

FAST AND FEASTS
A GUIDE
FOR
FAMILIES
FAST AND FEASTS

NOTE FOR ADULTS

One of the typical practices during Lent is fasting. Fasting is meant to mirror the practice of Jesus, who fasted 40 days in the desert in preparation for his public ministry.

Fasting during Lent (the 40 days leading up to Easter) is meant to help us draw closer to Jesus, and prepare our hearts and spirits to remember His death and resurrection.

While fasting is typically seen as a practice for adults, this Lent, we want to encourage you to make fasting a family affair! To help you do that, we've created this guide - "**Fast & Feast.**"

This guide is meant to help you participate in three practices over the Lent season. They are:

- **FAST:** Give up something they enjoy for the purpose of drawing closer to God.
- **FILL UP:** Spend time in God's presence by praying.
- **FEAST:** Read God's Word (the Bible), which is often referred to as "spiritual food"

Over the coming pages, you will find some notes on fasting, some ideas for prayer and Bible reading, and some activities for your family to enjoy as you focus on God together.

Depending on the age and maturity level of your family, you can use what is relevant to you! Regardless of age, we encourage you to commit to spending intentional time with God during this Lent season!

A WORD ON FASTING FOR FAMILIES

I know what you're thinking - **can kids fast?**

And - **Why would they?**

Valid questions.

We would **discourage** kids and teens from fasting **meals** - for health reasons, and also because of their maturity.

However, people of any age (kids included!) can understand that **fasting is about sacrificing something we love/enjoy to focus on God.**

While your family fasts during Lent, here are some ideas for kids and teens. You'll find more later in this guide! Here they are:

- Screen time on their tablet or phone
- TV, video games or movies
- Their favourite snack or drink (**not water!**)
- Arguing and complaining (All the parents said AMEN!)
- Social media (For preteens/teens)
- A game or toy

You can discuss this as a family, and decide if you will fast from them for a certain time frame (eg. an hour a day), a full week, a day during the week (eg. "Every Monday during Lent, we'll stay away from TV!"), or for the whole 40 days!

Make sure your kids understand that:

- Fasting is not a punishment! We don't fast because we are in trouble, or because God is "mad at us."
- Fasting isn't for a reward. We don't fast to get a prize, reward or a treat.
- Fasting is meant to help us focus on God and remember that He is the most important thing - He is all we need!
- When we **fast**, we are meant to fill up the empty time or space with something that helps us focus on God and our relationship with Him.

For example, if your kids are fasting screen time, consider taking that 20 minutes to read a Bible story and pray together!

If you're fasting social media, use that time to read a devotional, listen to worship music or do something else.

The point of fasting is not just to "give up." It is not about self-discipline, willpower or control. It is about focusing on God as all we need and intentionally spending more time with Him!

Christians have traditionally fasted during Lent to help focus on Jesus and His work on the Cross, and to identify to some degree with His suffering. As you join in on this practice, you are joining in with saints across history - and your kids can too!

You may be surprised at how much your kids teach you this week as you fast, fill up and feast on God's Word together.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON PRAYER & FASTING

- ["11 Creative Ideas for Teaching Kids How to Pray" from Ministry Spark](#)
- ["A Simple Way to Help Kids Pray" from Little Shoots Deep Roots](#)
- [Emoji Prayer Reminders for Kids](#) from Children's Ministry Deals
- [Fasting as a Family](#) from Go Minno
- [Should Kids Fast?](#) from Deeper Kidmin
- ["How to Make the Most of Bedtime Prayer with Toddlers" from Little Shoots Deep Roots](#)
- [Check out the Abide App for daily meditations & prayers!](#)
- [Ch@T Prayer Pattern & Prayer Journal Printables](#) from Rachel WoJo
- ["What is Fasting Video?"](#) from Crossroads Kids Club
- [Victory Kids Sample Fasting Guide](#)
- ["Pandemic Prayers" Plan on YouVersion Bible App](#)
(Great for a family devotional)
- ["Teach us to Pray" Plan on YouVersion Bible App](#)
(Great for teens/preteens)

