

SHARON BAPTIST CHURCH

3955 Conshohocken Ave.

Philadelphia, PA 19131

Bishop Keith Reed, Sr./Senior Pastor-Teacher



2024

Sharon Baptist Church

**40 Days of Prayer and Fasting
Participant's Guide**

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 – Saturday, March 30, 2024

Monday – Saturday

6:00 am – 6:00 pm

Psalms 42:1-2 (NIV)

**” As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with
God? “**



2024 SBC 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting - Participant's Guide

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is the six-week period leading up to Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday. It is a solemn period in the life of Christians, as we prepare our hearts and minds for commemorating and celebrating the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS THIS?

This is an invitation for you to commit to 40 days of prayer and fasting in order to gain deeper intimacy with God. It is meant to be a time of reflection and repentance, renewal and recommitment, purification and preparation.

It is our prayer that this 40-day journey will produce a transformational and spiritual encounter with God as you anticipate Him to move powerfully in:

- ❖ **your personal life (10 Days)**
- ❖ **the body of Christ (10 Days)**
- ❖ **our city, state, country, and the world (20 Days)**

WHY 40 DAYS?

Whenever God wanted to prepare someone for His purposes, He took 40 days.

- Noah's life was transformed by 40 days of rain.
- Moses was transformed by 40 days on Mount Sinai.
- The spies were transformed by 40 days in the Promised Land.
- David was transformed by Goliath's 40-day challenge.
- Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal.
- The entire city of Nineveh was transformed when God gave the people 40 days to change.
- Jesus was empowered by 40 days in the wilderness.
- The disciples were transformed by 40 days with Jesus after his resurrection.

WHAT ARE THE DATES, DAYS, AND TIMES?

February 14, 2024 - March 30, 2024

Monday - Saturday

6:00 am - 6:00 pm

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HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

We encourage you to commit to...

1. Read the assigned scripture and prayer directive and personally pray each day.
2. Corporate Prayer: Join the SBC Intercessory Prayer line every Wednesday at 6:00 am (Conference call# 951-799-9928)
3. Ask the Lord how He might call you to fast during these 40 days. **Saying “no” to something good to say “yes” to something greater** (See the “Fasting Basics” guide below for the many ways you can fast).
4. Walk in obedience to what Jesus tells you during these 40 days.

We look forward to what the Lord has for all of us, and what He will do in our lives, our church, our city, state, our nation, and the world.

ABOUT PRAYER AND FASTING

The Bible is full of promises about prayer – prayer rooted in the belief that God hears us, answers us, and invites us to participate in the answers He lovingly gives.

In the Old Testament, we see this promise: *"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..."* (2 Chronicles 7:14a). In the New Testament, we see this invitation to pray: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God"* (Philippians 4:6).

In other words, the God of the Scriptures, hears and answers prayer! There is no prayer too big, no prayer too small, to pray – especially if our greatest desire is to see the will of God be done here *"...on earth as it is in heaven"* (Matthew 6:9-13).

In the Bible, prayer is sometimes accompanied by fasting. Fasting is willingly doing without food, a portion of food, or a specific activity/necessity, for a set period of time in order to invest our energies and focus in prayer. One does not need to fast to pray with hope and intensity, but it can be a helpful spiritual rhythm to add to our experience of God in prayer (please see the Fasting Basics resource for more detailed information on this practice and talk to a physician before attempting any type of food fast).

However you choose to pray and fast, it is exciting that you've joined in for these 40 days of prayer and fasting as we seek God's move in our personal lives, in the life of our local church, and in our city, state nation, and the world.

HOW TO USE THIS DAILY PRAYER GUIDE:

This Daily Prayer Guide has been created to help you join in the 40 Days of Prayer & Fasting with guided daily themes and Scriptures to ground and inspire your prayers. This is intended to be a guide not a burden. As soon as you sense the Holy Spirit direct you in additional ways follow the prompting of the Lord in prayer.

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HOW SHOULD I PRAY?

This “season” of prayer and fasting covers 40 days, and it might be helpful to have some structure – like a calendar or something to post your prayers and God’s responses on as you go. You may want to consider journaling.

We suggest that each day as you come to prayer, you may want to follow a simple, 4-step process inspired by Jeremiah 6:16a based on the words **stand, look, ask, and walk**:

This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and **walk** in it, and you will find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16a). Remember as you pray to **stand, look, ask, and walk** – these are our guide words throughout this prayer adventure.

1. **STAND** – Take 30 seconds of silence or worship to become aware of the presence of Jesus. **Be still.**
2. **LOOK** – Pray the prayer, “Come, Holy Spirit” and read the daily Scripture.
3. **ASK** – Pray the Prayer Prompts for each day with the expectant confidence of faith.
4. **WALK** – Read the Responding to God section, act as led, and say “Thank You, Holy Spirit” for guiding your time.

