



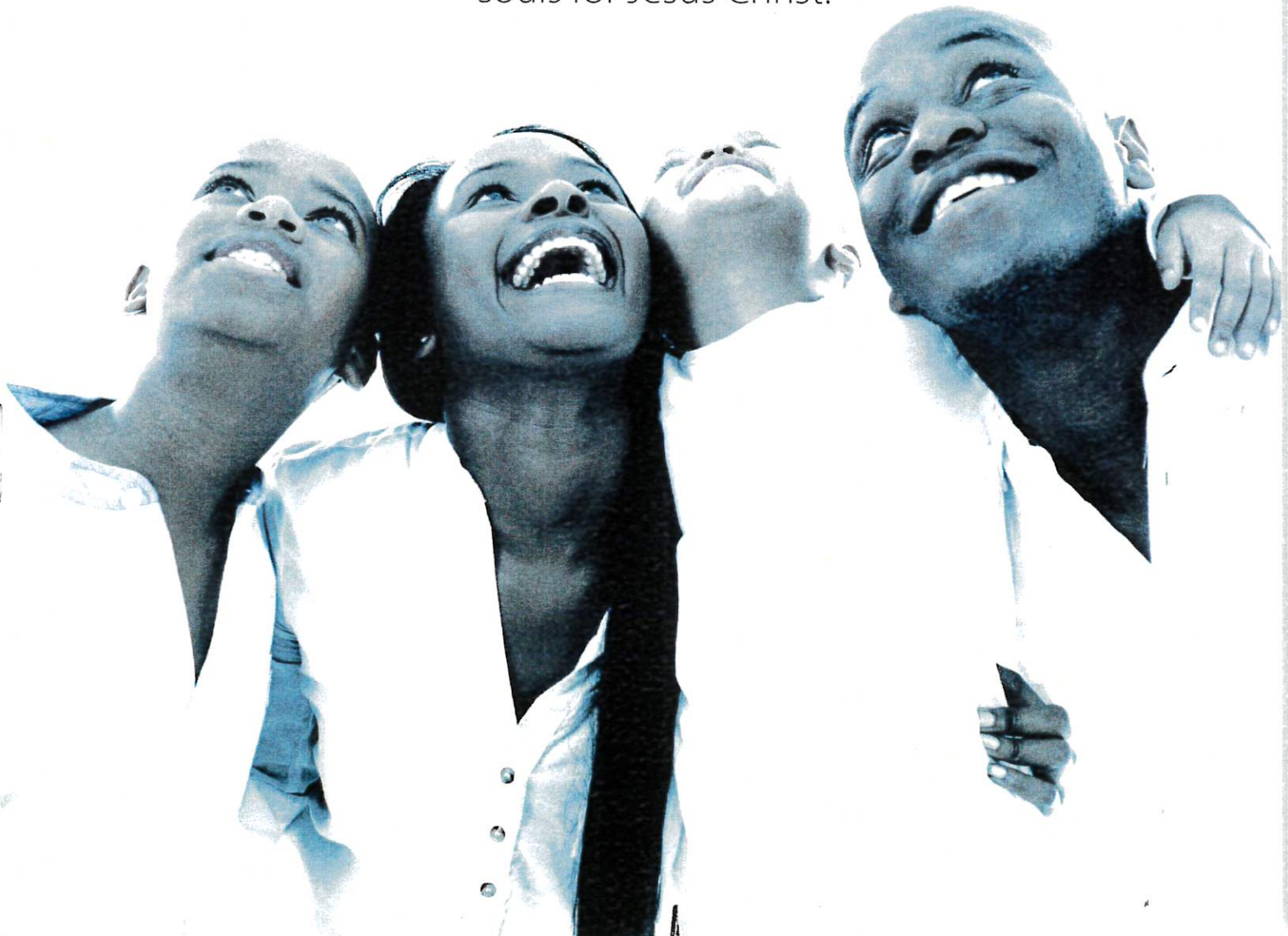
The Historic

ST. JAMES MISSIONARY
BAPTIST CHURCH

Build. Develop. Win.
For the Kingdom

Fasting Guide

Building divine people of purpose; developing them into
champions of change for the Kingdom of God to win
souls for Jesus Christ.