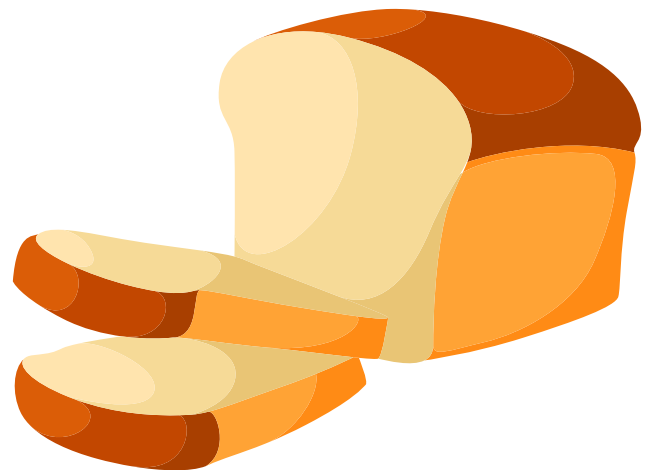
FEAST ON GOD'S WORD

A FAMILY ACTIVITY

During Lent, we are going to spend extra time reading God's Word together! Did you know that the Bible is compared to delicious food!? Look up these verses!



Psalm 119:103



Matthew 4:4



1 Peter 2:2



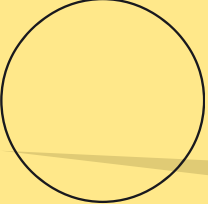
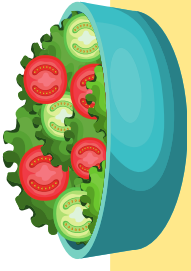
Hebrews 5:12-14

Every day during Lent, spend some time FEASTING on God's Word. Take the next page and stick it up somewhere in your house - on the fridge, in a bedroom, or leave it on the kitchen table.

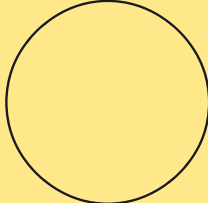
We've included enough copies for you and your family to have one for each week of Lent. (That's six in case you're wondering!)

Color in the space on the table for each day you read God's Word together and spend your week feasting on the Word of God!

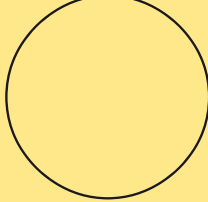
You and your family can choose your own reading plan during the six weeks of Lent, but to lend you a hand, we've created a plan you can follow along with in the Life of Jesus!



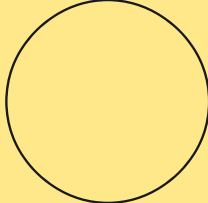
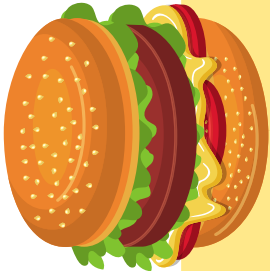
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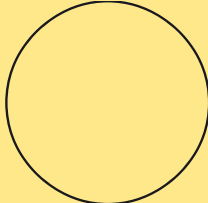
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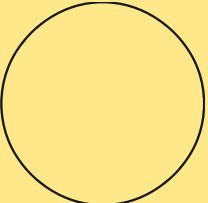
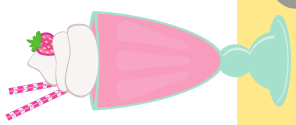
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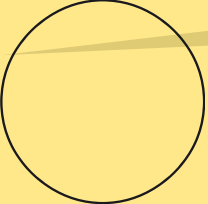
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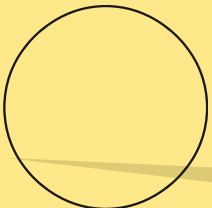


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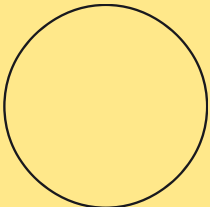


