



West Chester Nazarene Church

PSALMS 139

Prayer & Fasting Journal

January 2024

Happy New Year! As we move into 2024, our tradition is to start the year with a time of prayer and fasting. This month, our sermons and prayer are going to be centered around Psalm 139. This prayer guide is to assist you in your personal time with Jesus. Our hope is that you will take the time everyday to read the devotional, spend time in prayer, and grow closer to God.

We live in a time of great confusion. There are so many competing ideologies and belief systems. Now, more than ever, it seems that people are searching and confused about who they are. But, as followers of Christ, we know that God created us uniquely. God knows exactly who we are; God loves us and has plans for our lives. Psalm 139 is a Psalm where David acknowledges that God created him, knows him (better than he knows himself), gives him value, and leads him.

As you study through this guide, tune out the many voices of this world. Tune out the commercials, social media ads, and political agendas and voices. Spend this month in prayer seeking who GOD says that you are. Ask God to reveal not just who you are created to be, but who you are called to be. Take the time personally to allow God to show you your value to Him. And ultimately, seek God's direction daily. We are blessed to serve a God that knows us and is with us every day. His Spirit is living inside of us and is there to guide our thoughts, our feelings, and our actions.

Take this month to tune in to your creator. Make it a priority to spend time with Jesus every day. To help this happen, you could participate in fasting. Fasting is sacrificing something that you will replace with time and focus on God. Here are some examples of things you could fast this month:

- Social Media
- TV/ Electronics
- Food
- Hobbies
- Coffee or snacks

You could fast one thing for the whole month, or you could do weekly fasts. But if you do fast, make sure that you replace that time with prayer and study. You could meditate in Psalm 139 or other scriptures that will help you know who GOD created you to be and who GOD calls you to be.

May God lead us and guide us into 2024 so that we can glorify Him through who we are and what we do.

Blessings,
Pastor Alex

THE PURPOSE OF THIS JOURNAL

As a group of people following Jesus, we bow at the feet of our Lord and ask for God's guidance and blessing on WCN as we grow Upward, Outward and Forward in Jesus for 2024.

Personal Preparation – The keys to prayer are simple!

First Essential - Designate a time and a place to focus on God daily. Then, use that time to pray. Start talking to God about needs, hopes and dreams. **Write in this journal!**

Second - Join with a friend or small group weekly for accountability and encouragement.

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hears my voice, and opens the door, **I will come into him, and will sup with Him, and he with me.** Revelation 3:20*

*Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and **we will come to them and make our home with them.**” John 14:23*

This is prayer: opening the door to Jesus, inviting him in, conversing with him and following His advice. In this season of prayer and fasting we want to keep the door open to Jesus all month.

The Power of Agreeing in Prayer

Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them. Matthew 18:19-29

Find a prayer partner or get into a small group so you can agree with other believers for God to work in your life. This is often how miracles begin! Even if you are not in a small group, if you follow the daily prayer prompts, you will be agreeing in prayer with everyone else using the guide.

FASTING INFORMATION AND IDEAS

Why do we pray? Why do we fast? It's simple. Jesus told us to. He fasted and prayed before every major event in His three years of ministry on earth. He said his followers would fast after he was gone. Jesus devoted a large chunk of the Sermon on the Mount to instructions on how to pray and fast correctly. He fasted food. Prayer and fasting precede miracles and powerful moves of God.

Fasting with common sense – If you are thinking of fasting more than one or two meals at a time, make sure you are healthy enough to do so. **If you are on medications or have dietary restrictions, check with your doctor about what is sensible regarding fasting.** Those who work in strenuous jobs should not fast all day because they need strength and stamina for physical exertion. As you combine prayer and fasting, there are several options. Listed below are a few strategies, including non-food options.

Food Fast Ideas

One meal certain days—The fast is not about only giving up food, but also includes praying in lieu of eating. *Jesus said, “Could you not watch with me one hour?”* **Matthew 26:40** Use the time to prepare the meal or travel to a restaurant or get ready to eat for prayer.

Two meals certain days—You could pray twice each day by sacrificing two meals to the Lord.

Eat only veggies—**The Daniel Fast** involves giving up meats, desserts and snacks, eating only the foods like Daniel and his three friends most likely ate. While this fast doesn’t give extra time to pray, it is a commitment of the heart and when joined with prayer, it moves the heart of God.

Cut out refined sugar—Give up desserts, sweet drinks, and or donuts. It might even be healthy!

Behavior Fasts

Get up an extra 30 minutes early to pray – Jesus often got up early, before dawn, to pray.

Give up TV or video gaming for a while – Secular people might laugh at “fasting television” or “sacrificing screen time,” but it’s about putting loyalty to Christ first. *Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* **Matthew 6:33**

Give up watching/doing sports or binge watching TV – Give up some peloton time, the deer stand, fishing, jogging or other activity to pray and make talking to Jesus your top priority. Or give up a few NFL football games or college hoops for added prayer time.

Give up pleasure reading/media – Beyond what you must read for your work or preparing for teaching the Word of God, pleasure reading/podcasts could be turned into prayer time. You could consider laying aside your daily news sources like TV or media websites/apps a few days a week.

Restrict mobile phone and other social media screen time – While some of these communication updates are necessary, they often become serious time robbers. Substituting talking to God (prayer) for screen time would yield a big return.

Other – The Holy Spirit may have an idea for fasting unique to you.

What will you fast this month?

Food or drink fast:

Behavior or time fast:

Personal Prayer and Fasting Goals for January 2024

The corporate purpose of this journal is to help us cover the ministries and outreach of WCN with God's grace, unity, protection, and favor throughout all of 2024. We want everything we do, from worship and Bible study in this building to serving in Guatemala or God's Threads, to be covered by God.

The personal purpose of this journal is to simply get more people talking to God every day! Then, making it a habit. We are surrounded by needs, so it often helps to list and organize the needs.

Another good strategy is to write down personal prayer goals for this January spiritual journey. You can **revisit and revise** this page during the journey. Here are **a few possible areas** to consider.

Pray about use of time and priorities:

Pray about personal relationships:

Pray about use of talents, influence, or money:

Fasting Encouragement Day 1 – Whatever you have decided to do in special prayer and fasting, it’s an offering to God. **Jesus set the example for us and taught us to pray and fast.** Let’s do this!

Day One - A Prayer for Divine Guidance and Transformation

Pastor Shahne

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way. Psalms 139:23-24 (NASB)

In these two verses, we find a profound prayer of self-examination, humility and surrender to the Almighty. David, the Psalmist, invites God to examine the depths of his heart, to probe his innermost thoughts, and to reveal any offensive ways within. It is a plea for divine guidance, a recognition of our human limitations, and an acknowledgment of God’s omniscience.

This prayer is an expression of humility, acknowledging that we may not always be aware of our faults, weaknesses, or hidden sins. By asking God to search us, we open ourselves to His loving scrutiny, allowing Him to uncover those areas in our lives that need healing and redemption. Once God has revealed these areas, we’re not left to our own ways of self-repair. Instead, we ask Him to guide us in the way of truth, holiness, and everlasting life. Redemption comes through Salvation; Salvation flows into Sanctification and then to Holiness. This is an affirmation of our trust in God’s wisdom (**Isaiah 55:9**), His unfailing love (**Psalms 143:8**), and His eternal purpose (**Ephesians 3:10-12**) for our lives.

As we reflect on these verses, may we be inspired to make this our daily prayer and a continual part of our spiritual journey. Let us willingly open ourselves to God’s examination, and guidance, and trust. His plan for us. Remember, **the journey to transformation begins with a humble and sincere request for God to search our hearts**, and it leads to a path that ultimately guides us to an everlasting life in His presence.