The Historic
**ST. JAMES MISSIONARY
BAPTIST CHURCH**

*Build. Develop. Win.
For the Kingdom*



Dear Esteemed Members of the Historic St. James Congregation,

As we commence on this meaningful spiritual path together, it is crucial that we come together as a congregation to observe a period of fasting and supplication.

Fasting, deeply rooted in the sacred texts, serves as a potent catalyst for our spiritual development. While not obligatory, it is strongly advocated. Throughout the annals of the Bible, we find instances where believers sought spiritual clarity through fasting prior to making pivotal decisions.

The essence of fasting lies in redirecting our gaze from temporal matters towards the Divine. As [Psalm 69:10] poignantly reminds us, "I humbled my soul with fasting." It stands as a testament, both to God and us, of our unwavering dedication to nurturing a profound relationship with the Almighty.

In [Matthew 6:16-18], Jesus imparts wisdom on the practice of fasting, cautioning against showiness. He advises us not to adopt a somber expression like the hypocrites, who exaggerate their fasting for public display. Instead, he encourages a discreet approach: to freshen up, anoint our heads, and maintain a cheerful appearance. By doing so, our fasting becomes a private communion with God, known only to our Heavenly Father. It is in this secret devotion that we receive the true reward, for He sees our genuine intentions and responds with abundant grace.

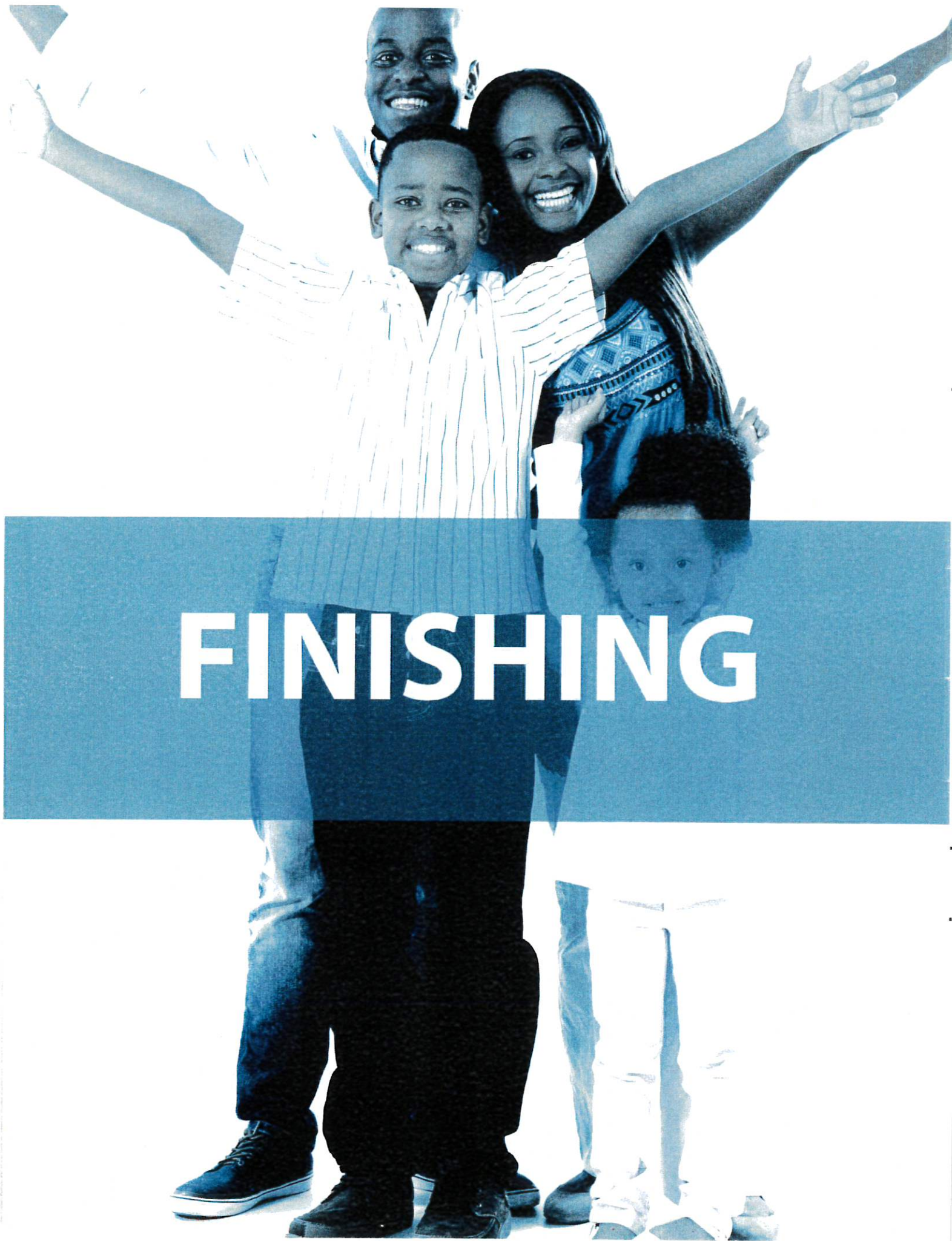
While one can certainly engage in prayer without fasting, and vice versa, it is the harmonious merging of these disciplines, devoted to the glory of God, that unlocks their full potential. Engaging in a dedicated period of fasting and prayer is not a method of coercing God to conform to our desires. Rather, it is a deliberate commitment to center ourselves on God, relying on Him for the strength, provision, and wisdom we seek.