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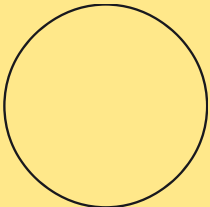




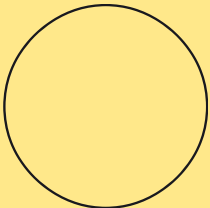
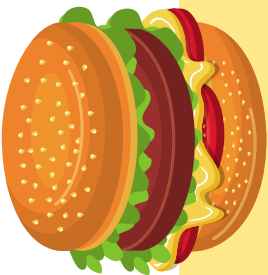
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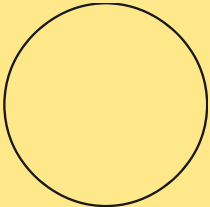
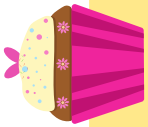
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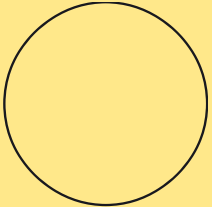
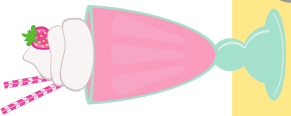
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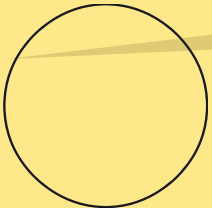
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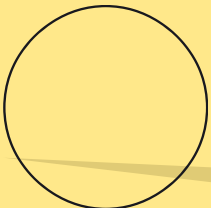


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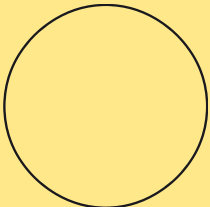


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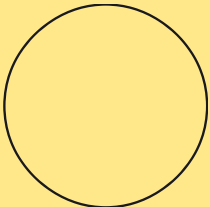




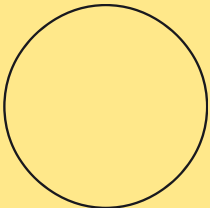
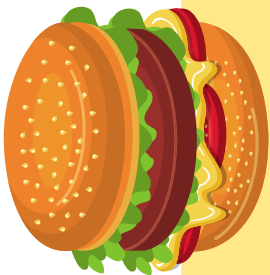
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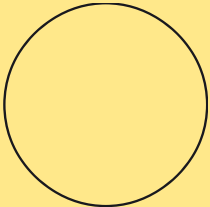
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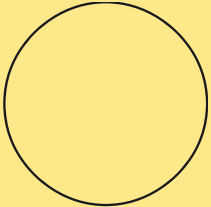
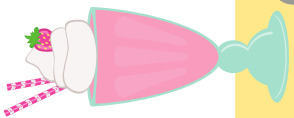
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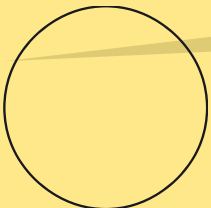
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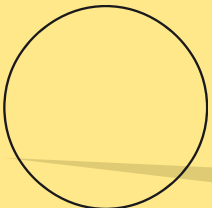


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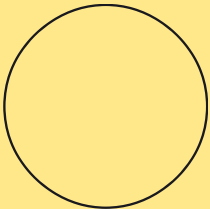


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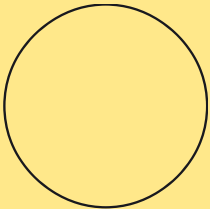




