



**CELEBRATING GOD'S
WORK THROUGH US**

Church-Wide Fast

JANUARY 15-21, 2018

 **PETRA CHURCH**

Seven-Day Fast Prayer Focus

Church-Wide Fasting and Prayer

January 15-21, 2018

Petra Church

Theme:

Celebrating God's Work Through Us

Fasting Week Events

School of Prayer

The Power of Prayer and Fasting—Joseph Smucker

Tuesday, January 16 - Oasis, 7 p.m.

Night of Worship

Friday, January 19 - Sanctuary, 7 p.m.

Night of Soaking Prayer

Saturday, January 20 - Oasis, 7 p.m.

Morning Communion Service

Sunday, January 21 - Sanctuary, 9 and 11 a.m.

Petra Family,

It's great to begin the year with a special time of prayer and fasting. It helps us to position our lives and church for what God wants to do in us and through us this year.

Throughout scripture we see that God honors his people when they fast. The self-denial of food is seen as an act of humbling ourselves before God. As we draw close to God through this united fast, we pray and believe for breakthroughs in our lives and church. And, most of all, we fast to know him more in our lives.

2018 is also the 35th anniversary of our church. We have chosen the theme **"Celebrating God's Work Through Us"** as we reflect on his faithfulness over these past years. We fast and pray for God's ongoing empowerment as we **bring Jesus' love, healing, and hope to the world** in the days and years ahead.

This year we asked seven people to write the daily devotionals to guide us in our fast. Each day has its own prayer focus. There is also a daily section for children. Thanks to each person who contributed to this fasting devotional.

Thank you for joining in this fast in whatever way you can. Be blessed!

Pastors Lester and Erma

Dear Friends,

Fasting may be a new thing for many of us, especially kids. It is a wonderful way to help our kids experience the power of God through personal discipline. Fasting for kids doesn't always mean totally going without food. One effective way kids can fast is to choose to fast a particular type of food or category of food (desserts, junk food) or an activity like TV or all tech devices. Please discuss this fast with your children, helping them choose what they would like to include in their fast. It's more meaningful for the child if they have invested in the decision. Some families commit together to fast the same thing. Help your children maintain the focus as an offering to the Lord instead of a religious ritual.

In this booklet I have included simple age-appropriate activities to help engage children in things that will help them learn and focus. Please choose the accompanying support materials that best suit the age of your children. These support materials will be located in the Kid's Hub. The children will be making celebration banners signifying "Celebrating God's Work Through Us!"

Younger kids have ribbon, triangular paper pennants, and stickers to create their banners. You will need crayons, colored pencils or markers, and a glue stick or tape to attach the pennant to the string. Everything else is provided. Older children have a printed pennant to place their activity stickers on. Please encourage them as you go through the booklet together.

Pastor Kim
Children's Pastor

DAY 1
Drawing Near To God

“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.” James 4:8a (ESV)

This promise in James speaks of the truth that, since the time the curtain was torn into two, we have access to God the Father in ways that only Jesus could have provided.

The expression of his love for us speaks of his great desire to be in relationship with us. As we purpose in our hearts to draw near him, we grow in our understanding of him, and we bask in the greatness of who he is. We are blessed with the fruit of being with him. Here our hearts are reminded of his love. We remember we are his. We are washed with the revelation of who he has created us to be, and our identity becomes more solidified in his presence.

So, as we purpose to pursue him this day, the first day of our fast, what does it mean for you to draw near him? What intentional action would help this to come to pass? It will be different for each one of us, and yet the unity that comes as we corporately purpose our hearts together is powerful. In his presence is life and fullness of joy. This is the essence of who he is . . . be present today with him. Take time to be with him for the purpose of simply being in his presence. Position your heart to pursue him, lean in and listen. May his truth wash over you as you draw near, for here he waits for you.

Prayer of Declaration

Lord, we acknowledge that you are here. As we position our hearts before you in thanksgiving and humility, draw near to us. We need you! We ask that you would forgive us of our self-sufficiency. We declare you are the one our heart longs for.