While fasting in the scriptural context predominantly denotes abstaining from food, it is worth noting that there are various avenues through which one can fast. Anything that can be temporarily set aside to redirect our focus towards God may be considered a fast.

The Historic St. James Leadership urge you to sincerely consider joining our Congregational Fast, set to take place from Friday, March 8, 2024, to Friday, March 29, 2024. Through this shared commitment, we will become unified in mind and spirit, experiencing a renewed devotion to our Lord in every aspect of our lives.

Included with this message is a Fasting Guide, which will help you identify the type of fast that suits your individual circumstances. Once again, we extend our heartfelt thanks and look forward to a deeper yearning for the presence of God.

In Unwavering Faith,
The Historic St. James Leadership Teams



FINISHING

START HERE

Fasting 101

Foods & Drinks

Fast Levels

1865 Daily Reading Plan

SOAP Bible Study Method

Bible Study Tools & Resources

Prayer

ACTS Prayer Method

Finishing

A.C.T.S.

PRAYER METHOD

A SIMPLE SYSTEM FOR DEVOTION

Use the A.C.T.S. method of prayer during your time alone with God.

1. Adoration: Give God praise and honor for who He is as Lord over all.
2. Confession: Honestly deal with the sin in your prayer life.
3. Thanksgiving: Verbalize what you're grateful for in your life.
4. Supplication: Pray for the needs of others and yourself.

During your time of Adoration, here are some attributes of God that you can incorporate: Self-Existence, Transcendence, Eternalness, Omnipotence, Immutability, Omniscience, Wisdom, Sovereignty, Faithfulness, Love, Infinity, Immensity, Goodness, Justice, Mercy, Grace, Omnipresence, Immanence, Holiness, Perfection... (Read "The Attributes of God: A Journey into the Father's Heart" - A.W. Tozer)

PRAYER METHOD

SAMPLE PRAYERS

ADORATION

Dear God, I love you. I trust you and you are my shepherd and king. You represent love & goodness. I know that you are all loving and all caring. You are my salvation.
Amen.

CONFESSION

Please forgive me for all of the times that I hurt others. Help me to forgive those who have hurt me. Lord, I want to be a better person, with your grace. Amen.