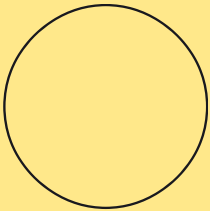
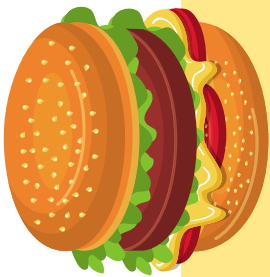
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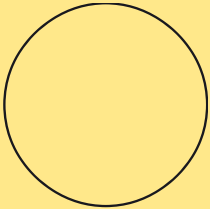
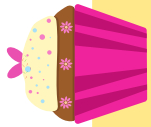
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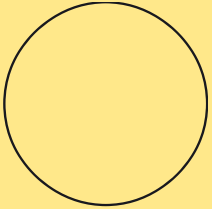
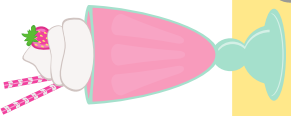
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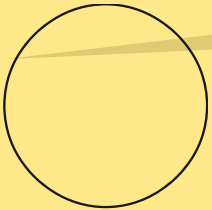
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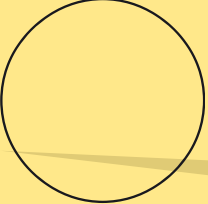
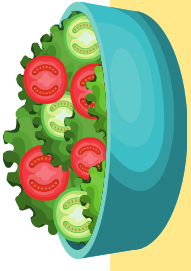


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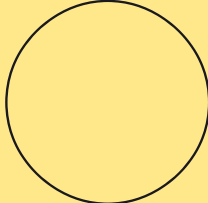


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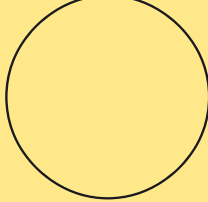




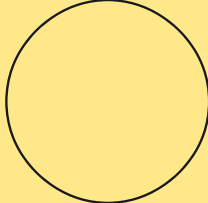
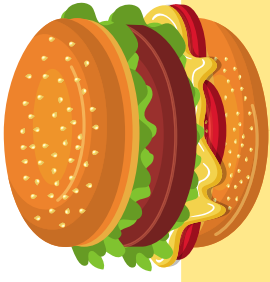
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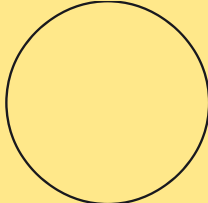
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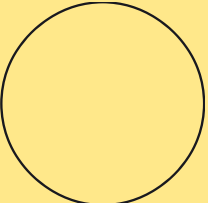
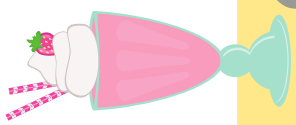
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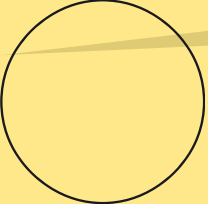
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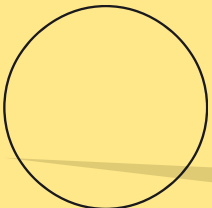


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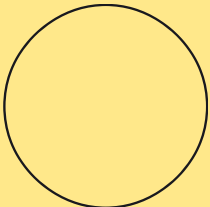


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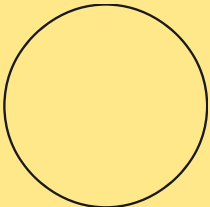




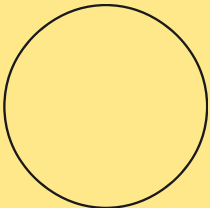
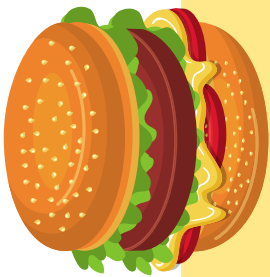
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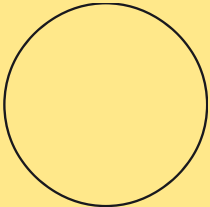
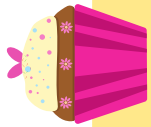
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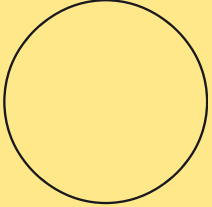
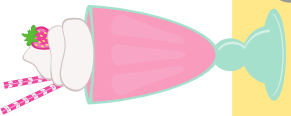
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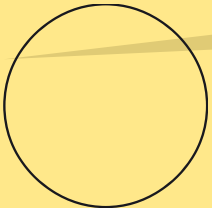
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THE LIFE OF JESUS: READING PLAN