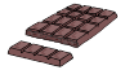
Would you reveal yourself in greater dimensions today, both personally and corporately for the body of Petra? We purpose ourselves to draw near today in the pursuit of you. We love you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Barb Hummel

DAY 1
Children’s Devotion
Be Intentional

When we choose to fast, it isn’t something that just pops into our heads and then we go for it. We deliberately choose to fast so that we can show God that we want to be close to him—on purpose. It’s called being intentional.

Kids, on the next page are some pictures of things that you could fast. Please circle one that you will fast this week. If your item isn’t here, feel free to draw it in the space.



Let's thank God for this special week of growing closer to him. Ask him to help you fast this week, especially during the times when you miss the thing you have chosen to fast. Ask him to help you stick to it. As you pray, you can even picture in your mind laying down the thing you've chosen to fast from in front of Jesus as a present to him.

DAY 2 Persistent Prayer

"So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." **Luke 11:9, 10 (NRSV)**

The tense of the Greek verbs — *ask, search, knock*— can best be translated "keep on asking, keep on searching, keep on knocking." In other words, persist in what you take to God in prayer!

A story is told that St. Augustine's mother Monica prayed for her son for 40 years before his dramatic conversion from an immoral life to a great fourth-century father of the church. While I marvel at Monica's perseverance in prayer, I realize that praying for those in our families commands my attention in prayer in a special way. We are entrusted by God to persevere in prayer until each child, grandchild, niece, nephew, aunt, and uncle has met Jesus personally and fully "by grace through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). And what rejoicing there is when one that was lost is found—even the angels sing! What eternal joy!

We also pray for friends or acquaintances who have yet to be saved. Let us encourage each other to take God at his word: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14). Like Monica, we are blessed to watch as one by one, victory is won and that lost one joins God's precious family of believers. Winston Churchill spoke these memorable words to bolster a flagging nation in World War II: "Never give up, never give up, never give up." May we be persistent in our prayers for those who have yet to know his love, peace and joy!

Prayer of Declaration

Lord, increase in us hope and love that no hardness of heart toward the lost and suffering, no hypocrisy, no exhaustion of spirit, no compromise or enticement from the world will keep us from persistently holding before your gracious throne of mercy those you seek to find and heal.

Theresa Newell

DAY 2 Children's Devotion Be Persistent

Have you ever seen the cartoon, commercial, or video clip of the kid tugging on their mom's shirt saying "Mom, mom, mom, mom, mom, mom, mom . . .?" Usually the mom ends up annoyed, but gives in to hear what the child has to say.

While mom or dad usually don't appreciate your doing this, it never bothers God. In fact, I think he may even like it! It shows him that we are depending on him to answer our prayers, and shows God that we trust him with what is on our hearts. Check out these verses, and circle the words that tell you how often we are to pray.

"So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." **Galatians 6:9**

"Never stop praying." **1 Thessalonians 5:17**

"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere." **Ephesians 6:18**

Find the confetti sticker. Think of each little piece of confetti representing one prayer. Let this remind us to continue to be persistent in our prayers. Color the sticker and attach it to your banner.

DAY 3 Praying For Our Church Family

And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near. **Hebrews 10:24-25 (NET)**

We are a family. We have been adopted by our heavenly Father. Indeed, because of Christ's shed blood, we are all one body with a unique bond through the Holy Spirit's dwelling within us. With Christ as the head of our body, he provides the example on how to love, forgive,

encourage, and pray. We are to be imitators of him. Therefore, let us love each other, be quick to forgive each other, encourage each other, and pray for one another.

May we be a people who asks the Holy Spirit to put on our hearts who is on his heart. May our ears be quick to hear when the Spirit brings one of our brothers or sisters to mind. May we be in such communion with the Holy Spirit that we are asking him: Who is needing prayer? Who is needing a phone call? Who is needing our assistance?