THANKSGIVING

Thank you, Lord, for all that you do for me. Thank you for dying on the cross to save me from my sins. Thank you for my family and my friends. Thank you for the chance to learn and to get a good education. Thank you for giving me clothes to wear and food to eat. Thank you for everything. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

Please, Lord, help me to be a better person. Help me to be more loving and caring. Help me to be able to do well at work. Help me to get along with my coworkers. Please bless my family and my friends. Help them to get what they want in life.

Amen.

FOODS & DRINKS

Fasting

- Fasting is a Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.
- Fasting does not have to be specifically food, but the denial of any legitimate desire for spiritual purposes.
- Scripture describes the fasting of numerous individuals including Jesus (Matthew 4:2), Daniel (Daniel 1:12), John the Baptist (Matthew 3:4) and Esther (Esther 4:16).

Types of food included in this Daniel fast:

➤ Vegetables, such as potatoes, beans, and soybeans will help provide substance. Fresh or frozen vegetables are recommended. If canned vegetables are desired, use sodium free or drain and wash prior to cooking.

➤ Individuals who have an intolerance to beans should substitute with soy products. It is advisable to take a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement during the fast (1 per day). You may also include various nuts to serve as a protein supplement.

➤ **Whole Grains:** Brown Rice, Oats (including Oatmeal), Barley and Pasta

➤ **Legumes:** Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas

➤ **Fruits:** Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oranges, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon (Limit your intake to 2 citrus fruits per day i.e. lemons, limes, grapefruits and oranges)

➤ **Vegetables:** Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini, Collard greens, Turnip greens

➤ **Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts, Olive Oil, Seasonings and Spices**

➤ **Liquids:** Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices (apple juice, orange juice, grapefruit juice, cranberry juice, etc.) No sweetened drinks or sweetened fruit.

To maintain portion control refer to the USDA Food Pyramid on www.mypyramid.gov for the recommended number of servings per day. For example, limit fruits or vegetables to 7-10 per day and nuts to 12-15 per meal.

Foods NOT included in this Daniel fast:

➤ Sugar, sugar substitutes and sugar products (desserts, soft drinks, etc.) • Table or box salt • Drinks including caffeine (coffee, tea, etc.) • Bread, enriched grains, and rice • Meats, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs

➤ Fried foods • Margarine, shortening, high fat products

Alternative to the Food Fast: If you are unable to participate in the Daniel Fast, at least do a "no pleasantries fast." Put aside the fulfillment of your physical appetites by laying aside something that you like or unnecessary things that entertain and satisfy the flesh. Examples include: TV, radio, internet, movies, shopping, phones, romantic novels, hobbies, desserts, candy, cigarettes, alcohol, fast food, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)

Check with your doctor prior to starting the fast.

S. O. A. P.

BIBLE STUDY METHOD

A SIMPLE SYSTEM FOR DEVOTION

GETTING STARTED

- Identify a consistent time and place to meet with God.
- Turn off all distractions to focus on your time with God.
- Using a bible reading plan greatly assists your passage selection. (see Bible Study Tools & Resources)

SCRIPTURE

- Read the 1865 scripture reading plan

OBSERVATION

- Observe what the verse says. Think about who it was addressed to and why it was written. Ponder its meaning, tone and purpose.
- Take several moments to meditate on it and let it soak into your heart.
- Write down your observations in a paragraph or a few sentences in your journal.

APPLICATION

- Write out how you plan to put into practice the lesson from what you have read?
- How will you be different today as a result of what you've just read? How does this verse apply to me?

PRAYER

- Write out word for word your prayer to God based on your reading.

FAST LEVELS

SELECT A LEVEL THAT
YOU FEEL WILL WORK FOR
YOUR **COMMITMENT.**

We have broken the fast into 3 levels. Each level intensifies the level of sacrifice. The commitment levels allows you to be more flexible to your needs, to make your fast as personal as possible. Below you will find a breakdown of each fasting level.

Level ONE + Daniel Fast

Requires participants to do the Daniel Fast which is a vegetarian fast. Preview **FASTING 101** on page 5 for details on Foods and Drinks that are allowed during your 21-day journey.