WEEK 1

- Mark 1:1-13
- Mark 1:14-28
- Mark 1:29-45
- Mark 2:1-18
- Mark 2:19-27
- Mark 3:1-12
- Mark 3:13-35

WEEK 2

- Mark 4:1-20
- Mark 4:21-41
- Mark 5:1-20
- Mark 5:21-43
- Mark 6:1-13
- Mark 6:14-29
- Mark 6:30-56

WEEK 3

- Mark 7:1-16
- Mark 7:17-30
- Mark 7:31-37
- Mark 8:1-10
- Mark 8:11-21
- Mark 8:22-33
- Mark 8:34-38

WEEK 4

- Mark 9:1-13
- Mark 9:14-29
- Mark 9:30-50
- Mark 10:1-12
- Mark 10:13-31
- Mark 10:32-45
- Mark 10:46-52

WEEK 5

- Mark 11:1-11
- Mark 11:12-26
- Mark 11:27-33
- Mark 12:1-17
- Mark 12:18-27
- Mark 12:28-40
- Mark 12:41-44

WEEK 6

- Mark 13:1-13
- Mark 13:14-37
- Mark 14:1-10
- Mark 14:10-21
- Mark 14:22-72
- Mark 15:1-41
- Mark 15:42-47

Read Mark 16:1-8 on Easter Sunday!!

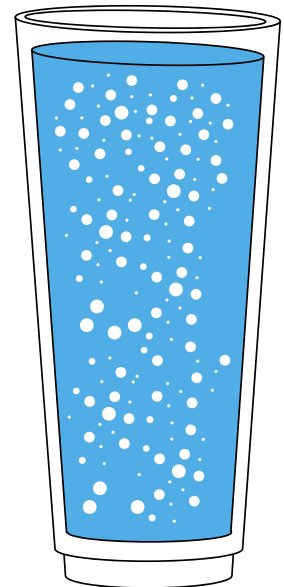
FAST & FILL UP

A FAMILY ACTIVITY

We want to make more room for what God wants to do in our family during Lent as we feast on His word and take time to pray. We do that through fasting.