As a family, let us pray for healings and breakthroughs. May we be willing to persevere with our brothers and sisters when the journey is difficult. May we celebrate as a family when others are blessed and burdens lifted. May we pray for a deeper hunger for the Word and for a more consistent walk with the Holy Spirit.

As brothers and sisters, may the deep, deep love of Jesus continually overflow from his heart to our hearts and to each other. And may we do so all the more as we see the day of his return drawing near.

Prayer of Declaration

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the fresh and living way that he inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in the assurance that faith brings, because we have had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water. And let us hold unwaveringly to the hope that we confess, for the one who made the promise is trustworthy. And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near. **Hebrews 10:19-25 (NET)**

Kent and Sanda Brady

DAY 3 **Children's Devotion** **Be Family**

One of the things that makes family special is that everyone is included and important. Families laugh together, cry together, celebrate together, and work hard together. Each person in the church family has a special place that God has made just for them! Did you ever think of the people of our church as family? We are told in Galatians to share each other's burdens, and do good—especially when it comes to our church family.

Check out Galatians 6:2 and 10. We need to take care of each other in similar ways that our own personal family takes care of each other.

Today find the balloon sticker and write the name of one person from our church family on it. Pray for that person, and then place it on your pennant. It's exciting to see how God is using you to bless the church family through prayer!

Day 4 Praying For Breakthrough

And shall not God avenge his own elect who cry out day and night to him, though he bears long with them? Luke 18:7 (NKJV)

Although sometimes God brings breakthrough immediately when we ask, we often have to keep asking and trusting that God will move on our behalf. Just like the widow who kept pestering the judge for justice in Luke 18:1-7, we also have to keep bringing our petitions for breakthrough before God. This does two things: One, it lets God know that we really believe and trust in his faithfulness, and Two, it lets the enemy, Satan, know we are serious about getting our breakthrough and that we will not give up.

As you seek God for whatever breakthrough(s) you need in your life, keep pressing in and seeking God's face. If the breakthrough tarries, ask God to reveal any blockage or hindrance that may be preventing your breakthrough. Then follow what God says to do, whether it involves forgiveness, repenting, renouncing, restitution, declaring, breaking, casting out, or just continuing in prayer. Be encouraged; God is trustworthy.

Prayer of Declaration

God of breakthrough, we humbly submit to your Lordship and authority in our lives. We resist the enemy in any area that he is sending hindrances or blockages to prevent our breakthroughs. We declare breakthrough in the areas of healing, restoring relationships, finances, jobs, family, marriages, and our destinies. We purpose to seek and petition God for our breakthroughs. In Jesus' Mighty Name, Amen.

Mike Ingold

Day 4 Children's Devotion Be Warriors

It's always exciting when watching a favorite team entering the field to play; often football teams will line up off the field, and as they enter, they burst through a large paper banner with the team's logo or name on it—then each player breaks through and runs onto the field for the introduction.

Many times, when we pray, that is the kind of thing that happens. We go from one place, behind the banner, and break right through it to a whole new season of life. It could be a habit or something challenging us, or maybe fear, worry, or other thoughts. God wants us to pray so that we can bust through whatever things are holding us back from everything he has planned for us. He knows the new way is much better and will make us much happier. 1 Corinthians 10:13 reminds us that we are not alone; God will help us break through the barriers.

After you check out the verse, find the fireworks sticker, color it, and then write one thing on it that you are praying for, for breakthrough. Then pray!

Day 5

Praying For Addictions and Healing

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:36 (ESV)

There are hundreds if not thousands of people right here in our region that are addicted to some type of substance (alcohol, drugs, etc.). As a church we can ask ourselves, “Why is this happening on our watch?” We are the people of God made to implement the rule and reign of God here on this earth in our sphere of influence. Addiction to substances (or anything else for that matter) is not God’s will for humans! Families are utterly ruined by these addictions—sometimes violently ruined or forcefully separated. This, again, is not God’s intention for families.

