- Pray for miracles and healings confirming the Word of God preached and taught by the missionaries
- Pray for bibles to be made available in the native languages of unreached people groups
- Pray for protection of new believers and missionaries especially in areas hostile toward Christians
- Pray for new believers to begin study and prayer groups among

Suggested List of What to Pray for Our Church Family

- That God will be glorified, and Christ exalted among us
- God's Spirit and power will continuously fill our church
- Desire and discipline to pray and study God's Word
- A desire to learn and grow in Christ
- To worship God freely
- To be an effective witness for Christ
- Unity and love for one another
- Faithfulness in supporting church with time, talents, gifts, tithes and offerings
- Strong Christ centered marriages and families
- Godly Christ centered parenting
- To be faithful and passionate about spreading the gospel to the world
- To listen for and discern God's voice
- To be filled with the Holy Spirit regularly
- God would bless us financially as we honor His principles of giving
- Opportunities and provision for Missions trips
- Our board and ministry leaders
- God's continued power and protection against attacks from the enemy
- Come together in worship with a sense of expectancy
- That we will have a positive testimony in the community.
- To be known for compassion, grace, and holiness
- God will give us more laborers to bring in the harvest of souls
- A willingness to be accountable to one another
- That God would bless, guide, and use us to reach out with online ministry
- The vision of our church will be clear and passionately lived out
- An evangelistic mindset to always be reaching out to the unchurched
- Generous giving spirit toward God's kingdom work
- For volunteers willing to fulfill their God-given calling in our church
- Our worship team be continuously filled, led, and anointed by the Holy Spirit as they lead our church in worship
- To understand and put into practice our spiritual weapons against the enemy
- Our children and youth and those that lead and minister to them
- Our pastor and his family

- A welcoming atmosphere toward the guests that come to our church
- A cooperative and understanding spirit among us
- Our outreach ministries to our community
- To remain faithful and spiritually alert in the days in which we are living
- To face any challenges with wisdom from God and faithfulness toward one another

Suggested List of What to Pray for in Our World

- Revival of holiness and power in the church around the world
- Our President and National Leaders to be greatly influenced by the Holy Spirit and Godly advisors
- Our State leaders to be greatly influenced by the Holy Spirit and Godly advisors
- Our local leaders to be greatly influenced by the Holy Spirit and Godly advisors
- For Christians to enter into political leadership positions
- Open doors for the gospel to be spread in unreached areas of the world
- Against persecution of Christians around the world
- For those in prison because of their faith and their families
- Against the evil behind terrorists' attacks
- Against the evil behind civil unrest in our country
- Against the evil behind untruthful media and its leadership
- Against moral and political corruption in our government
- That leaders of the world will come to Christ
- For prayer to be reestablished in schools
- For Christian teachers in our school systems of all ages
- For Christian students not to compromise in secular school systems
- Safety, courage, and wisdom from God for all of our country's military
- Peace in Jerusalem (Psalms 122:6)
- That our country will support Israel
- That false prophets will be revealed, and true prophets will operate in the fear of the Lord
- Unity of God's true church throughout the world

- For God to confound the enemies plans around the world against all believers
- For the church to stay in a state of preparedness for the return of Christ
- For preachers and teachers around the world to be courageous and true to God's Word
- The financial provision of the church and Spirit led wisdom in using finances
- That Godly family values will stand against the ungodly culture of our day
- The morality of the church will not be compromised by worldly influence
- God's blessings and protection for Christian businesses
- Those affected by Covid
- For first responders (medical, police, military, fire, etc)

Suggested List of What to Pray for Your Personal Life

- To understand and practice the power of prayer in my life everyday
- Continual desire for daily meditation on God's word
- Following daily God's will for my life
- Stand strong when my faith is challenged
- Learn how to truly give my burdens over to God
- My spouse/future mate
- My children/grandchildren
- God's wisdom in whatever decisions I need to make
- To be a good witness for Christ everywhere I go
- A greater understanding of God's Word and how to apply it to my life
- Allow the Holy Spirit to develop Godly character in me
- To be totally open to the work of the Holy Spirit in my life
- To know and use the talents, gifts, and abilities God has given me for His glory among my church family and in the world
- For God to fill me with His love for those I come into contact with everyday
- To see people through God's eyes

- To rid me of any selfishness and egotistical traits
- To use my finances in a way that honors God
- To constantly remember that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit
- That I will always choose to speak words of life and not death over myself
- and those around me
- To take steps of faith and not allow fear to control me
- To be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry (James 1:19)
- My heart be open to help others instead of avoiding them
- To have a heart of obedience toward God no matter how tough the circumstances
- A willingness to be not only a great friend to those I love but also to the unfriendly
- To pray for those who persecute me
- To have the courage to confront trouble instead of running from it or avoiding it
- To have strength to practice tough love when necessary
- To keep my heart pure so that my eyes don't focus on ungodly things
- To apply myself at my job as if working for the Lord
- To be a Godly example in my home

Ministry Leader's Prayer Page

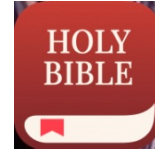
This page is for you as a ministry leader for suggested ways to pray for the ministry God has called you to do.