Reflection

You Have searched me, Lord, and you know me. Psalm 139:1

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts. Psalm 139:23

Psalm 139 starts and finishes by acknowledging the fact that God knows us completely. He’s searched us. He knows us better than we know ourselves. We can trust Him and His guidance!

What are you praying for that will require total trust in God to accomplish?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day One

Week One Fasting Challenge: Know Me – The Audit. Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 1 – Help us, Lord, to find a quiet place to hear your voice each day this month. Show us your majesty and holiness! Help us to see and hear Jesus clearly! Help us to see where you want to lead us and transform us!

Fasting Encouragement Day 2 – If you are fasting food today, remember to drink plenty of water. Stay hydrated physically and spiritually! ***Jesus is the living water!***

Day Two – Walking Daily with Jesus

You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? **Psalm 139:5-7**

Psalm 139 reminds us that everywhere we go, every minute of the day, God is right there with us! We must not act like we are “big shots.” Jesus continually taught and modeled humility. He washed his disciples’ feet. He said, “Don’t let your right hand know that your left hand is helping a needy person.” Pray in your closet. Do fasting with a smile on your face.

People who live humbly like Jesus are the ones actually building the Kingdom here on earth.

What is God leading you to do in 2024?

For your family:

At work or school:

In your neighborhood:

At WCN, at school:

What breaks your heart about today’s world:

If you have leadership responsibilities, how can you be a servant leader like Jesus? The root word in administrator is minister.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Two

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 2 – Lord, we recognize that we need to do things your way. Help us to be broken hearted over the sin and heartache around us. Help us to be diligent and wise as we love our neighbors and build God’s Kingdom here on Earth every day.

Fasting Encouragement Day 3 – If you are fasting solid food for an extended time, expect a little discomfort and possibly a headache. This is not uncommon, especially if you’ve cut out caffeine, sugar, or sodas. It’s a good idea to drink plenty of water and avoid excessive exercise on days when you miss meals. Listening to worship music or an audio Bible can be helpful.

Day Three – Forgiveness and Mercy

Search me, God, and know my heart: test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. **Psalm 139:23-24**

From The Lord's Prayer – *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* **Matthew 6:12, 14-15**

From the Beatitudes – *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.* **Matthew 5:7**

In Psalm 139, David says that God searches our hearts and reveals anything bad. This aligns with the Lord’s Prayer where Jesus says, “**forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**” Then, Jesus points out that we must forgive others as God forgives us. He said nothing about any exceptions.

Is there anything in your life for which you need forgiveness?

Is there a deep pain or hurt from the past that you need to let go of and forgive someone?

When you forgive someone, it can spark hope in their life that God will forgive them, too. Forgiving also sets us free of negative feelings that haunt and hinder us.

**If there is a serious forgiveness issue in your life, whether it is accepting God’s amazing love for yourself or knowing how to forgive someone who has hurt you deeply, please contact one of the pastoral staff for help.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Three

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 3 – Help us, Lord, to fully accept your forgiveness of our sins. Then, Lord, help us to step out in faith and forgive people who have hurt us deeply. Help us to be deep springs of mercy and grace to our family members, our friends, our church friends, even our enemies. Lord, we thank you for your grace and mercy to us!

Fasting Encouragement Day 4 – Praying and fasting are about priorities. *Then Jesus said, “If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” Matthew 16:24*
This is not about inflicting pain on yourself or earning points with God. It is putting Jesus ahead of a food, screen time, social media, or whatever you’re giving up during this time of fasting and prayer.

Day Four – Walking the Walk

Carol Beckett

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Psalm 139:23

Growing up as a teenager I first experienced anxiety in the 7th grade. I remember feeling so lost and out of control with my feelings. Of course, the 7th grade for any teenager is a difficult year with many new feelings of awareness and so many adjustments in growing from a teenager into adulthood. Over the course of my life, though, I still have struggled with times of deep almost disabling episodes of anxiety. During these times, I have grown especially close in my relationship with the Lord. I have been so truly amazed at how God had sent friends to help encourage me, blessed me with a husband who loved me through the frightening times of my despair, and most of all gave me a peacefulness that he was with me. Friend, if you find yourself having everyday anxious thoughts or times of deep anxiety, God is with you. Call out to him in your prayers; ask him to give you his calming reassurance that he is with you.

Prayer: Dear God, please be with me in my times of anxiousness. You know my heart and I want to sense your peace at all times in my life. Thank you for loving me and being with me. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.

Reflection

How are you maintaining the purity of your heart?

How do you bring peace into your home, office, workplace or school?

When have you had to stand up for doing the right thing or for your faith in Jesus?

When has God led you away from temptation or delivered you from evil?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Four

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 4 – Lord, your prayer to the Father was that we, your followers, would be one in you, just as you are one in the Father. Help us at WCN to realize that the best way to get closer to each other is to get closer to you! Jesus, make us one in you, one with the Father and filled with the Holy Spirit! Help us trade our anxiety for Your peace!

Fasting Encouragement Day 5 - If you are fasting a particular food or activity, renew your commitment. **If you slip up, don't be discouraged.** Stay faithful to your goal and restart! Drink plenty of water, juice or broth if you are not taking solid food.

Day Five – Awakening and Revival – WCN and Beyond

The Great Commission: *And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. **Matt. 28:18- 20***

We live in a revival that has been in progress for about 1995 years. It started at Pentecost and will continue until Christ returns. The amazing spread of the gospel has moved from Israel to the four corners of the earth. Our job is to continue the task, maybe even complete the task. The Middle East seems to be matching what Jesus described about His return. *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. **Matthew 24:6-8***

Are we at WCN willing to deny ourselves and pray to God for spiritual awakening and revival in 2024? What would happen if churches across the USA prayed sincerely for revival? Let's find out! Satan wants people and churches to be isolated and full of fear and mistrust. God calls us to love all people, as He does.

Pray for our church ministries and our personal contacts to bring in new believers.

Pray for God to awaken each of us, pastors and laypeople alike, to be led by the Holy Spirit! He is faithful to equip each of us to share the testimony of Jesus.

What is God calling you to do to help reach out to the needy or lost?

*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. **II Chronicles 7:14*** Some would say this verse only applied to Israel, but that ignores what He has done for many cities and nations over the last 3000 years, including pagan Nineveh.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Five

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 5 – Lord, we love you and thank you for supplying our needs. Give us the backbone and heart to do your will in helping others and spreading the Good News of Jesus. Unite us in worship! Awaken us! Revive us!

Fasting Encouragement Day 6 – Prayer and fasting are about growing closer to God. We show that we hunger and thirst for righteousness more than we want food or social media. *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.* **Matthew 5:6**

Day Six – Friends and Co-workers

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. **Matthew 5:14-16**

Think about your circle of friends and neighbors. List the friends or co-workers that you know well enough to have good conversations with.

What are their needs? Are there any ways in which you could help them?

Do any of them need to know Christ? Pray for them daily through this fasting time and regularly after that.

Do any of your friends or co-workers need a church home?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Six

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 6 - Father in Heaven, help us to do your will and build your Kingdom! Help us to share the good news of Jesus with the people we see regularly. Our friends, co-workers, and neighbors all need to know Jesus! Give us the wisdom and backbone to share our faith at any time. Help us to expand our circle of friends!

Fasting Encouragement Day 7 – During an extended time of fasting food starts looking really, really good. Don't let your stomach take over your brain! Good worship playlists or good Bible podcasts from RightNow Media can help a lot!