Prayers of Declaration

Please pray with me in three ways:

Let’s pray for God’s glory to touch each of these people who are addicted in such a way that they no longer need the substances they are addicted to. Ask God that they would be fully enthralled with him! We want nothing less than salvation for these precious people!

Let’s also pray that, as God heals their minds and hearts, he would restore them to healthy family and community. (Petra Church could be part of this healthy community for them.)

Finally, let’s pray that God would raise up his Church in our region to be the house of prayer that he intended her to be, rising up and saying, “NO!” to this kind of thing in the spiritual realm, and that the gates of hell would not prevail against us!

Joseph Smucker

Day 5
Children's Devotion
Be Free

Have you ever noticed someone who was so much into something they didn't really talk to people, skipped meals, didn't get enough sleep, and didn't take care of themselves because of the "thing" they are into? Some kids even struggle with this and with their phones, tablets, computers, TV shows, books, or video games. The word to describe this is "addiction." Let's stop today to pray for those who struggle with this problem. Kids are missing out on so much that God wants to bless them with! Maybe it's even you who is struggling? Let's pray for healing and freedom for those struggling, and for protection for those who have not dealt with this challenge. God is wanting to use YOU to help kids be free! Check out Galatians 5:1 "So Christ has truly set us free . . ."

Find the sticker of the party hat. Color it in and include the name of one person that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind for you to pray freedom for. Or someone that you can pray for regarding protection from addiction. Place the sticker on your banner.

Day 6
Praying For The Lost

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

Therefore, we are interceding this day for the lost souls, in the name of Jesus Christ, that you would open their ears to hear and give them an understanding heart.

I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see. This is our cry, Father; remove the scales of blindness over their eyes and help the lost see themselves as you see them. **Lost and in need of a relationship with your son, Jesus Christ.**

"The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance." **2 Peter 3:9 (CSB)**

While praying, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind the names of those family members, friends, and neighbors that need our prayers.

Through faith we believe God can do anything with anyone at any time, so we can offer up our prayers for the lost perpetually. We have seen our God answer many prayers in our own lives and through the life of our Petra Church family. Today we claim victory for the lost in the mighty name of Jesus!

Prayer of Declaration

We pray that our Heavenly Father will send us out into the harvest to tell the lost about Jesus Christ and the cross. Ask God for that open door to share the good news. You might be the “someone” that others are praying for to tell their friend or family member about Christ. Be obedient and faithful when God chooses to use you.

Gabriel and Blanche Pilotti

Day 6 Children’s Devotion Be A Star

Long ago, before Google Maps and cell phones, even before paper maps were common, people would find their way by looking up into the sky at night, at the stars, to find out which way to go. Do you remember the Christmas story when the wise men followed a star in the sky? It was the way God showed them the direction to go to find Jesus Christ, the Savior that had been born.

Now there are many people who are looking for the way to go—but not by way of a physical road or place. People need to know that God made them, knows them, and loves them. We need to be like a star in the sky showing them the way to have a relationship with Jesus so that today they can be his and live for him!

What does it take to be a star? Pray for others, treat them with love, and tell them what Jesus has done for them! Are you ready to be a star? Take some time to ask the Holy Spirit who he wants you to show the way to. Write that name on a star sticker, color it in, and place it on your banner. Be ready—the Holy Spirit might tell you more than one name! Write down as many names as he tells you and pray for them. Check out this verse about shining your light: *“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**

Pray that God will open the door for you to share with them, and then get ready to celebrate what God does!

Day 7 Praying For Missions

“All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.” **1 Corinthians 13:12b (NLT)**

We often think of missions as the Great Commission in Matthew when Jesus tells us to “Go and make disciples of all nations.” By my definition, missions is to go out of your way to proclaim the gospel while ministering specifically to the needs of people, whether physical, emotional, or

spiritual. Missions does not have to be in a foreign country; it is a call for intentional believers to step out of their comfort zones and go wherever God is instructing you.