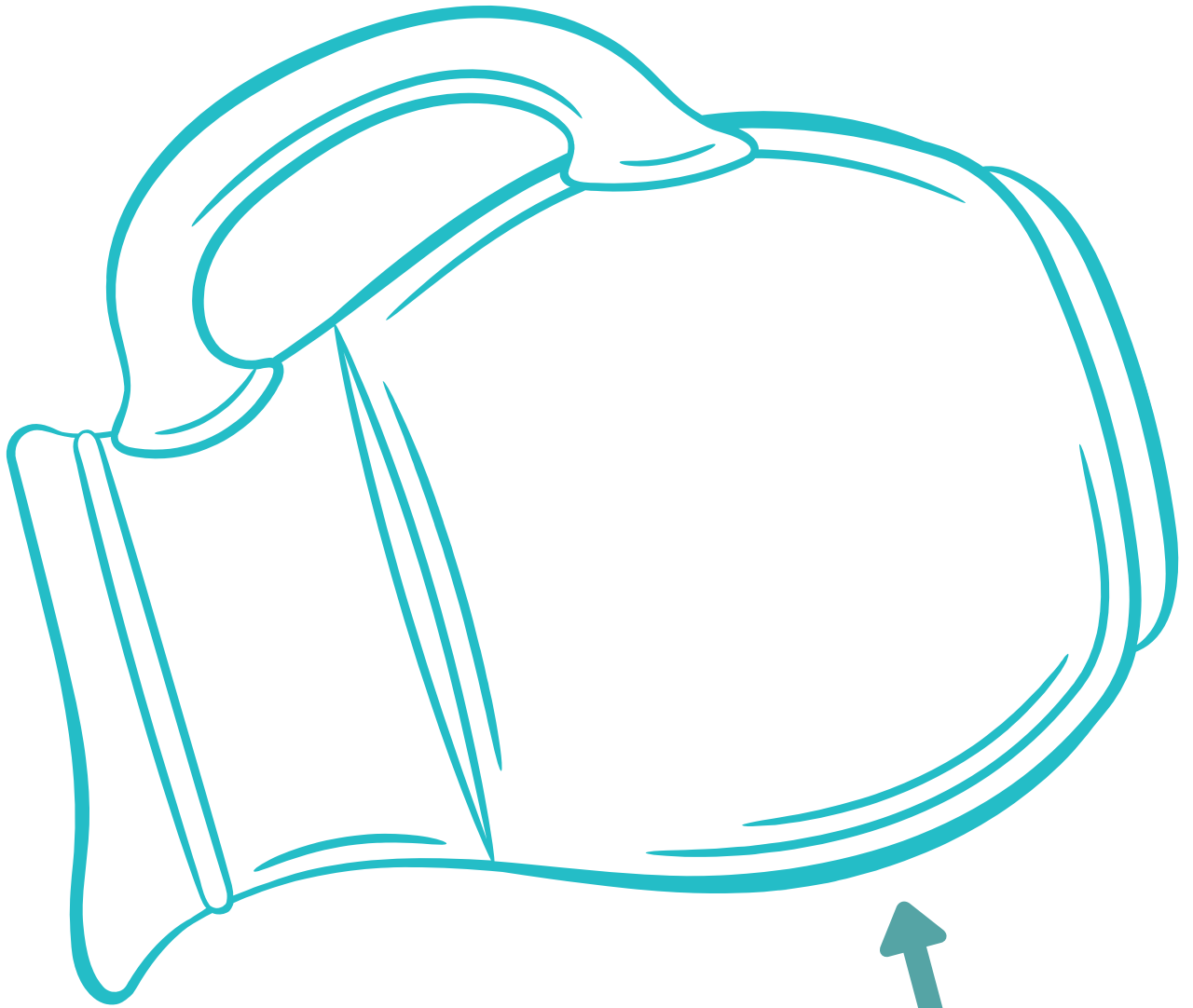


**Fasting is when we
GIVE UP
something to pay
attention to God and make
more room for Him in our
lives.**



**As we GIVE UP
something,
we spend time
FILLING UP
with good things -
the Bible, time with God &
serving Him.**

FASTING HELPS US FOCUS ON GOD.



**WRITE OR DRAW
WHAT EACH
PERSON IS
FASTING IN THE
JUG.**



**BRAINSTORM
SOME WAYS
YOU CAN MAKE
ROOM FOR GOD
TO "FILL YOU UP"
WHILE YOU FAST.**

FAST IDEAS:



- Sweets & Sugary Treats
- A Favourite Food
- Takeout or Restaurants
- Secular Music
- Social Media
- Screen Time
- Video Games
- TV or Movies
- "Free Time"
- Arguing
- Complaining
- A Game or Toy
- Unkind Words
- Gossip
- Coffee or Tea
- Pop
- Weekend Sleep-Ins

FILL-UP IDEAS:



- Prayer Time
- Worship Music
- Read the Bible
- Read a Christian Book
- Use a Devotional
- Sing/Dance
- Do a Service Project
- Write a Kind Note
- Use the Bible App
- Write in a Journal
- Draw/Create
- Talk to someone about God/the Bible
- Call/Facetime someone and encourage them



LENT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the hardest part about fasting?
- What do you miss most about _____ (whatever you're fasting)?
- Have you thought about quitting on your fast? Why?
- Are you learning anything during your fast?
- Why do you think the Bible teaches us to fast?
- Has God been teaching you anything while you fast?
- What ways have you been filling up during our fast?
- What is your favorite way you've filled up so far?