3 AREAS OF PRAYER

This Guide will lead you through welcoming the Holy Spirit as you partner with God in prayer in 3 areas:

- ❖ **your personal life (10 Days)**
- ❖ **the body of Christ (10 Days)**
- ❖ **our city, state, country, and the world (20 Days)**

HE IS ABLE!

FASTING BASICS

“NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN ALL WE ASK OR IMAGINE, ACCORDING TO HIS POWER THAT IS AT WORK WITHIN US....” EPHESIANS 3:20

THIS GUIDE IS DESIGNED TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE MOST BASIC QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE OF FOOD FASTING AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO CAN NOT FAST FOOD*

Before we talk about fasting food, I want to remind you that you can fast anything... it is **saying “no” to something good to say “yes” to something greater**. It might be social media, TV, movies, etc - and a partial food fast like the “Daniel Fast” are great options for others. There are some who are physically unable to fast food, however, many people in good health can fast food and greatly benefit from a biblical food fast.

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is the spiritual discipline of restraining or abstaining from eating in order to gain something spiritually. **Saying “no” to something good to say “yes” to something greater**. What is central to the fast is the idea of humbling ourselves through self-denial. Fasting is a voluntary weakness. It is NOT proving my desperation to God, like going on a hunger strike. Rather it is prioritizing God, His presence, and His will over anything else, even the things like food that we have a natural appetite for. Fasting food is a great way to allow God to increase our appetite for Him.

Fasting is just one of many spiritual disciplines that are all considered part of a normal Christian experience. There are other ways to practice the discipline of self- denial and voluntary weakness that are not tied directly to food (Isaiah 58). This is important for those who have a medical limitation to food fasting. Please see the section on alternative forms of fasting and self-denial later in this guide for more information.

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

As has already been mentioned, if you choose to fast, fasting is a process. If you are new to fasting food, it is wise to start with manageable lengths and progress from there. You might begin by skipping one meal in a day. If you choose this option, it is wise to set a time frame for not eating, like 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. If you just say you are going to skip lunch and eat at 11:00 am and then eat again at 1:00 pm, you have in fact skipped lunch, but you may not have truly fasted.

The next level of intensity would be eating only one meal in a day (no snacking!). After that you might choose a 24-hour fast going from, say 6:00 pm on Tuesday evening till 6:00 pm on Wednesday evening. In this way you have done a full 24 hours, but still had at least one meal each day.

The next level would be a full 36-hour fast. An example of this would be not eating from 6:00 pm on Wednesday evening until 6:00 am on Friday morning. In this instance you have gone a full waking day without eating.

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You also always have the option of combining partial food fasting with varying lengths of time. *Please read the Medical Disclaimer at the end of this Guide.

You will have much more success with regular fasting intervals than trying to do something only once or twice a year. As with any form of self-denial, there will be some discomfort. But if you start gradually and increase over time, your body will learn how to adapt, and you will be amazed at what you will be able to tolerate while continuing to fulfill your obligations. The objective is the ongoing practice of making ourselves available to God, not just getting one big “fasting trophy” and spending the rest of our life talking about it!

A special note for those with physically, mentally, or emotionally strenuous jobs:

All fasting is not equal! For a delivery driver who is lifting hundreds, if not thousands of pounds in a day, a 24-hour fast is more intense than for someone who is sitting at a desk most of the day. Some jobs are more physically, mentally, or emotionally demanding than others and you must allow for this. Let the Holy Spirit show you what is right for you.

IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULD DO TO PREPARE FOR A FAST?

As our Bishop would say, “I’m glad you asked!” **Yes!** There are some very important things to think about before you begin your fast.

- **Determine your Purpose or Motivation for the Fast**

This can be as simple and general as just wanting to grow closer to God, to something very specific like guidance for a particular question, and anything else in between.

- **Determine the Kind of Fast**

Answer questions like “How Long” and “What Type” of fast. Choosing a fast will partly depend on your occupation and normal physical demands. Think about how much additional time you will spend “feeding” your spirit with prayer, worship, fellowship, service, or Bible reading.

Focus your mind on things above, not on things here on the earth. Colossians 3:2 (CJB)

- **Physically**

- Consult your doctor* if you have any physical limitations or are on any medications (see the list of those who should NOT food fast)
- Consider your scheduling and physical exercise limitations
- Avoid sugar and caffeine, at least three days prior to your fast
- Resist having that “last big feast.”

* Many medical doctors are untrained in the area of fasting and may object to any kind of full food fast. If you are in good health, you may want to get a second opinion from a Christian doctor or nutritionist and proceed with caution.