Day Seven – Psalm 139:1-6 – You Know Me Completely

Wings of the Dawn - Pastor Teresa

I graduated from a local Christian high school where I participated in different types of extracurricular activities. One of those activities was musicals (*and for the record, I have no acting skills*). Each year, the school did a spring musical and before each performance, the cast, chorus (*which was what I was usually in- remember, no acting skills*), and the crew would come together for last minute instructions and prayer.

My choir had a traditional song that we would sing at concerts and at the gathering time before the start of the show called *Wings of the Dawn* by Linda Spencer (you can find it on Youtube), which comes straight out of Psalm 139. The beginning of this song comes from verses 1-3 of the chapter....

*O Lord, You have searched me and know me
You know when I sit and when I rise
Where can I go from Your Spirit, where can I go from Your presence
And if I rise on the wings of the dawn
If I settle on the far side of the sea
Even there Your hand will guide me
Your right hand will hold me fast*

As I have gone back and read these verses, it not only brings to my mind memories of singing this song, but also the memories of thinking about what this passage was saying to me then. As a high school kid, I thought about how anxious I was to know what God's plan for me was and what life was going to look like when I became an adult. But what I didn't think about was how much God loved me and the value that my life actually had at the time. Now, as an adult, I know that God has been with me through the ups and the downs that life brings, and where his presence has guided me through highs and lows.

Reflection:

List out the areas where God has guided you and has been faithful to you. Listen to this song if you have never heard it before, and spend some time praising God today for what He has done for you.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Seven

Week One Fasting Challenge: *Know Me – The Audit.* Thought/ Word/ Action Audit - Take time to journal your thoughts, your words, your actions and then during your time of fasting, pray over what you have thought, said, and done each day.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 7 – Thank you, Lord, for the fact that you know us better than we know ourselves. We have nothing to hide. When we ask you to help us say and do the right things, you are always right there to help us. Lord, enable us to share the good news that you know everything about us and yet you still love us with an everlasting love.

Fasting Encouragement Day 8 – If you are on a food fast drink plenty of water. Also, don't give up. Be diligent! *But **without faith it is impossible** to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who **diligently seek Him.*** **Hebrews 11:6**

Day Eight – Marriage and Family

“Haven't you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate. **Matthew 19:4** *You shall not commit adultery.* **Exodus 20:14**

In Genesis 1, God created the universe and the world. In chapter two, He created the family. In the Bible, the family is the cornerstone of society. When God gave Moses the Law, one of the 10 essential laws was to be faithful in marriage. **As believers, our first loyalty after God is to our husband or wife.**

If you're married, how is God telling you to bless your spouse today?

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. **Exodus 20:12** *This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.* **Numbers 6:23-26**

In Numbers 6, Moses gave the priests the blessing to say over families as they worshiped. Devout Jews still have this blessing on their door frames. We should bless our families in Jesus' name every day. We need to do everything we can to bless our children and when the need arises, our parents.

How can you bless your children and your parents this week?

Are there any families that you could help as they raise their children? Is there a single parent family you could encourage? Some free babysitting? A gift card? A meal together?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Eight

Week Two Fasting Challenge: *His Presence- See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 8 – Lord, help us honor marriages and be one with our wife or husband. Help us guide our children to you. Help us honor our parents. Remind us to pray daily for family members. Help our hearts to be broken over family members living apart from you. And Lord, help our church to be family for those who have no family.

Fasting Encouragement Day 9 – *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you. II Thessalonians 3:1* In their letters, Paul, Peter and John **always request prayer**. We still need to make it a habit to pray for each other. Fasting helps us pray more intensely for others.

Day Nine – The Clubhouse and WCC

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.
Proverbs 22:6

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there. **Matthew 19:14-15**

How important is childhood? Childhood is the ideal time to plant the seeds of faith and truth into a person’s life. Everyone who comes to God must become like a child to start the journey. Jesus encouraged parents to bring their children to Him. Who are the children in your life and how can you bless them and pray for them? How can you bring them to Jesus?

If you have children in public schools, get to know the teachers, coaches, administrators, and elected school board members and pray for them regularly.

The Clubhouse & Backyard, our children’s ministry at WCN, is the focus of today’s prayers. Could God be prompting you to help teach and encourage our children? Sunday School classes, the nursery, Wednesday night groups, Fall Fest, Eggstravaganza, and VBS require a lot of committed volunteers. **If you would like to help, please contact Pastor Emily or Carol Beckett.**

West Chester Child Care (WCC) is another way WCN blesses children and families. Sherri Rindfleisch is director of our Pre-school and Day Care. **If you need pre-school child-care or would like to inquire about teaching or assisting in any way, please contact Sherri through the church office.**

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Nine

Week Two Fasting Challenge: *His Presence - See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 9 – Lord, help Pastors Emily and Carol and the children’s ministry team as they teach Bible stories and Biblical truth to our children. Help them as they bless the children by planting seeds of love and truth in children from the nursery through sixth grade. Lord, guide Sherri Rindfleisch and her staff of committed teachers and assistants as they minister to Day Care and pre-school children and their parents every day. And Father, help Dale Ann Watkins with Whiz Kids ministry of City Gospel Mission.

Fasting Encouragement Day 10 – No matter what kind of fast you have committed to during this prayer and fasting challenge, stay true to your commitment. **Don't Quit! Reboot and restart if you need to!** Read Hebrews 11:6 again (**Diligence!**).

Day Ten – The Neighborhood
Search me and Know Me – Pastor Grace

Have you ever prayed the prayer “Search me, Lord. Know my heart”? In Psalm 139, this is the anthem of David’s prayer. David desperately asks the Lord to look within his heart and to see how he desires what the Lord desires. In verses 17 and 18, David’s adoration for the Lord and His thoughts are evident. He refers to the Lord’s thoughts as precious and vast. I believe noting these things are important for the verses to follow because, if we do not understand the devotion David has for the Lord, verses 19 through 22 will seem like pure hatred. In reality, David values the Lord’s thoughts because he desires to live a life for Him.

Psalm 139:19-22 shows holy hatred. I bet you would have never put those two words together because they seem like an oxymoron. This idea is similar to righteous anger. In these verses, David is expressing his hatred and utter dislike for these people who are speaking against the Lord. He literally says in verse 22, “I hate them with complete hatred.” You may be asking, “Are we not called to love?” The answer is yes, but David calls these people his enemies because they are speaking against God. I want you to notice how he responds to his anger though. He went directly to God in prayer rather than gossiping about it, acting on it, or doing anything unrighteous. (Reminder: Psalm 139 is a song of praise and a prayer.) He declares how he knows the Lord is going to take care of it (verse 19), but continues on in prayer regarding his feelings. David’s desires align with what the Lord desires. David wants to live a life for the Lord, so he is not going to behave like the people who are speaking against the Lord. Let’s revert back to this idea of holy hatred for a second. How is his hatred holy? He turned to prayer and declared the Lord’s authority over the situation. How we respond to situations shows the depths of our hearts. “Search me and know me” is the heartbeat of Psalm 139. God already knows all. I can’t help but ask myself this question, “When God searches the depths of my heart, would He confirm that I truly live a life that responds to frustration through prayer and declaration of His character?”

Young people are capable of great things for God. Let’s support Pastor Grace and her team with daily prayer and encouragement. Who are the teens in your life? Pray for them, their schools, and our church youth. If you have teens in school, get to know the teachers, coaches, administrators, and elected school board members and pray for them.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Ten

Week Two Fasting Challenge: His Presence- *See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 10 – Lord Jesus, help Pastor Grace as she and her team shepherd the junior and senior high students at WCN. Father, move powerfully this week at the District Teen Winter Retreat and their events throughout 2024.