Level TWO + Sun Down

Allows for a more intense challenge that requires participants to eat a "Daniel Fast" meal after 6pm. All meals before 6pm should consist of liquid. See the **FASTING 101** page for details on Foods and Drinks that are allowed during your 21-day journey.

Level THREE + Liquid

For the ultimate challenge we urge you to consider this all liquid Fast. Keep in mind that all juices must be 100% fruits or veggies. No sugars. Preview the **FASTING 101** for details on drinks allowed.

Level FOUR + Social Media and Financial Fast

If you cannot participate in the other fasting levels, we urge you to consider both a Social Media and Financial Fast. Keep in mind, this would consist of shutting down social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) and personal purchases (with the exception of necessary items) for the entire 21 day journey. Instead use the time that you would normally spend on social media and shopping to spending intimate time with God.



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study is crucial to resetting our lives, it is God's Word that gives us the instruction and inspiration we need for our lives. We have chosen a daily 1865 scripture reading plan to increase your knowledge of God and develop a more intimate relationship with him.

STUDY TIPS

- Give God your best you
- Find an accountability partner who you can connect with daily
- Journal about your discoveries
- Consider reading as a couple or family together



FAST LEVELS



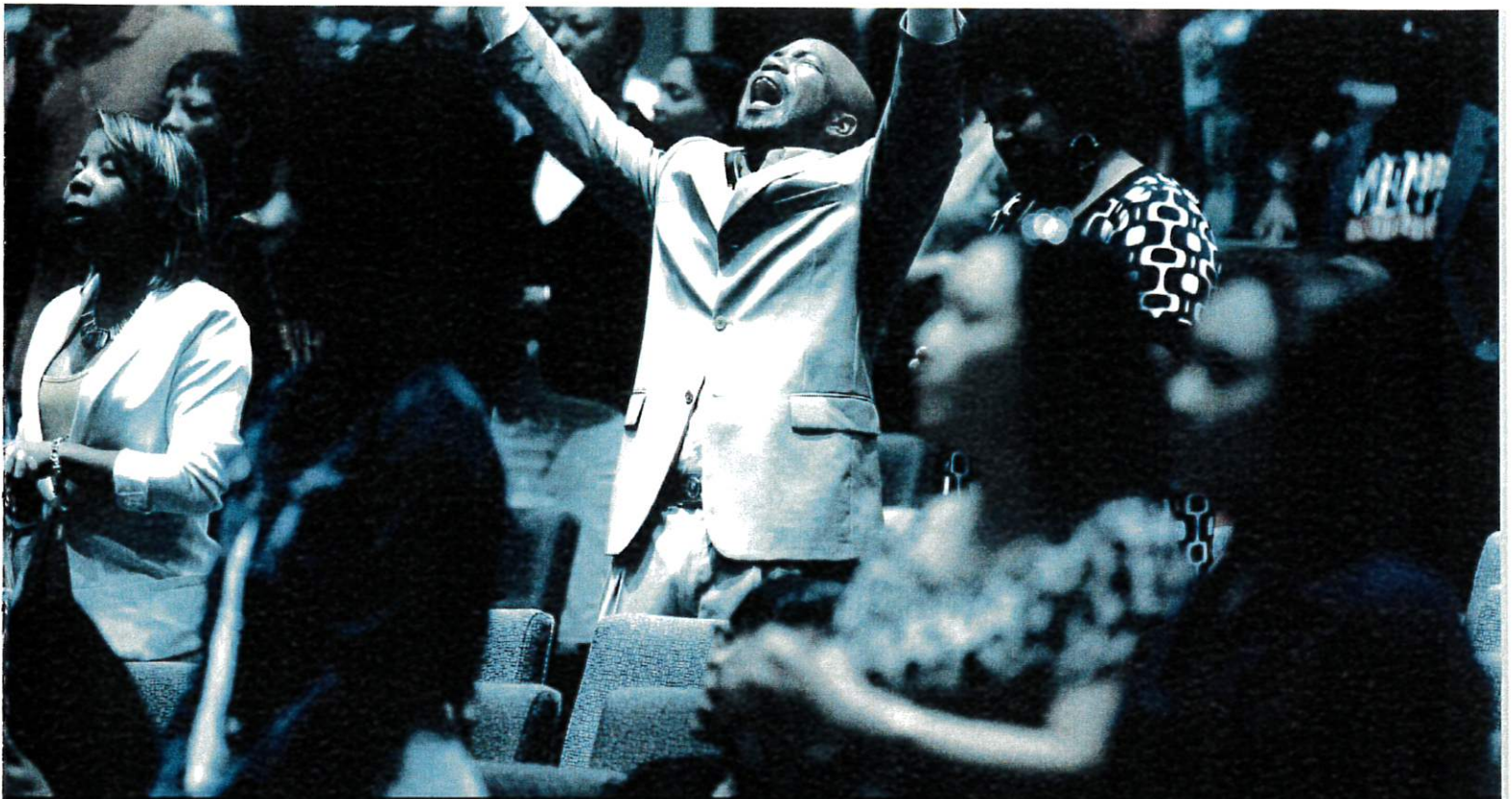
PRAYER

We will be praying each day for 21 days. Prayer is crucial in our lives as believers and essential to having a growing relationship with God.

We will come together for a 30-minute prayer session every fourth Wednesday at 6:00pm to 6:30pm in the Sanctuary.

PRAYER FOCUS

- Believing God for answered prayers to our specific needs
- Declaring our dependence on God in every area of our lives
- Asking for forgiveness for our sins and the sins of our land
- Praying for the completion of the Great Commission
- Inviting the Presence of God in our church and our lives
- Being Open to be Transformed



FASTING 101

Fasting is to deny myself food for spiritual purposes. It is a spiritual discipline that allows one to reset and refocus on God by removing things we normally enjoy. We will be practicing the Daniel fast, which is a vegetarian fast.

FASTING TIPS

- Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily throughout the fast
- Anyone with a medical condition related to eating or under the treatment of a physician must consult their doctor before proceeding
- No Fried foods or use of margarine, shortening, and high fat products