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- **Spiritually**

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you.
- Spend some time in self-examination and confession.
- Follow through on any restitution as led by the Holy Spirit.
- Use the daily scriptures for meditation or others as led by the Holy Spirit.

- **Socially**

- Consider who will need to know about your fast.
- If you live with children, use the fast as a teaching example and explain simply (depending on their ages) what you are doing and why. This will help them to view fasting as a normal part of being a Christian, just like going to church.
- It is wise to have someone praying for you, especially if you are just beginning or are attempting a long term fast.
- It is also helpful to have one or two people to whom you can be accountable during your fast.
- Consider what you will say to those who will inevitably notice you are not eating ("I have other plans for lunch today..."). Do not seek it out, but don't be afraid to be honest with anyone if the subject becomes unavoidable. **This is an open door for you to share about who God is in your life.**
- Think about how you will handle the family mealtimes.

For longer fasts, reading some Christian literature devoted to long term fasting is recommended. Water-only fasting is not advised without advice from those who have participated in this kind of activity. It is best done under the supervision of those to whom you are spiritually accountable. Don't be afraid to ask, "Do you have any helpful hints or pointers for me while I am fasting?"

Some Physical and Emotional Effects to Expect

Be prepared for some temporary social, physical, and mental discomforts! Missing the social or mental pleasure of eating is usually as intense as the physical desire to eat. You may find yourself feeling irritable and impatient early in the fast. This is partially a result of the tension created in your body as it looks for an alternate source of energy. Practice patience! Over time your body comes to understand what to do, and this tension subsides.

Hunger Pangs – the first three days are generally the worst. This is your body learning to make the switch from using the food in your digestive tract (which usually stays about three days) to burning stored fat.

Later in the day may prove more challenging both emotionally and physically than early in the day, **plan on spending some of that time with the LORD.**

God – you are my God! I can't get enough of you! I've worked up such hunger and thirst for God, traveling across dry and weary deserts. So here I am in the place of worship, eyes open, drinking in your strength and glory. Psalm 63:1-2 (The Message)n

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Feeling cold or tingling sensations is the body conserving its energy!

Lightheaded or dizziness from a sudden change in position - this should be minor and temporary. Body aches and/or headaches can be a result of the body burning fatty tissue. **Sleeplessness becomes built-in extra time with the LORD!**

Bad breath, increased body odor, a white coating on your tongue. These are normal results of your body throwing off the toxins which were stored in burned fat.

Headaches or stomach-aches are commonly associated with salt, sugar, or caffeine withdrawal. Eliminating these prior to the fast will help minimize these discomforts.

Physical weakness – the weakness experienced in a moderate fast is again due to the body trying to conserve energy while looking for an alternate energy source. Physical activity should be minimized, which provides the perfect opportunity to spend more time in prayer and Bible reading, etc.

Lower back pain may indicate you are not drinking enough water.

Weight loss – though some may list this as a benefit, it is only temporary, weight will return once you begin eating again.

During Your Fast

These are general suggestions only. Your body may react or tolerate things differently and you should go with what works best for you.

- **Drink lots and lots of water** (over three days without water is considered deadly).
If you choose not to do a water fast (no food only water), you might prayerfully consider a juice fast (no food only juice).
- **Drink natural** (no sugar added) fruit and vegetable juices, diluted one-half to two-thirds
- **Fruit juice** (restorers) in the morning, vegetable juice/broth (builders) in the afternoon
- **Avoid highly acidic juices** (citrus, pineapple, tomato)

If you “blow it” and eat something you should not have eaten, **don’t give up!** Just continue on and finish what you started. You will still be better off in the end, even if you did falter.

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Breaking Your Fast

When breaking shorter fasts (one to three days in duration) using common sense about what you choose to eat and how much you eat will generally be sufficient to bring you safely back to normal. For the first day, avoid large meals, fatty foods, meats, and foods or drinks with high sugar content. Begin with light foods in small portions on the first day.

Breaking an extended fast (seven days or more) is as important as the fast itself. Your body's digestive system has been "asleep" and you will need to wake it gently and gradually. After a 40-day fast you should plan on at least three days of transition before returning to eating normal foods and quantities. The physical side effects of unwisely breaking a long term fast can be quite severe.

Much of what your system will tolerate, you will learn from trial and error, but it is better to err on the side of caution when you are just learning about what works best for you. Most recommend breaking the fast by gradually adding raw or steamed vegetables to your diet in increasing quantities, and moving gradually to fresh fruits.

Eat smaller portions more frequently throughout the day. How much you eat is as important as what you eat. Take smaller bites than normal and chew your food more thoroughly than usual.