Fasting Encouragement Day 11 - Revelation 3:20 says Jesus is knocking and waiting for us to open the door to our heart so he can come in and sup with us. In fasting and prayer, we have had the door open for eleven days. Give Jesus permission to come in and rearrange the furniture!

Day Eleven – Young Adults, Outreach, and Sports Ministry

Post high school is also a challenging time. Questions arise. Can you believe what you were taught in church? Most of society, especially media and entertainment, says, “Do whatever you want. It’s your life, your body, you’re your own God!” **Pray for Pastor Teresa and her team** as they help young adults navigate life.

Who are the college students in your life? Pray for them.

Who are the young adults in your life? Pray for them

Outreach opportunities - Pastor Teresa directs many of our outreach ministries. From raking leaves to Serve Week, she can help you find a place to serve and spread the Gospel. Also, as Southwest Ohio NYI director, you might be able to help out with a district youth event. If you are an athlete, or think of yourself as one, she can also help you get connected into one of our Sports Ministries.

WCN Outreach Ministries exists to reach our local community with the love of Christ through weekly, quarterly, and annual ministry opportunities. **Contact Pastor Teresa** to see where you can get connected.

Right now, Upward Basketball is going full steam with hundreds of people in the Gym every Saturday. If you’d like to help out contact Dennis Blankenship or Pastor Teresa. **Pray for Dennis, the coaches, refs, players and parents.**

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Eleven

Week Two Fasting Challenge: *His Presence- See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 11 - Lord, help Pastor Teresa and her team as they lead the teaching, fellowship, and discipleship of the young adults at WCN. Give her and her team patience and creativity to reach the diverse needs of our young adults. And Lord, Help Teresa as she coordinates our Sports Ministries to win people to Jesus and keep us healthy.

Fasting Day Encouragement 12 – As we fast and pray for our church during this call to prayer, we are laying the foundation on which God will do amazing things in the coming months of 2024. Be diligent. **Be faithful. Fast and pray.** And drink plenty of water while you fast.

Day Twelve – Adult Ministries and Discipleship

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. **Matthew 28:18-20***

Adults and Seniors Adults who are mature in their faith are the foundation of the church. They have seen the hand of God move and lead in the past. They have seen God lead through both the mountains and the valleys of life. They pray. They lead. They give. They love.

One goal of this January 2024 prayer and fasting challenge is to prepare us to make disciples by being disciples. If you are an experienced follower of Jesus, have you asked God to open doors for you to mentor or counsel a younger believer?

If you are early in your walk with God, try to find older experienced believers to help you grow and strengthen your faith. **Pastor Dale loves to connect disciples and mentors.**

If you are retired, please consider the J.O.Y. Club as a means of outreach and fellowship. They do ministry and get together for good times, too. Contact Bev Dowler or Donna Stewart.

Pray for Pastor Dale and Discipleship, Dave Reuss and Men’s Ministry, and Karen Hensler and Women’s Ministry.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twelve

Week Two Fasting Challenge: *His Presence- See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 12 – Lord, thank you for the adults in our congregation! Please guide Pastor Dale and our adult connection group teachers as they lead in Bible study and fellowship. Father, we thank you for the impact of the J.O.Y. club at WCN. Please help Bev Dowler and Donna Stewart as they lead the J.O.Y Club and plan outreach and support for our seniors.

Fasting Encouragement Day 13 – As we fast, be reminded that our prayers for these four weeks will result in answers for months, even years to come. God’s timing is not necessarily ours! Be diligent.

Day Thirteen – Connection Groups
Connection and Small Group Leaders

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.
James 3:1

It is a heavy responsibility to stand before a group of people, from the very young to very old, and lead in a study of God’s Word! In this age of communication, teaching God’s word is tricky. To say, “This is the way, this is the truth, this is what the Bible says ... ,” requires diligent preparation and experience. **WCN has a wonderful corps of Bible teachers and mentors. Pray for each one!**

What teachers have influenced you to know God in a deeper way?

Take a moment to pray for your teachers and the teachers of your children and grandchildren.

Today would also be a good day to pray for the people in our congregation who work in public and private schools educating our children and youth. We have several who are teachers and administrators.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Thirteen

Week Two Fasting Challenge: *His Presence- See it.* Each day in your fasting time, focus on what has happened in your day...good, bad, small, big...and think of how God was with you during that day. What was God saying and doing in your life through each thing?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 13 – Father, help us to be like Jesus in willingness to serve, which sometimes means leading. Help our teachers to prepare well and thoroughly know the passages they teach. Thank you, Lord, for faithful teachers of your word! Fill them with your spirit! And Lord, pour out your Spirit on those who teach and run schools as a career.

Fasting Encouragement Day 14 – Jesus spent forty days fasting and praying to begin his public ministry. Before big events of his ministry, he spent entire nights in prayer. We need to be intentional in prayer and fasting. Do you feel called to **pray and fast for a particular WCN ministry?**

Day Fourteen – Psalm 139: 7-12 – You Are With Me

Tracked – Pastor Alex

Ever felt like you were being watched? With modern technology, it's easier now than ever to be tracked. We have programs like Life360 and FindMyFriends that allow us to track one another. I don't know about you, but I don't love being tracked. My friends and coworkers don't need to know where I am at all times.

Psalm 139 is a reminder that God knows not just where we are, but who we are. It's a beautiful reminder that God not only created us, but God knows us, and God is always with us. In verses 7-12, David acknowledges that God is always with him. There is nowhere that we can go that is outside the reach or presence of God.

This could be a scary proposition...if you are wanting to hide from God (Think Jonah). But what is really comforting is looking at this section in light of the whole context of the Psalm. God knows exactly who we are. God knows our thoughts before we think them. God knows our intentions, our words, and everything about us. There's no point in trying to hide. It's useless.

Here's the best news...God knows everything about you...and God still loves you more than you will ever know. God is always pursuing. God is always working on your behalf. No matter where you find yourself today, God is with you. God knows exactly what you are going through. God knows exactly where your heart is. **God's deepest desire is that you would know His love for you and as verse 10 says, let His hand guide you.**

Reflection

How has God's tracking benefitted you over your life as a follower of Jesus?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Fourteen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God's Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

Prayer Focus Day 14 – Lord, as we meditate on Psalm 139 this month, help us understand what David knew about your presence in his life. Lord, we praise you that we can trust you in every high and low of life. Help us trust you completely and perfectly! Open our eyes, Lord!

Fasting Encouragement Day 15 – King David wrote Psalm 139. The greatest king of Israel knew his need for God. He prayed and fasted. We are agreeing with David as we read Psalm 139?

Day Fifteen – Psalm 139:1-6 - Prayer is Relational with Jesus

Pastor Youngduk

As we begin the new year 2024, we might increase our tendency to pray to God. This desire is very common because we, as Christians, know well that we should pray for ourselves or other people (our families) or other things. Unfortunately, when it comes to thinking of prayer it is so easy for us to fall into the trap that makes us consider prayer as an annual event or a special program. Prayer is not a yearly event; it is a daily life with Jesus, walking and talking with Him. Therefore, starting the new year, it's important that prayer become an everyday activity in our relationship with Jesus. So, how can we pray practically? First and most important, we must know prayer is relational. In other words, prayer is closely based on a relationship with Jesus. I love many of David's prayers, praises, and songs he wrote in the book of Psalm because all of his expressions in various forms came in a close relationship with God. For example, in Psalm 139, David shows us how important his relationship with God is in a prayer life. Specifically, in verses 1 to 6, we can clearly see the intimate relationship between God and David. He says, **"You have known me... You understand my thoughts... You look over my path and my lying down... You know all my ways very well."** Psalm 1-3 I believe that only those who have an intimate relationship with God can express in this way. Two applicable questions are following.