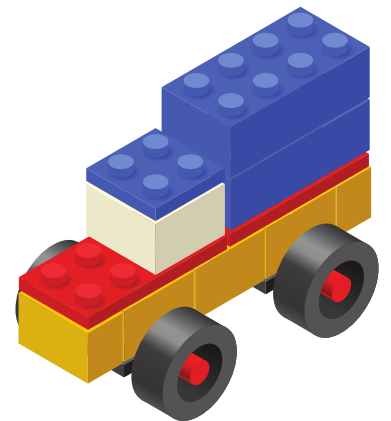
FILL UP WITH PRAYER

One of the best ways we can fill up our lives is by **spending time in prayer!** Here are some ideas for ways you and your family can fill up with prayer.

PRAY FOR PROTECTION!

Spend some time today asking God to protect your family and friends! We can also ask God to protect our town, province or state, our country and those who work at dangerous jobs.

BONUS: The Bible calls God our "strong tower!" Build a tower out of blocks. For every block you add, say "God please protect..." and say the name of a person, a place or group you want Him to protect!



PRAY FOR CREATIVITY!

God gives all of us unique gifts, talents & ideas! He wants us to use those things to serve Him and tell other people about Him! Today, pray that God will give your family ideas on how you can serve Him this year! You can also ask God to help your pastors and church family be creative!

BONUS: Grab your favourite art supplies (markers and crayons, play-dough, paint, etc.) and start creating! As you do, think about ways you can serve God this year.



PRAY FOR PROVISION!

Do you know anyone who has lost their job during this year? Have you donated something to the Food Bank to help out? Lots of people are struggling this year to have all the things they need! Let's pray for God's help and provision for our town, province and our family.

BONUS: Ask the grownups in your family to share an example of a time God provided.



PRAY FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW JESUS!

Take some time today to pray for people you know who don't follow Jesus yet. They can be in your family, friends, or classmates. Ask God to lead them to Him, and to use you to do it!

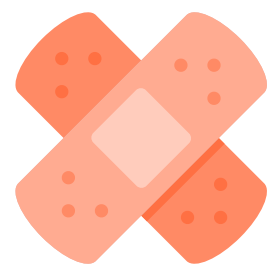
BONUS: Do "Popcorn Prayer" as a family tonight. Have everyone "pop" in with the names of friends, family and people you know who don't know Jesus! Have someone close in prayer at the end, asking God to lead them all to Him!



PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK!

Lots of people we know may be sick, sad or, in need of God's healing and help! Take some time today to ask God to be with those who are sick and in need of God's healing touch!

BONUS: Find a pack of bandaids in your home and a piece of paper (or posterboard!) Write the names of people who are sick that you know on the bandaids, and pray "God heal them!"



PRAY FOR PEACE!

This has been a scary year for a lot of people! Lots of people feel worried, scared or overwhelmed. Pray and ask God for His peace, love and strength for those people - and for your family too!

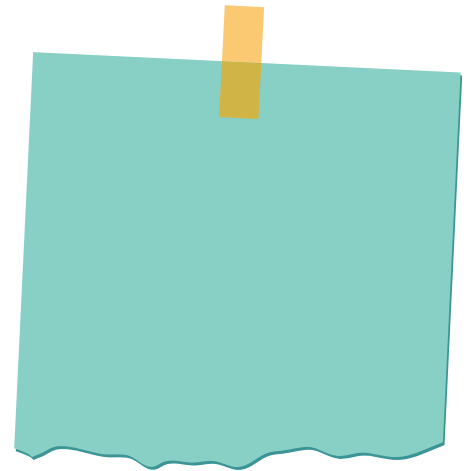
BONUS: Listen to a quiet worship song (some of our favourites are "It Is Well" by Kristene Dimarco and "Not Afraid" by Red Rocks Worship and think about and pray for God's peace as you listen.



PRAY FOR OTHER KIDS!

Today, we are praying for the kids and teens of our church and town! As a family, pray for the other kids and teenagers in our church - ask God to bless them, be with them & help them grow in their faith this year. If you have friends who need God's help, pray for them today too!

BONUS: Grab some sticky notes and write down as many names as you can think of - of kids, teens and families in our church or town! Stick them on a wall in your house & pray for them all!



PRAY FOR THE WORLD!