For digestion to begin, your body must produce thousands of enzymes. This takes time, energy, and nutrients! Make sure you give your body time to build its enzyme production. Your body has been resting and it doesn't function "half asleep" any better than you do! Limit the variety of foods you eat in the first few days. Different foods require different enzymes and simpler is better while your body is "gearing back up".

Do not drink a lot of liquid during meals. This will dilute the digestive juices your body is creating to digest the food. Your body has to heat iced beverages before they can be absorbed, and this also takes energy away from its ability to produce what is needed for digestion.

Carefully consider your schedule on the days you will be breaking a long-term fast. It is not unusual to experience some nausea, cramping, or diarrhea.

Avoid beginning with starches such as potatoes, breads (except for "Melba Toast"), rice, pasta, etc. The primary reason for this is that although they are easy to digest, they swell in your digestive system, and it is too easy to eat more than you should (and end up with severe digestive discomfort).

Avoid meats, fats, and dairy products for the first several days after a long term fast; begin introducing them slowly and in small amounts.

Although you may feel hungry after a long term fast, be mentally ready to eat only small portions of simple foods on the first few days.

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What about those who can't fast for medical reasons?

Any normally healthy adult can safely fast from one to seven days without incurring any significant, permanent health problems, but there are some people for whom this type of fasting should only be done under the supervision of their primary health care provider. There are others for whom a full food fast is not an option.

Some people who should NOT do full food fasting include:

- Persons who are physically too thin or emaciated
- Persons who are prone to anorexia, bulimia, or other behavioral disorders
- Persons with weakness or anemia
- Persons with tumors, bleeding ulcers, cancer, blood diseases, or heart disease
- Persons with chronic problems of the kidney, liver, lungs, heart, or other major organs
- Persons who take insulin for diabetes or who have hyperglycemia
- Persons recuperating from surgery or accidents
- Women who are pregnant or nursing

Some other alternatives to a full food fast might be:

- Partial food fasting mixed with varying lengths of abstinence
- Time restraints on eating (not before noon, not after 3:00 PM, etc.)
- A "Daniel Fast" is a biblically based partial fast based on two accounts of the Prophet Daniel's fasting experiences (see Daniel 1 and 10) and typical Jewish fasting principles. The Daniel Fast eating plan is similar to a vegan diet with additional restrictions. See the Daniel Fast Food List for a more complete outline of foods to include and foods to avoid.
- Entertainments (TV, movies, video, books, sports, eating out, etc.)
- Favorite pastimes (shopping, various recreations, computer, hobbies etc.)

Remember, in the Christian fast we are not just abstaining from food - but in place of eating we are feeding our spirit on the living and written Word of God.

***Medical Disclaimer**

The content of this document is published only for the purposes of information and is not intended to substitute for consultation with a medical professional before beginning a fast of any kind. Consult a doctor or medical professional before beginning a fast.

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❖ **PRAYER FOR YOUR PERSONAL LIFE**

Day 1 - Wednesday, 2/14/24 (Ash Wednesday) - Identity in Christ - John 1:11-13

John 1:11-13 (AMP)

He came to that which was His own [that which belonged to Him—His world, His creation, His possession], and those who were His own [people—the Jewish nation] did not receive and welcome Him. But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the right [the authority, the privilege] to become children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name—who were born, not of blood [natural conception], nor of the will of the flesh [physical impulse], nor of the will of man [that of a natural father], but of God [that is, a divine and supernatural birth—they are born of God—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified].

Prayer Directive

Pray that God would open your understanding that you are a child of God, and as His child you are given authority over sin and Satan.

Responding to God

Write out 5 ways that knowing you are a child of God changes your relationship with God.

Day 2 - Thursday, 2/15/24 - Personal and Family Needs - Psalms 90:14, 16-17

Psalms 90:14, 16-17 (NIV)

*Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.
May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us— yes, establish the work of our hands.*

Prayer Directive

Review areas where you and/or your family have need for refreshing and provision. Pray for those areas.

Responding to God

Write what provision/blessings you requested from the Lord today.

Day 3 - Friday, 2/16/24 - Fellowship with the Holy Spirit - 2 Corinthians 13:14

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NIV)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Prayer Directive

Pray, "Father would you show me how to experience the communion, the sharing together, and the participation I can have with the Holy Spirit?"

Responding to God

Using a topical Bible (i.e. Zondervan NIV Nave's Topical Bible) or Bible software, search for "Holy Spirit" and see all the ways that the Spirit is available to help you as a Christian.

Day 4 - Saturday, 2/17/24 - Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23

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Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Prayer Directive

Pray for the fruit of the Spirit to be present in you and reflected through you and your loved ones today.

Responding to God

From the reading, list the fruits of the Spirit. Next to each fruit, write your name or the name of a loved one who needs that fruit in their lives today.

