



Spiritual Disciplines for Lent 2023

Pray ~ Fast ~ Give ~ Study

Below are a few suggestions for engaging in spiritual disciplines during Lent.

Please email Pastor Jen (pastor@stjohnslutheran.church) if you have any questions.

Pray

"When you pray..." (Matthew 6:5, NLT)

~ Connect with God in Prayer Daily

Breath Prayer

Find a place of solitude and silence. Focus on your breath. Breathing in, address God (Jesus, Lord, Shepherd); breathing out, bring your request (have mercy on me, here I am, guide me). Do this for a few minutes.

Centering Prayer

Choose a word or phrase and repeat it silently or aloud for a few minutes to draw into the presence of Christ. The word or phrase might be a designation for God (Jesus, Good Shepherd, Lord) or a reflection of desire (love, grace, peace).

Contemplative Prayer

Settle into a time of quietness with God. Say silently "Here I am, Lord." Spend a few minutes listening to God's voice.

~Resources

- 1) Pray-As-You-Go.Org - daily guided prayers/reflections on Scripture (approx 15 minute) hosted by Jesuit Media Initiatives
- 2) Contemplativeoutreach.org - Centering Prayer app guides in creating a structured prayer time
- 3) *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005)
- 4) "Christ in Our Home" and "The Word in Season" Daily Devotionals available on Sunday mornings, and at the Church Office (Mon-Fri, 9 am-2 pm)

Please see back page for information on Fasting, Giving, and Bible Study...



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Fast

"When you fast..." (Matthew 6:16, NLT)

~ **Abstain from food – for example**

**Check with your doctor to make sure this is an appropriate and healthy option for you*

- 1) Give up a specific food or drink during Lent: alcohol, chocolate, meat, etc.
- 2) Skip one meal (a day, a week, a month...)
- 3) Fast from dinner one evening through dinner the next evening (or from breakfast to breakfast) once a week

~ **Abstain from indulgences:** social media, TV, movies, video games, eating out, fast food, etc.

~ **Abstain from negative behaviors:** judging, gossiping, buying what you don't need, binge watching, staying up late, 'doom scrolling' through social media, etc.

Give

"When you give to someone in need..." (Matthew 6:16, NLT)

~ **Give (or increase giving) financially to St. John's or another worthy cause**

~ **Give of your time to help others** – call one family member or friend each day, volunteer regularly, write and send a daily letter of gratitude, speak a kind word every day, donate forty unused items over the forty days of Lent, etc.

~ **Commit to a healthy habit** – get regular exercise, eat well, get some fresh air every day, get enough rest, take a weekly Sabbath, etc.

Study

"These are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name..." (John 20:31, NRS)

~ **Come to the "Do You Want to Be Made Well?" Bible Study here at St. John's** – Wednesdays in March at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall, during Soup Suppers

~ **Read a book of the Bible you haven't read before** (Luke, Acts, Romans, James, Genesis, Ruth, etc.)

~ **Commit one Scripture verse(s) to memory each week** (Isaiah 40:31, Jeremiah 29:11, John 11:25-26, Romans 8:37-39, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Philippians 4:4-8, etc.)

Please see front page for information on Prayer...