At the beginning of the new year, before you pray, I encourage you to check out your relationship with Jesus seriously. Do you have an intimate relationship with Jesus? Then, I want to encourage you to have a "You know me well and you lead my life" attitude before you pray. This humble attitude will verify the relationship between you and Jesus.

Do you believe that Jesus is controlling your life?

Do you have an intimate relationship with Jesus?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Fifteen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God's Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 15 – Father, help us be like Jesus! Whether it's feeding the hungry, helping the needy, healing the sick or turning over the money changers' tables, we want to be like Jesus! Whatever we do, Lord, help us do it for your glory, not ours. Help us practice daily communication with our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ!

Fasting Encouragement Day 16 – The health benefits of a Daniel type fast or an ongoing intermittent fasting diet are well documented. Feeling better is not necessarily a spiritual thing, but if you feel good and your mind is clear then you can pray better and get things done!

Day Sixteen – Recovery Groups

Addictions - Think about how hard it is to give up food, or just sugar or caffeine? How much more difficult life is for a person who is trapped in the addictive power of medications, alcohol, drugs or pornography. Addiction is a cruel prison. Whether drugs or alcohol or some type of behavior, it is terrible to be unable to think clearly and make good choices. All of us likely know someone who is battling addiction and would like to be set free but can't do it on their own.

Who do you know that is struggling with an addiction? Do you have an addiction? ****If you need help or advice on how to help someone, contact the church office for counsel from a pastor. It can be very tricky helping someone caught in an addiction. Don't try to go it alone.**

List and pray for anyone you know who is battling addictions. God is their ultimate hope! We have seen God answer many prayers and help people be freed from addictions.

Do you know of anyone who has a family member dealing with addiction? Pray for them and pray for God to show you how to encourage or support them.

Grief – At some point we all face grief, whether from loss of a loved one or some other tragedy. People who have loved ones dealing with addictions often live in grief. When we see that friends or family members are dealing with grief, the first thing to do is lift them up in prayer. Then be sensitive to how you might help. Our Grief Share groups can help you through grief and teach you how to help others through their grief.

Pray that the healing and redeeming presence of God is active in every recovery and support group that meets in our church.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Sixteen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God's Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 16 – Lord, we ask for your Spirit to lead and move in the recovery ministries and support groups meeting here at church. Help Pastor Dale and Jessica Fresquez, as they lead the Recovery in Jesus group. Bless Debbie Rudd, Wilmer Jones, Devita Claxon and Kathy Orlando as they lead the Grief-share group. Guide Pam Prather as she leads the PAL group.

Fasting Encouragement Day 17 – As we continue this month of prayer and fasting challenge, keep up your commitment. Be diligent. Be faithful. Stay sweet, even if you have cut out sugar! Hebrews 11:6

Day Seventeen – Compassion Ministries

*When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “**The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.**”* **Matthew 9:36-38**

Pray today for Doris Yinger and her team as they direct the God’s Threads outreach. The God’s Threads team, Shirley Brown, Judy Vanas, Lynn Shimkus, Sharon Salyer, Sharon Stevens, Liz Cox, Jeannine Pearson, Sandy Lemmel, Carol Sears, Renae Hatfield, Lucy Pelcha, Rod Hogsten, Barb Thomas, Bill Smith, Kathy Crowley, Rodney Brown, Sherry Williams, Ed Donnell and Ruth Wheeler are changing the world for people every week!

Pray for Ralph and Dale Funderburg and their team as they lead the Meet the Need at WCN.

Pray for Jim and Debbie Williams as they minister to people in homeless camps.

Contact Pastor Teresa to learn about joining a ministry team. It’s a practical way to use your talents and share your faith.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Seventeen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God’s Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 17 – Father, help us share the Good News of Jesus effectively every week. Please enable us to help people in need with food and clothing whenever we can. Be with our teams led by Doris, Ralph and Dale, and Jim and Debbie as they lead in these efforts.

Fasting Encouragement Day 18 – Review your goals for this month of fasting and prayer. Renew your commitment. **Each person you pray for is worth more than this entire planet!** Jesus asked, “What will a man profit if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?”

Day Eighteen –Church Board

We have been blessed to have a talented and dedicated group of men and women who are elected to serve on the WCN Church Board. They have the responsibility of providing leadership, wisdom and accountability for the pastoral staff as we carry out our vision of growing Upward, Outward and Forward to build the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in Heaven. They manage the finances, maintenance of the building, safety and security, and oversight of ministries and mission outreaches. They have the ultimate responsibility for decisions regarding WCN and the WCC Pre-school and Day Care. **Encourage them and thank them** when you get a chance!

Mike Aaron – Outward
Eric Anderson – Operations
Carol Arrom - Outward
Jenn Badenhop – Outward
Steve Caddell – Operations
Kim Coffing – Forward

Ralph Funderburg – Outward
Jason Morris – Forward and Operations
Ray Murray – Upward
Chris Perniece – Operations
Kalyn Vogelmann – Forward
Debbie Williams – Upward

Our Vision of Upward, Outward and Forward breaks down like this:

Upward – Discipleship, Prayer and Worship

Outward – Local Outreach, Global Missions, Daycare Board/WCC, Korean PAC

Forward – Children, Youth and Young Adults. Senior Adults, Men’s and Women’s Ministries

Operations – Finance, Administration, Properties

Be open to God’s direction about ways to support our Church Board. Which of the four areas listed above is God leading you to help lead or support in 2024?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Eighteen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God’s Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 18 – Lord, thank you for members willing to give time to provide leadership for our church. Help our board to hear from you and be unified. Protect them and their families. Build your Kingdom through their wise stewardship over the resources you provide for this body of believers.

Fasting Encouragement Day 19 – Fasting is always associated with prayer. However, the Bible makes it clear that one result of fasting is helping the needy. During this month of prayer and fasting, has God opened your eyes to someone you can help materially or spiritually?

Day Nineteen – Pastors

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Timothy 2:15

Pray for the pastors and program leaders at WCN, especially those that minister to you and your family.

Pastor Alex – Lead Pastor

Pastor Grace – Junior/Senior High

Pastor Shahne – Administration and Tech

Pastor Teresa - Young Adults and Outreach

Pastor Brad – Worship

Pastor Dale – Discipleship and Adults

Pastor Carol – Preschool

Pastor Youngduk – Korean Community

Pastor Emily – Children

Pastor Dan – Sunday Night Praise

Sherri Rheinfliesch – WCC Director (Daycare)

Pray also for our non-pastoral operations staff:

Jordan Watkins – Technical Director

Jessica Fresquez – Head Custodian

Hannah Spaniak – Administrative Director

Eli Mahaffey– Custodial Support

Teri Huckins– Office Administrator

Jeremiah French – Building Maintenance

Retired Pastors:

Bob Highley

Make Mathews

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Nineteen

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God’s Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 19 – Lord, today we lift up the Nazarene churches and schools around the world. Help us to be faithful to proclaim the walk of holiness to which we are called. Help, guide and bless our Generals, College Presidents, and our District Superintendent, Bob Mahaffey, as they lead! Fill them with truth, knowledge, and wisdom by your Holy Spirit so that our churches bear fruit to the glory of God! In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Fasting Encouragement Day 20 – *And when He (Jesus) had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Matthew 4:2* **After Jesus had fasted forty days**, He was hungry, but He was also ready to battle Satan and begin His three-year mission to establish His Kingdom on earth. You are getting spiritually stronger to expand His Kingdom!