Day 5 - Monday, 2/19/24 - Filled with the Holy Spirit - Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Prayer Directive

Ask God to fill you or to refill you with the Holy Spirit, and with His power to be God's witness wherever you go.

Responding to God

Talk with a friend or spiritual leader who is filled with the Holy Spirit and ask how you can nurture your relationship with Him.

Day 6 - Tuesday, 2/20/24 - An Increase in Love - 1 Thessalonians 3:12

1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NIV)

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

Prayer Directive

Pray asking God to increase your capacity to love and for ways to demonstrate love.

Responding to God

Ask the Lord to bring 3 people to mind you can love more. Ask the Lord how you could specifically respond to them in His love. Write down what you sense He is saying to you.

Day 7 - Wednesday, 2/21/24 - Boldness in Faith - Colossians 4:3-4

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Colossians 4:3-4 (NIV)

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Prayer Directive

Pray for God to give you great boldness and opportunities to share your faith and ask Him to do His miraculous work in and through you.

Responding to God

Write a script for a conversation to share your faith. Then, be intentional in sharing with a family member, friend, neighbor, or stranger this week.

Day 8 - Thursday, 2/22/24 - Hope for Now and the Future - Psalms 62:5-6

Psalms 62:5-6 (NIV)

Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress; I will not be shaken.

Prayer Directive

Pray for confidence in the hope, which is found in Christ Jesus for you and your loved ones today.

Responding to God

What would the Lord invite you to “eagerly hope” for in Him today?

Day 9 - Friday, 2/23/24 - Perseverance through Difficulty - Hebrews 12:2

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)

fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Prayer Directive

Pray that God will keep us open to His teachings in the trials; peaceful during the process in knowing He is always present; mindful of the endurance of our Suffering Savior on the cross; and confident in our purpose in His plan.

Responding to God

If you prayed for someone else, write them a short note and let them know you prayed for them.

Day 10 - Saturday, 2/24/24 - Joy in the Holy Spirit - Romans 14:17

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Romans 14:17 (NLT)

For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Prayer Directive

Ask your heavenly Father for the joy of the Holy Spirit to saturate you today.

Responding to God

Begin to list the blessings and provisions that God has poured into your life.

❖ **PRAYER FOR SHARON BAPTIST CHURCH**

Day 11 - Monday, 2/25/24 - Devoted to Prayer - 1 Timothy 2:1

1 Timothy 2:1

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—

Prayer Directive

Pray that our church would be actively committed to continual prayer.

Responding to God

Ask the Lord how you can encourage another brother or sister in our church to join you in seeking God in prayer. Write down what you sense He brings to your mind.

Day 12 - Tuesday, 2/26/24 - Cling to our First Love - Revelation 2:4-5

Revelation 2:4-5 (NLT)

But I have this complaint against you. You don't love me or each other as you did at first! Look how far you have fallen! Turn back to me and do the works you did at first. If you don't repent, I will come and remove your lampstand from its place among the churches.

Prayer Directive

Pray that we will cling to our first Love.

"Jesus, we can only love because You first loved us. You gave Yourself for us. We are YOUR body. We are nothing without You. Do not allow us as a church to take You or Your message of redemption for granted. Deepen our love. Show us how to love. We proclaim as a church that we love You!! You are our God! We want no one but You! Show us where we have failed. Bring us to repentance. Forgive us! You are our first, and only love, dear Jesus."

Responding to God

Ask the Lord to reveal to you anything, or anyone you have put a higher priority on than Him. What is the Lord revealing to you about your priorities?

Day 13 - Wednesday, 2/27/24 - Discipleship of all Ages - Colossians 1:28-29

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Colossians 1:28-29 (NLT)

So, we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ.

Prayer Directive

Pray for the church's dedication and perseverance to lead believers into maturity in discipleship, and instant and total obedience to Jesus.

Responding to God

Who are you discipling? (You are simply saying come obey Jesus with me) Who is discipling you? (They are simply saying come obey Jesus with me)

Day 14 - Thursday, 2/28/24 - The Vulnerable and Marginalized - Matthew 25:37-40

Matthew 25:37-40 (NIV)

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Prayer Directive

Pray that God will show you how you can personally engage with the poor and the marginalized in our city. Ask God to show you how to invite others in our church to join you.

Responding to God

Look for opportunities to volunteer and serve others in need in your community or city. Write down who you could invite to join with you.

Day 15 - Friday, 2/29/24 - Individuals and Families in our Church - Galatians 6:10

Galatians 6:10

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Prayer Directive

Pray the Holy Spirit will make us sensitive to the concerns and needs of individuals and families in our church.

Responding to God

Write a note to a few people to tell them you prayed for them today.