It is obvious that we have been called to missions, but why should we respond? It all comes back to the confidence of being known by God. Just as the verse describes above, we now only partly know all of the intentions of God. It says that one day, when we meet with him face to face, we will know him completely. We will finally comprehend with all amazement how intimately God has always known us. Not only does God know us; he loves us! From the beginning of time we have been thought of by the Highest of Kings. That revelation begins a process in us of understanding the heart of God, which leads us to desiring every single one of his children on earth to be able to have that same confidence. That is the heart of a missionary.

So as you pray today, ask God to give you a revelation of how much he knows you, then ask him to give you that same revelation for the people you encounter in every-day life, and for people across the world.

Prayer of Declaration

I declare that I am a child of God who is fully known by him. I have inherited his heart for people near and far. I am called, without the spirit of striving, to fulfill the Great Commission in a special way so that every person may know the fullness of the love of Jesus.

Andrea Beiler

Day 7 Children's Devotion Be A Missionary

Yesterday we talked about being a star. Today let's take it a step further. Not only do we ask God to show us the individual people he wants us to share the truth with, let's ask for something even bigger. Let's start asking God to tell us the names of places and people groups he wants to save. Take a peek at a map and see where the Holy Spirit guides you. Or maybe when you pray, he will tell you the name of a country. God asks some of us to pray for those people and countries until they know him. Other times, he asks us to get ready to go there and share the Gospel with those people ourselves.

Did you know that many people hear God call them to be a missionary when they are a young child? So don't be shy when you hear him. Write down the name of people groups or countries that he is telling you to either go to or pray for. Maybe you already know missionaries there.

Find the sticker of the noisemaker. Write down on that sticker what God speaks to you and then pray about it. Pray that God would open doors for those people to not only hear the truth, but receive it. Then celebrate how God is saving people all over the world, and place your sticker on the banner.

Petra Missionaries 2018

Long-Term and Associate Missionaries:

- Mario and Jeanette Araya
- Lazaro “Nacho” and Merrilee Barrera and Family
- Devan Colby
- JC and Lois Ebersole
- Marta Estrada
- Bruce and Joyce Heckman
- Darryl and Joyce Henson
- Daniel and Jamie Jones and Family
- Arlen and Keturah King and Family
- Joe and Jeniece Kingman and Family
- Randy and Bonnie Martin
- Brad and Lori Ortenzi
- Leah R.
- Alex and Jodi Seidler
- Barbara Stoltzfus
- Kenny and Steph Stoner and Family
- Alan and Carol Wert and Family
- Leslie and Suzanne Yoder

Short-Term Missions

- Sarah Eby
- Steven Fisher
- Nicole Hurst
- Lydia Landis
- Jeremy and Gabriela Leaman and Family
- Josh Leininger
- Ethan Martin
- Brandon Zeiset

Praying for Salvation

If you're believing for the salvation of a family member or friend:

Father, I bring _____ before you now, asking that as I pray, the Holy Spirit would draw them to Jesus.

I Pray:

1. That God would lift the veil that prevents _____ from seeing truth.
2. For the Holy Spirit to bring conviction and protect him/her.
3. For godly people to be placed in his/her pathway each day, especially ones who speak truth and life.
4. I cast down anything that would exalt itself against the knowledge of God, specifically: pride, rebellion . . . (anything you can think of).
5. In the name of Jesus, I take down all known strongholds, thought patterns, opinions on religion, etc.
6. I bind Satan from taking _____ captive any longer, and bind all wicked thoughts and lies Satan would try to place in his/her mind.
7. In Jesus' name, I place the armor of God on him/her.

* Don't forget to pray in the Spirit, releasing his power and life.

Salvation Prayer

Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. By faith, I open the door of my life and my heart to receive you as my Savior and my Lord. Please forgive me of my sins. Thank you for your grace and for giving me eternal life. Take control of the decisions of my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be. Amen.