Day Twenty – Sanctity of Life

Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:7

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” Genesis 1:26

Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:16

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. 1 Corinthians 3:19

When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Luke 1:41-44

Many people want to identify abortion and euthanasia as very gray political areas. However, the Bible and Jesus’ teachings make it clear that human life is very special. We are created in the image of God. Human life is unique from conception to final breath. Sanctity of life is for all people including the children still in the womb, the handicapped, the sick and the elderly.

Do you know anyone who is dealing with these types of situations: considering or dealing with abortion, single parent, an older person needing assistance, someone dealing with a disability? Are you able to help them? How can you pray for them? How can you love your neighbor?

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God’s Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 20 – Father, we lift up those in the political, legal and activist arenas who are working to protect unborn babies, the aged, the handicapped who can’t care for themselves, and the laws defining marriage. We lift up organizations like “Life Forward,” that work to help expecting mothers in need. We repent for the sins of our nation in these areas and the church’s failure to confront attacks on the value and dignity of human life.

Fasting Encouragement Day 21 – It's amazing how praying when your stomach is not full allows you to think more clearly and have great conversations with Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Day Twenty-One – Psalm 139:14 - Identity in Christ

We Are Handmade! – Pastor Dan Walters

Psalms 139 is the basis for the self-esteem and self-worth of believers: God made each person. God knew each one before we were born, and He knew the moment we were conceived. And He is present at every phase of our development from that moment on.

We have been fashioned by God, including our shape, our appearance, our personality, and He has woven us together like a cloth on a loom. The scientific study of the human body caused David to cry out to his creator, "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well." We all must say Amen to that!

Therefore, since God fashioned our inward parts, He knows how we function. David writes: "Thou hast possessed my reins"- Hebrews believed that the reins were the first part of the human fetus that is formed, and God placed within us a conscience, a moral guide to right and wrong, which means God laid the foundation of our being so we could become like Him in righteousness and holiness.

In verse 15 David acknowledges "My substance, (embryo) being yet unformed, was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, that is, in the womb, unobserved." God saw and knew what his structure was to be, as well as the number of days "when yet there were none of them."

What is hidden to us, however, is not hidden to God. He is the Creator. Not only does God know us in the womb; He also knows us beyond the womb. God is sovereign. He not only sees the end from the beginning; He molds it. He is the potter, and we are the clay. "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!"

Reflection:

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-One

Week Three Fasting Challenge: *Your Value - Hear From Him.* During your fasting time, focus on who God says you are. Use God's Word to show you your value. How are you unique? How does God feel about you? What does God want to tell you about who you are?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 21 – Lord, you made each of us uniquely – one of a kind. We are all created in your image, yet each of us has unique gifts, skills, and interests. Father, help us glorify you by using our talents just as Jesus used his!

Fasting Encouragement Day 22 – As we enter this last full week of our January prayer and fasting for 2024, be faithful. Fast and pray. Renew your effort if you need to. It's a battle but fasting and prayer lay the foundation for blessings here at home or even to Guatemala and Africa!

Day Twenty-Two – Work & Witness and Global Missions

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.** Acts 1:8*

One of the best ways to have your eyes opened to the broader scope of making disciples to the end of the earth is to go on a Work and Witness mission trip. WCN members have impacted parts of Peru, Ecuador, Paraguay, Mexico, Argentina, Papua New Guinea, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Bahamas, Senegal, Guatemala, El Salvador, Cuba, Jordan, Ukraine and several locations in the USA. Nearly everyone who goes on a mission trip will testify that they gained more from the experience than they gave. **This July WCN will be traveling to Kenya to do work at Africa Nazarene University.**

There is an order of priority in all mission efforts:

1. Pray and fast for the project (right now)
2. Give to support the project
3. Go on the trip to help out

We can't all do step three, but we can all do steps one and two! **Ask God what he wants you to do for our Global Missions program.**

A second prayer need is the **Guatemala Life Center Project in Se' Chinapemech**. It will involve a school, evangelism and feeding projects. This is a new start from our project with Springdale last year. **Pray for our contacts, Fili Yat and Nidia Castro, and Pastor Santiago, Pastor Miguel and Pastor Jose Maria** as they train people for the opening of the center by this coming summer. This center will be about 30 miles from Chisec where our Women's Ministry and youth ministered the last couple of years.

***If you are interested in participating in Work and Witness this summer, working at other Mission work for WCN or the SW Ohio district, contact Jenn Badenhop.*

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Two

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 22– Father, please bless the Kenya, Africa, Work and Witness trip this summer and other projects throughout the year. Please help in the assembling of the teams, safe travel to and from the sights, the successful evangelism, safety at the work sites, and money for the projects and travel costs. Be in the planning and startup of the Se' Chinapemech Life Center.

Fasting Encouragement Day 23 - ... *let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. Keeping our eyes on Jesus ...* **Hebrews 12:1-2**

Day Twenty-Three – SWONAZ Ministries and Nazarene Colleges

SW Ohio Nazarene (SWONAZ) District events – *Dr. Bob Mahaffey* – District Superintendent
Nazarene Missions International, District Assembly

Men's Advance – April TBA – West Chester Nazarene – *Mike Pendell, Dave Reuss*

Thrive – March 15-16, 2024 – West Chester Nazarene – *Kalyn Vogelmann*
This annual women's event impacts hundreds of women across our district and beyond.

Higher Ground – Children's Camps, Teen Camps, Retreats, Camp Meeting, and more.
Our District Camp and Retreat Center ministers to our SWONAZ churches but also to other Christian groups around the Tri-State.

Target Dayton – Year-round ministry in downtown Dayton that meets spiritual and physical needs of people every day.

Nazarene Universities

Pray for our nearby University Presidents: They are faced with the task of preparing young people to go into the world of work or graduate school with a Christian worldview and witness. Their Religion and Theology departments prepare young people to be pastors, preachers, and professors. Spiritual warfare is real! **They need our prayers!** Mount Vernon – Dr. Carson Castleman, Olivet – Dr. Greg Chenoweth, Trevecca – Dr. Dan Boone

Nazarene General Superintendents

Our six General Superintendents – oversee the outreach of the Nazarene church worldwide. They ordain new pastors and deacons and help guide every district assembly around the globe.

Dr. David Busic
Dr. Carla Sunberg

Dr. Gustavo Crocker
Dr. Scott Daniels

Dr. Filimao Chambo
Dr. Christian Sarmiento

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Three

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

Prayer Focus Day 23 – Father in Heaven build your Kingdom in the Cincinnati-Dayton-SW Ohio area. Lord, bless Higher Ground – children and teen camps, Camp Meeting, even UC football. Bless our SW Ohio efforts in Target Dayton, the Thrive Women's Conference and the Men's Advance Rallies and District Assembly and events! And Lord, fill our Nazarene Universities with your Spirit, especially our regional school, Mount Vernon and Dr. Carson Castleman.

Fasting Encouragement – Day 24 – *For God’s will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.” Hebrews 10:10* Each person you know is an eternal treasure!