Day 16 - Saturday, 3/1/24 - Church Growth - Mark 4:26-29

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Mark 4:26-29

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.

Prayer Directive

Pray that Jesus, the Lord of the harvest, will give us grace and power to be effective co-laborers with Him and have a heart for harvesting souls through evangelism and outreach.

Responding to God

Write down 3 areas or ministries that the Lord brings to your mind where you can become an active laborer today.

Day 17 - Monday, 3/4/24 - Finances and Provision - 2 Corinthians 9:10-11

2 Corinthians 9:10-11 (NLT)

For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.

Prayer Directive

Pray that you recognize God as the creator and owner of everything and that He gives you a heart of gratitude for the abundant blessings He has provided so that you acknowledge that cheerful giving is not an obligation but a joyful act of worship and thanksgiving.

Responding to God

Consider where the Lord is calling you to faith and obedience in giving and where you might increase your giving for the furtherance of God's kingdom.

Day 18 - Tuesday, 3/5/24 - Encouragement of Pastors and Leaders - Hebrews 6:10

Hebrews 6:10

For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Prayer Directive

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways of letting our Bishop, pastors, and leaders in our church know God remembers them. Ask the Holy Spirit how you can encourage and support them.

Responding to God

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Which leaders in your church would the Lord invite you to encourage today? Call, text, email, or write a note of encouragement right now.

Day 19 - Wednesday, 3/6/24 - Encountering God in Worship - Psalms 29:2

Psalms 29:2 (NKJV)

Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Prayer Directive

Ask the Lord to reveal to you his heart for intimacy in worship.

Responding to God

Take time to seek out the desires of God that you might live to satisfy his longings for your worship.

Day 20 - Thursday, 3/7/24 - Asking God What He Wants - Palms 25:4-5

Palms 25:4-5 (NLT)

Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.

Prayer Directive

Pray for the Holy Spirit to teach us humble obedience to listen to God's Will, and for patience as we wait for His answer.

Responding to God

Where do you sense the Lord calling you to stop and seek Him today? Where are you seeking His will specifically today? Take some time today and share that with a friend.

❖ PRAYER FOR OUR CITY, STATE, COUNTRY, AND THE WORLD

Day 21 - Friday, 3/8/24 -Unity Among All Christians - John 17:20-23

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Prayer Directive

Ask the Holy Spirit for power for the body of Christ to love one another and be united from a consciousness of Christ and His unity with the Father.

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Responding to God

Who has the Holy Spirit placed on your heart that is saved but is not in fellowship? Be intentional in reaching out to invite them to join you in worship. Don't judge – gently nudge!

Day 22 - Saturday, 3/9/24 - Spiritual Awakening - Acts 2:37-41

Acts 2:37-41 (NIV)

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles,

"Brothers, what shall we do?"

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call."

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Prayer Directive

Pray that Jesus will revive the Church and awaken our City to His greatness and supremacy. Pray that God will pour out His Spirit on our nation, forgive our sins, and heal our land. Pray that many will be convicted by the Holy Spirit, repent of their sins, and turn to God with all their hearts.

Responding to God

Acknowledge before the Lord that an outpouring of repentance and obedience always starts in an individual heart. Ask the Lord to start a revival in your heart today.

Day 23 - Monday, 3/11/24 - Unbelievers to be Saved - 1 Peter 3:9

1 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Prayer Directive

Pray that people's hearts will be opened to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Savior. Pray that every person will be able to hear the gospel.

Responding to God

Write down the names of three people the Lord brings to your mind, who to the best of your knowledge do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior. Begin to pray for them daily. If you can't think of anyone, ask the Lord to help you meet people today who don't know Him yet.

Day 24 - Tuesday, 3/12/24 - Boldness to Witness - Acts 4:13,19-20

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Acts 4:13,19-20 (NIV)

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus... But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

Prayer Directive

Ask God to give us more boldness to speak up about what we have seen and heard of Jesus. Ask God to help you join with others in our church in courageously sharing your faith in Jesus with others in our city.

Responding to God

What do people notice or take note of about you? Is there anyone in your life who hears you speak about what Jesus is doing in you? Speak more about what Jesus is doing in you rather than what you are doing at church.

Day 25 - Wednesday, 3/13/24 - Racial Reconciliation -Revelation 7:9

Revelation 7:9 (NIV)

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

Prayer Directive

Pray for supernatural humility and reconciliation between people of different ethnic backgrounds, among men, women, and children throughout our nation.

Responding to God

Read through today's scripture again and ask the Spirit to highlight areas of fear, prejudice, or unreconciled attitudes in your own heart. Give those to God as they are revealed to you.