- You may experience moderate to severe headaches for the first day or two as your body rids itself of various impurities

SAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRY

A SIMPLE SYSTEM FOR DEVOTION

Scripture

"Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." - John 8:7

Observation

Jesus is talking to the Pharisees and scribes that brought a woman caught in adultery to stone her. The only thing he says to them is "Let him with no sin, stone her first." Before I judge someone else, I need to always consider my own issues. We all have issues we need to work on. The best way to help another person is to remember how God brought me through.

Application

Today, I am going to be more sensitive to the struggles of others by considering my own struggles. I know I need to talk to my co-worker, Sarah, about her attitude but I also realize I need to approach her the right way. I really need wisdom for this. I also know that I need to change my own tendency to be so negative.

Prayer

Lord, thank you for your Word. Today, I repent before you for allowing pride to cause me to think I am better than anyone else. I need you desperately to forgive me and cleanse me today – my mind and my heart need you Lord and thank you for forgiving me. Today, when I go to work and even when I deal with my kids help me to be

OUR MISSION

We will develop and enable people to grow into complete followers of Christ through the teaching of God's Word, authentic worship and wholesome fellowship.

The start of a new year is an opportunity set the vision for the future.

Over the next couple of months, we will be taking a look at what's next for The Historic St. James. During these 21 days we'll be outlining the mission and strategy for people growing people by connecting them to their next step with Christ.

As we take this journey, we will focus on hungering for a word from God.

Our desire is to live boldly for him, to cultivate a passion for people and to be catalysts for change in our city. By doing so, we create opportunities for ourselves and others to grow and strengthen our relationships with God. May God bless this journey.



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 The Historic St. James Missionary Baptist Church

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FINISHING

BE CAREFUL TO TRANSITION
OFF YOUR FAST WITH
LIGHT FOOD TO AVOID ANY
FOOD RELATED ILLNESS.
WHAT'S NEXT?

Now is a great opportunity to join a grow group. You can find a list of opportunities at stjbc.org

We encourage early morning daily prayer
before the day gets started





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