Day Twenty-Four – WCN Ministries and Outreaches

The scope of ministry and activity at WCN is very broad. As we listen to God today let’s think about the many ways WCN touches our congregation, our community and beyond. Listed below are WCN ministries and other activities we host:

WCC Day Care and Pre-school	For the Master Men’s Ministry
Children’s Ministries	Men’s Bible Studies
Eggstravaganza	Pal Packs and Comfort Care Kits
Vacation Bible School	Prayer Meetings
Fall Fest	Greater Cincinnati Prayer Canopy
Junior High classes	National Day of Prayer Site
Senior High classes	Prayer Groups
Young Adult classes	Grief Share & Parents of Addicted Loved Ones
Adult Connection Groups	Recovery In Jesus
Nazarene World Missions	Christmas Project
Work and Witness	Target Dayton missions
SWONAZ Events	Hoxworth Blood Drives
JOY Club	First Responder Appreciation
Women’s Ministry and Thrive Conference	Polling place for elections
Women’s Bible Studies	Various Community Clubs
Naz Jazz Concerts	Open Gyms
Upward Basketball	Scouts
Meet the Need	Food pick up and distribution
God’s Threads	ESOL- English for Speakers of Other Languages
Compassion Ministry	Watchman on the Wall
Taekwondo	
Korean Church	

Perhaps God is leading you to find a place of service in one of the ministries at WCN. Think about it. **Pray about it! Talk to Pastor Teresa.** If you speak English you could help with ESOL, contact Lynn Shimkus. If you like to meet/greet people or ref basketball games, contact Dennis Blankenship.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Four

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 24 – Lord, we thank you for everything happening in our church building! As we do ministry and host community groups help us build your Kingdom here! May every square foot of our building be used to glorify God in English and Korean, Naz Jazz and Upward basketball, the Day Care and J.O.Y. Club (55+), connection groups and so much more!

Fasting Encouragement Day 25 – I urge you, first of all, to **pray for all people**. Ask God to help them; **intercede** on their behalf and **give thanks** for them. **Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority** so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. **This is good and pleases God our Savior.** I Timothy 2:1-4

Day Twenty-Five – Elected Officials and First Responders

In the Lord's hand the king's heart is a stream of water that he channels toward all who please him.
Proverbs 21:1 If ever there was a time when peacemakers were needed in American society and culture, it is now. Praying and fasting can help us become mature children of God. Be faithful in prayer and fasting as well as action! Pray for:

President Biden and the people appointed by his team.

U.S. Senators: Sherrod Brown and J D Vance

Area House Members: Warren Davidson, Greg Landsman, Brad Wenstrup.

Governor Mike DeWine, and the state legislators as they take office and govern Ohio.

Your local elected officials such as school boards, trustees, and county officials.

Supreme Court Justices, Ohio Supreme Court Justices, federal, state and local judges.

Many moral and religious issues are tied to the decisions of lawmakers; parental rights, abortion, euthanasia, sexual identity, even freedom of speech, it seems lately. We must not neglect to pray for leaders. No one can keep the Holy Spirit out of the back rooms where decisions are made. We need to ask God to work for the sake of the Kingdom and our children and grandchildren. We need to be aware of the facts and vote.

First Responders and Military

Remember to pray regularly for the people who put their lives on the line every day they go to work. We have several first responders in our congregation. **Let us pray for their safety and success, as they keep us safe throughout 2024.**

The US Armed Forces play the lead role in maintaining freedom around the world. Certainly, we have been blessed and used by God to prevent dictatorships from taking over the world. It appears Satan is trying to weaken our military from within. We are called to pray for those in authority and charged with keeping peace around the world. We have several military people on our prayer list each week. **Let us be faithful to call out their names to God for his blessing, guidance, and protection.**

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Five

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 25 – Lord, may your Holy Spirit move throughout the politics in our nation. We pray for repentance, revival and awakening among the elected and appointed leaders of this country. Lord, direct our leaders to make transparent wise decisions that honor you. And Father, we ask that you would be a hedge of protection around our police, our firefighters, our EMT's and our military. Protect them as only you can! Let them know they are doing your work in keeping the rest of us safe. Give them rest and peace of mind when they are off duty! Bless them at home with their families. Amen!

Fasting Encouragement Day 26 – Living in the United States, it's easy to lose track of the difficulties Christians face around the world. Fasting periodically for persecuted believers is an effective way to support them in their faith and dangerous commitment to Jesus.

Day Twenty-Six – The Persecuted Church – Beatitude Nine

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. **Matthew 5:11**

Many Christians around the world risk their jobs, safety, even their lives and put their families at risk when they profess to be a follower of Jesus.

North Korea
Parts of China

Iran
Afghanistan

Parts of Nigeria
Parts of North Africa

We dare not forget to pray for, and help when possible, our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being persecuted for the name of Jesus.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.

Revelation 6:9-11

This scripture indicates that God is very aware of martyrs for Jesus. We need to be aware as well. Set aside some time to pray on their behalf. Help when possible. At the end of the Bible, nearly 2000 years ago, Jesus says he will come back quickly, not necessarily soon, but quickly. And John replies, "Come, Lord Jesus!" As Jesus sees the injustice to and in humanity across the globe and the persecution of believers, in particular, He is very ready for the Father to say, "Go!"

Let's be found ready and faithful! It will happen – at the appointed time!

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Six

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 26 – Father, we lift to you our brothers and sisters in Christ who live under the oppression of Satan and tyranny around the world. We ask that you protect them and enable them to lead their neighbors and nations to Christ. Help us to provide for them however we can.

Fasting Encouragement Day 27 – As we end this month of fasting emphasis consider how God might be leading you to fast each week or month in 2024.

Day Twenty-Seven – God Has a Plan for Us

Your Thoughts For Me – Pastor Emily

“How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can’t even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!” Psalm 139:17-18

I think I speak for many of us when I say that Psalm 139 is one of my favorite passages of scripture. Here, David reflects on God’s incredible, deep love. A love that searches and knows us, does not leave us and a love that knows us intimately. We are not only known by our Creator but thought of often. Verses 17-18 say that God’s thoughts for us outnumber the grains of sand!

Did you know that there are roughly 700,500,000,000,000,000 (seven quintillion, five hundred quadrillion) grains of sand on earth? If God’s thoughts for us outnumber the grains of sand, that means God has a lot of thoughts about us! These aren’t just any thoughts. God knows us. He sees us. We are wonderfully made by Him, and He cares deeply for each of us. Sand is an important part of creation. It is used in concrete. Sand dunes protect our coasts from wind and waves. Sandy soil is also ideal for crops such as watermelon and peaches. We need sand in so many different ways. I can’t help but think – if sand is so important, and God’s thoughts for us are compared to sand – then God’s thoughts for us hold a lot of value! Just as sand is used in construction, may our lives be built on God’s thoughts for us. Just as sand dunes protect us, may God’s thoughts for us protect our minds during the storms we face in life. And just as sandy soil is beneficial for some crops, may we grow in fruitfulness as we are reminded of how deeply God cares for His creation.

Reflection:

Meditate on Psalm 139:17-18, take some time to pray and ask God to speak His thoughts over you. Write down what you hear God saying to you in a journal or in the space below. Let God’s thoughts for you stick to you like sand on the beach and be reminded that He knows, sees and cares.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Seven

Week Four Fasting Challenge: *Your Direction- Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 27 – Lord, we continue to reflect on your amazing care for us and knowledge of who we are in Psalm 139. Lord help us to trust you completely! You know what we can handle and what we can achieve. Give us the backbone to never quit!

Fasting Encouragement Day 28 – After Jesus fasted for forty days, angels came and ministered to Him. If you have been faithful in your commitment for the past twenty-nine days, don't be surprised if you experience a special blessing from God!