Day 26 - Thursday, 3/14/24 - Life to be Valued - Psalm 139:13-16

Psalm 139:13-16 (NIV)

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Prayer Directive

Pray for life to be valued and protected through all stages and ages. Pray for God to break the culture of death and violence in the world and restore a culture that respects the sanctity of life.

Responding to God

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Prayerfully consider how as a Christian you can actively engage in confronting racism and injustice in our city, state, and country.

Day 27 - Friday, 3/15/24 - Remembering the Poor - Proverbs 14:31

Proverbs 14:31

Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Prayer Directive

Pray that you, our church, and the body of Christ will lead the way by caring for the poor and marginalized.

Responding to God

How is the Lord inviting you to have “eyes to see” those who are poor around you, and to respond to His invitation to care for the “least of these”?

Day 28 - Saturday, 3/16/24 - Vibrant Worship in Our City - John 4:23-24

John 4:23-24 (NIV)

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

Prayer Directive

Pray and ask God to inhabit the praises of His people in our church in a way that honors Him breaks down dividing walls and sets people free to know Him and be changed.

Responding to God

Take a moment. Invite the Lord to come and show you ways to connect with Him and be changed in worship. Give thanks.

Day 29 - Monday, 3/18/24 - Local, State, and National Leaders - 1 Timothy 2:1-2

1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NIV)

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Prayer Directive

Pray that God will give our local, state, and national leaders wisdom to make wise decisions and to govern with integrity, justice, and mercy.

Responding to God

Seek the Lord for a desire to pray for all our leaders even the ones with whom you disagree. What might it

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look like if the entire body of Christ lifted each elected leader in prayer? How might God break our hearts and fill us with love and a burden for them?

Day 30 - Tuesday, 3/19/24 - Spiritual Battle - Ephesians 6:11-12

Ephesians 6:11-12 (NIV)

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Prayer Directive

Pray that God will strengthen you against temptation. Pray that He would teach you to do His will, guiding you. Admit that you cannot do it yourself. Thank God that He can defeat the enemy and bring you victory in HIS NAME.

Responding to God

Write down the struggles you are facing and then pray them back to God. Give them to Him with a heart of worship and thanksgiving – even before you see the victory.

Day 31 - Wednesday, 3/20/24 - For Our City to Turn to God - Jonah 3:1-10

Jonah 3:1-10 (NIV)

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you."

Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

By the decree of the king and his nobles:

"Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let the people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

Prayer Directive

Pray that God would give you the boldness to proclaim His word to those in your sphere of influence. Pray

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for those in your city who know Jesus to be bold to share the gospel with those around them.

Responding to God

Go back to the list of 3 names you wrote down and have been praying for. Ask God for specific ways you can begin sharing the gospel with them. Write down what He tells you. Be prepared to obey.

Day 32 - Thursday, 3/21/24 - Against Division -Matthew 12:25

Matthew 12:25 (NIV)

... "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. "

Prayer Directive

Pray against the spirits of conflict and the stirrings of satan to cause chaos, and for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our nation and in the world.

Responding to God

"Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." What are some ways you can promote peace in your sphere - your family - your neighborhood - your workplace - your church? Think about your conversations that take place with others. Do they promote peace? Or do they harbor bitterness, envy, or selfish ambition?

Day 33 - Friday, 3/22/24 - Children in Our City - Luke 18:16

Luke 18:16 (NIV)

But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Prayer Directive

Pray that God would protect the children of our city. Pray over children experiencing trauma from violence in the home or their neighborhood. Pray over children in foster care, separated from their parents and experiencing loss, grief, and confusion. Pray that each child would know he or she is loved and a unique gift to You.

Responding to God

Find a way to encourage a child in your life through words of encouragement, a small gift (when appropriate), or through a note of encouragement. Make sure to give it when the child's parents are present.

Day 34 - Saturday, 3/23/24 - Teens in Our City - Proverbs 1:5

Proverbs 1:5 (NIV)

let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—

Prayer Directive

Pray specifically for the teenagers in our city. Pray that they would come to a saving relationship with Jesus

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Christ. Pray for their friendships. Pray for protection from drinking, drugs, and pornography. Pray for their purity in dating relationships. Pray that they would find their worth in Christ.

Responding to God

Write a note of encouragement to our youth pastor or a teenager in your life. If you do not know a teenager, write a note and give it to a youth ministry leader to distribute to a teenager as they see fit.

Day 35 - Monday, 3/25/24 - Families in Our City - Psalm 127:1

Psalm 127:1 (NIV)

A song of ascents. Of Solomon.

Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

Prayer Directive

Thank God for creating and establishing the family. Thank God for creating men and women and assigning them unique roles and responsibilities within families. Confess on behalf of our city, that we have neglected and forgotten the importance of the family as part of God's design. Ask for an end to the epidemic of fatherlessness in our communities. Ask for a newfound love for children, for them to be seen as a blessing and a gift, not a burden.