People all over the world need God's help,, presence and strength. Take some time today to pray for countries around the world and and missionaries you know!

BONUS: Find a map in your house or online, and have each person in your family point to a country. Look up some facts about it, then pray for that country.



PRAY TO GROW CLOSER TO JESUS!

People who follow Jesus are called **disciples**. Whether in the Bible or today, if you follow Jesus, you're a disciple! To be a disciple we need God's help - to live like Jesus, let His Holy Spirit work in us, and make us more like Him! Today, take some time to pray and ask Jesus to help you be a **disciple** this year.

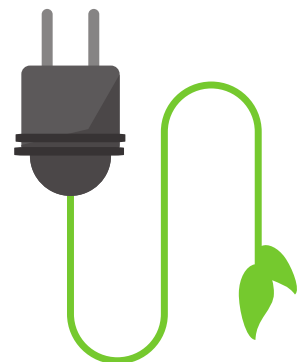


BONUS: Draw a picture of yourself. On the picture, write or draw some ways you can be a disciple in 2021.

PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER!

We need the Holy Spirit's help and power to live out God's plan for our lives this year. Today, spend some time praying this simple prayer - "Holy Spirit, fill me with your power!"

BONUS: Fill a pan with baking soda, Grab some vinegar, mix in some food coloring, and drop it into the pan with an eye dropper or even a turkey baster! For each drop, think of an area you need the Holy Spirit's help with! Pray and ask God for His power.



PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH!

Today, ask God to help your church family, leaders and pastors! Pray for His blessing on them!

BONUS: Write an encouraging note, text or send a video message to a pastor or leader in your church family.





DID YOU PRAY TODAY?

PUT A CHECK MARK OR DRAW PRAYING HANDS AFTER YOU PRAY EACH DAY!



SUNDAY

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY


THURSDAY




FRIDAY



SATURDAY

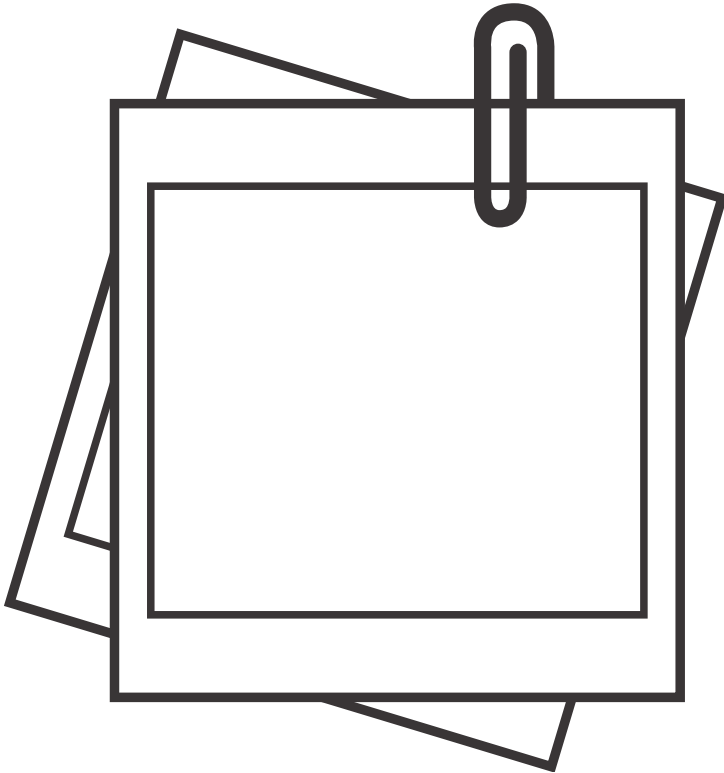


SUNDAY



AT THE END OF LENT...

TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED!
(YOU COULD ALSO COMPLETE THIS SHEET
EVERY WEEK AS A FAMILY)



WHAT'S
SOMETHING I
LEARNED ABOUT
GOD?

WHAT'S
SOMETHING I DID
FOR THE FIRST
TIME I CAN KEEP
DOING?