Day Twenty-Eight – Lead Me

The Antidote to Spiritual Drifting – Dale Wine

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

Psalm 139 begins with David reflecting on the pervasive nature of the presence of God. In verses 1-12, there is a detailed recitation of all the ways in which He knows us. Nothing about us is hidden from Him. Then, David prays a prayer that we should all pray in the last two verses of the chapter. This is a prayer I pray every day as I spend time with Jesus.

I know that the only way I can keep from growing stagnant and wandering in my obedience to Jesus is to pray this prayer and to allow Jesus to answer it as I listen to Him. He is faithful to lovingly convict me and to keep me aligned to His will. And when He points out anything in me that is not aligned to His will, my commitment is to quickly confess it, receive His grace and forgiveness and allow it to motivate me to obey Him moving forward.

Other times when I pray this prayer, the Holy Spirit affirms my obedience and I respond to Him with thanksgiving for helping me be in step with the Spirit.

This practice which I have been doing most days for 49 years has been a significant help in my walk with Jesus. Thank You, Jesus!

Reflection:

As you think about your life, is this part of your time with Jesus? Should it be? Make the commitment to be accountable to Him!

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Eight

Week Four Fasting Challenge - Your Direction- *Let Him Lead You.* During your fasting time, ask God to give you direction...and not just in the big things. What does God want you to do today? How does God want you to live? Who is God calling you to serve?

WCN Prayer Focus Day 28 – Father in Heaven, lead us and guide us! Help us to forgive our debtors, just as you forgive us. Help us to be like Jesus! Use us at WCN to build your kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven! Jesus, thank you for your amazing grace and mercy to us!

Fasting Encouragement Day 29 – God is on the move all over the world! But the spread of the Gospel in the Middle East is incredible. We can support and participate in the miracles there by praying and fasting here. Think about that for a minute! They request prayer more than money!

Day Twenty-Nine – Israel and the Middle East

The Church of the Nazarene has a dynamic ministry in the Middle East. We have churches, schools, and compassionate ministry for refugees, as well as evangelism. In these days of strife and military action, be faithful to pray for believers living in the midst of this turmoil.

Pray today for our schools in Amman and Zerka, Jordan; Damascus, Syria; and Beirut, Lebanon.

Our schools, especially in Jordan, minister to Christian and Muslim students and accept many refugees, both Christian and Muslim, from Syria and Iraq.

We have churches in Syria and two in Iraq under great pressure due to government instability. However, many people are coming to Christ. Please pray for them.

Our churches in Nazareth and Haifa have daycares ministering to Christian, Muslim and Jewish families. Pray for our Pastors in Haifa and Nazareth as they lead their congregations in difficult places to evangelize. Imagine bringing Christians, Jews and Muslims together.

If you would like to sponsor a child at one of our schools in Jordan, Lebanon or Syria, go to the Nazarene Compassionate Ministries website to see how.

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Twenty-Nine

Week Five Fasting Challenge – Try to establish regular times for prayer and fasting in the coming year. Jesus said if we pray and fast privately, God will reward us publicly. (Matthew 6). Reuse and apply the four fasting challenges in this guide throughout 2024.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 29 – Lord we plead for your hand of mercy and providence over Israel and the Middle East. Especially, we pray for Pastor Khalil Halaseh, in Amman, Jordan as he leads our churches and schools in the Middle East. Please fill him and his team of pastors with your Spirit. Protect them and give them wisdom. Be their shelter and fill their churches with love!

Fasting Encouragement Day 30 – One strategy for the rest of the year is to join in the Greater Cincinnati Prayer Canopy the last Tuesday of every month. It is a “sweet hour of prayer!” Check out that old hymn on your music app!

Day Thirty – Pray in the GCPC Today!

The Greater Cincinnati Prayer Canopy

Cincinnati Prayer Canopy is a growing group of over fifty churches that join in praying for the Cincinnati area. Each church covers a particular day of the month. Currently, over 50 churches and groups with over 1500 people are interceding for the Cincinnati area every month. Each month has a prayer guide to help the intercessors agree and unite in prayer. WCN covers the last Tuesday of each month.

Prayer is always the fuel that God uses to ignite the fires of revival and spiritual awakening. Our country, especially the children and youth need to see what that looks like. **So, if you haven't done so, please sign up to pray for an hour on the last Tuesday of each month.** Reminders will be emailed.

To sign up go to: wcn.church/events and click on sign up, then register.

Our world needs God and step one for Christians is to pray!

Politics is very divisive. International tensions are all around; Israel, Ukraine, Taiwan, much of Africa, South Korea and other areas. Perhaps Cincinnati and other prayer canopy areas will be centers of revival that ignite awakening and rescue across the world. Let's unite in prayer now!

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Thirty

Week Five Fasting Challenge – Try to establish regular times for prayer and fasting in the coming year. Jesus said if we pray and fast privately, God will reward us publicly. (Matthew 6). Reuse and apply the four fasting challenges in this guide throughout 2024.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 30 – Lord Jesus, for the rest of 2024 help us to follow your teaching and example in prayer. Help us to ask, seek and knock faithfully. Help us to fast. May Your will be done in our lives and all we do at WCN. Help us faithfully intercede for Greater Cincinnati the last Tuesday of every month this year! Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Fasting Encouragement Day 31 – Congratulations on completing this month of focusing on prayer and fasting! May God continue to pour out His Spirit on you, your family, and WCN for this entire year!

Prayer Agreement Day Thirty-One – Peace

Peace from God – Pastor Brad

How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand– when I awake, I am still with you. Psalm 139:17-18

My family and I love the Coastal areas and especially love going to the beach. I love to hear the water crashing up onto the beaches, birds chirping, and especially feeling the sand in my toes. I continually find myself wondering how much sand is covering the patch of beach where I am standing? I won't claim to be a scientist and give the answer on how much sand covers the beaches of the United States, let alone the World, but I would say I find peace knowing that God placed each grain across the Earth.

This passage in Psalm 139:17-18 shows that God thinks about His creation and humanity all the time and we are precious to Him. Some translations even say, “your thoughts concerning me”. This is a powerful reminder to each one of us. We are always on His mind!

Our concerns and anxieties are always on His mind. He knows us and the number of times He thinks about us can't be counted and they outnumber the grains of sand!

What is one thing you need God to handle for you? Maybe a worry, a family member, a job?

When we can release these concerns from our thoughts and give them to God, He instead gives us peace for our weary and worn-out minds.

Reflection:

For peace in 2024...

WCN Prayer and Fasting Day Thirty-One

Week Five Fasting Challenge – Try to establish regular times for prayer and fasting in the coming year. Jesus said if we pray and fast privately, God will reward us publicly. (Matthew 6). Reuse and apply the four fasting challenges in this guide throughout 2024.

WCN Prayer Focus Day 31- Thank you, Lord, for the truth of Psalm 139! Thank you for the peace that passes all human understanding! May everyone we meet in 2024 sense your presence in us because we have Your Peace! Amen and amen.

Psalm 139 – NKJV

O Lord, You have searched me and known me.
You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.
You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.
You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?
If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.
If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me;
Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

For You formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother's womb.
I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well.
My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book, they all were written,
The days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!
If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand;
when I awake, I am still with You.
Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men.
For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain.
Do I not hate them, O Lord, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?
I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.
Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;
And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.



LIFT UP THE WORD LIGHT UP THE WORLD

2 SAMUEL 22:29-31

THE 73rd ANNUAL NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER
THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024



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