Responding to God

How can you support a family in need today? Donate to our food pantry or pray about how you can support families in our church.

Day 36 - Tuesday, 3/26/24 - Elderly in Our City - Job 12:12

Job 12:12 (NIV)

Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long-life bring understanding?

Prayer Directive

Thank God for the elderly in your life, in your church, and your city. Pray for them as they navigate their current stage in life. Ask God to give grace to those who find it difficult to come to terms with other people caring for them. Pray that God would draw them into a closer relationship with Him, showing them that they have purpose and wisdom to give to younger generations.

Responding to God

Find a way to love and encourage someone who is elderly in your life. Call, write, or spend time with them in a meaningful way.

Day 37 - Wednesday, 3/27/23 - Neighborhood Impact - Luke 10:27

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Luke 10:27(NIV)

He answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Prayer Directive

Pray for your neighborhood. Picture each house on your street and pray specifically for each family. If you know them by name, pray for them by name.

Responding to God

Begin praying about what you might be able to do to reach out to a neighbor. Perhaps it is bringing them a gift or inviting them to dinner at your home where you can share your faith. How can you reach your neighborhood for Christ by starting with just one family?

Day 38 - Thursday, 3/28/24 - Local Schools - Proverbs 16:20-21

Proverbs 16:20-21

Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord. The wise in heart are called discerning, and gracious words promote instruction.

Prayer Directive

Pray for local schools – specifically for the students, the teachers, the administrators, and the staff who work there. If you live in an area near a school, pray for that school by name. Name the teachers and administrators you know who work in the local schools and pray that they will have an eternal positive impact on their students.

Responding to God

If you know any teachers or administrators, let them know you've been praying for them. You can share those prayers on social media, over the phone, in a conversation, or on a personal note.

Day 39 - Good Friday, 3/29/24- Global Impact - Matthew 28:19-20

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Prayer Directive

Seek God's will for you as you respond to the Great Commission. Pray about those you meet regularly – how should you share the gospel with them? Pray for missionaries in other countries. Pray that God would give them the boldness to share the gospel.

Responding to God

Revisit the list of names you've written down and prayed for over the last 40 days. If you haven't

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already, make a definitive plan to share the gospel with them.

Reach out to a missionary through e-mail or a letter to encourage them as they spread the gospel in other countries.

Day 40 - Saturday, 3/30/24 - Come Holy Spirit! - Luke 11:9-13

Luke 11:9-13 (NIV)

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Prayer Directive

Pray specifically that you will be changed dramatically by the Holy Spirit. Pray for our church, our city, our nation, and our world. Pray for our gathering together tomorrow after the 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting, that God would speak to us, and we would obey.

Responding to God

PRAISE GOD!

How might God be asking you to obey after these 40 Days? What is He specifically calling YOU to do in response to this time of prayer and fasting? Share it with an accountability partner so you can follow through.

The SBC Intercessory Prayer Ministry hopes this 40-day journey has left you hungry - Hungry for the Bread of Life.

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’

We pray you will thirst for the Living Water, and that God will pour out His Holy Spirit and revive us again!

Hosea 6:2 (NIV)

After two days he will revive us; on the third day, he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.

On this final day of the SBC 2024 Prayer & Fast...

- ❖ **Find someone and share your experience with that person.**
- ❖ **Be thankful and rejoice!**
- ❖ **Prepare for blessing, harvest, and an anointing like you have never experienced before.**

The Sharon Baptist Church Intercessory Prayer Ministry Mission:

To ignite a passion for personal prayer, as well as corporate prayer, to edify the body of Christ. We believe that prayer and God’s love will manifest the power of God in all that we do.

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I Corinthians 12:25-27 (NIV)

So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

SBC Intercessory Prayer Team

- Rev. Dr. Rena' Morrow (Ministry Shepherd)
- Deacon Dotrice Abney (Ministry Servant Leader)
 - Sis. Pamela Lackey (Administrator)
 - Sis Sonja Bundy
 - Sis. Nicole Clayton-Morgan
 - Sis Channie Goodman
 - Sis Bonnie Hemphill
 - Deacon Alfredo Jennings
 - Minister Johnnie Latham
 - Minister Evelyn Lawson
 - Minister Garth McBride
 - Reverend Kevin Merritt
 - Deacon Joseph Rivers
 - Deacon Andrew Starks

The Intercessory Prayer Ministry is open to any member who would like to join the team in praying for our families, church, and global communities.

Send your interest to:

thesbcprayerteam@gmail.com

Good Friday - March 29, 2024



Resurrection Sunday - March 31, 2024