Suggested Prayers

- Help me be an example to those I lead
- Help me do this ministry with excellence as I do it unto You and for Your
- Name's sake
- Help me to be a learner as well as a teacher/leader
- Help my vision for this ministry to be aligned with the vision of our church
- Show me how this ministry can grow and stay vibrant
- Give me constant guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit
- Show me how I connect with those I lead in greater ways
- Help me be sensitive to the needs of those I lead
- Show me how to build love and fellowship in this ministry
- Those I lead to keep their eyes on God
- Help me to keep my relationship with God fresh so that I do not burn out
- and the ministry can continue to flourish
- Help me develop a plan for new people to easily connect with this ministry
- Help me to be a good mentor to future leaders
- Help me to be an encourager
- Give me wisdom when having to discipline
- Help me to be creative

Suggested Readings for the 21 Days

- Gospel of John – Has 21 chapters and the fast will be for 21 days
- Pick any book or books of the Bible and simply break them down to a comfortable reading level that you can do in 21 days
- Along with your bible reading, the YouVersion app (free) has many devotional topic reading plans.
- The YouVersion App icon looks like this:



- Other bible reading plans and devotional helps can be found on our church website rolworship.com
 - **Under the “Next Steps” Tab click on “Resources”**

What is Fasting?

Fasting is abstaining from food for a spiritual purpose. It helps to unclutter your spirit by getting your focus off the things of this world and making you more sensitive to God.

A fast is NOT a:

- form of punishment or penance
- forced tradition
- weight loss strategy
- way to manipulate God or other people

Why Fast?

- To strategically make space for God in our lives.
- To break routine and spend more time focusing on spiritual matters as opposed to the natural.
- For breakthrough in areas of our life and church that will make us more effective for Christ.

Different Types of Fasting

Normal Fast: No food, water only

Modified Fast: No food; juices only

- Tips on Juice Fasting
- Drinking fruit juice will decrease your hunger pains and give you some natural sugar energy. The taste and lift will motivate and strengthen you to continue. The best juices are 100 % juices.
- Mix acidic juices (orange, tomato) with water for your stomach's sake.

Daniel Fast: Fruits, Vegetables, water

Prolonged Fast Tips

If you choose to do a full fast of 3 days or more where you are only drinking water here are some suggestions:

1. Prepare Yourself Physically

- Fasting requires reasonable precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescription medication. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision.
- Do not rush into your fast. Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting. Avoid high-fat and sugary foods.
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for two days before starting.

2. While You Fast

- Limit your activity.
- Exercise only moderately.
- Rest as much as your schedule will permit.
- Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
- Expect some physical discomforts, especially if fasting more than a day.
- Withdrawal from caffeine and sugar may cause headaches. Physical annoyances may also include weakness, tiredness, or sleeplessness.
- When doing a longer fast the first two or three days are usually the hardest. As you continue to fast, you will likely experience a sense of well-being both physically and spiritually. However, should you feel hunger pains, increase your liquid intake.

3. End Your Fast Gradually

- This applies to fasting three or more days. Begin eating gradually. Do not eat solid foods immediately after your fast. Suddenly reintroducing solid food to your stomach and digestive tract will likely have negative, even dangerous consequences. Try several smaller meals or snacks each day. If you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will result in continued good health.
- Break extended water fast with fruit such as melons of some kind.
- While continuing to drink fruit or vegetable juices, add the following:
 - First day: Add a raw salad.
 - Second day: Add baked or boiled potato, no butter or seasoning.
 - Third day: Add a steamed vegetable.
 - Thereafter: Begin to reintroduce your normal diet.
- Gradually return to regular eating with several small snacks during the first few days. Start with a little soup and fresh fruits such as watermelon and cantaloupe.
- Advance to a few tablespoons of solid foods such as raw fruits and vegetables or a raw salad and baked potato.
- If you fail to make it through your first full fast, do not be discouraged. You may have tried to fast too long the first time out, or you may need to strengthen your understanding and resolve. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed.