



Lent 2020: A quiet time of prayer and reflection on five spiritual disciplines: Solitude, Prayer, Fasting, Meditation and Servanthood.

### The potter's creation

During our Ash Wednesday service, as the sermon was being preached, Victoria DePalma created a plate and chalice out of lumps of clay. Here is a picture of what is being fashioned. May it be a reminder that our God is the Potter and we are the clay. He is alive and working in an amazing way to fashion us, so that more and more we are transformed into the image of His Son – even in these days!



## **A time of prayer:**

### 1. Lift up the name of the Lord.

- Praise Him for who He is.
- Praise Him for what He has done.
- Read through Psalm 91 and use the Psalm as a basis for prayer.

### 2. Pray people:

- Pray for those who have been infected by the coronavirus.
- Pray for those who have lost loved ones.
- Pray for those who are anxious and afraid.
- Pray for first responders and for health care workers.

### 3. Pray for the nation:

- Pray for wisdom for those who govern and lead.
- Pray for unity in this nation.
- Pray that we would be a people who cared for our neighbor.

### 4. Pray for our church:

- Pray that this would be a time of great spiritual growth.
- Pray that we would find ways to care for one another.
- Pray for a heightened awareness of the spiritual discipline of fasting.

## Read – Study – Participate

1. John Wesley once said, “Some have exalted religious fasting beyond all Scripture and reason; and others have utterly disregarded it.”
  - Why do you believe people in our culture have disregarded the spiritual discipline of fasting?
  - What do you know about fasting? What is the reason for a fast?
  
2. Jesus spoke about fasting. **Read Matthew 6:16-18 and Matthew 9:14-15.**
  - What does Jesus say about fasting?
  - According to Jesus, what is the purpose of fasting?
  
3. The Bible speaks about the proper motive for fasting. It must forever center on the living God.
  - **Read Zechariah 7:5.** What is the proper motive for fasting?
  - Many people fast as a form of cleansing, or dieting, or a way for them to have a clearer focus. There is nothing wrong with this, but ultimately Biblical fasting is a way to turn one’s heart to the Lord God Almighty.
  - John Wesley said, “First, let it [fasting] be done unto the Lord with our eye singly fixed on Him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaven.”
  
4. In the Bible individuals fasted (Luke 4:2; Daniel 10:3; Esther 4:16). However, there were also times when together the people of God fasted. And so often, the time of fasting was accompanied by prayer.
  - **Read Joel 2:15; II Chronicles 20:1-4; Ezra 8:21-23.** What was the reason for the people fasting?
  - Does the church need to fast today?

## A Call to Fast

We are calling on the people of Hope to join us in a time of fasting and prayer.

### 1. When?

- Thursday March 19 until Friday March 20

### 2. How?

- Have lunch on the 19<sup>th</sup>, and then your next meal is lunch on the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- During that time drink plenty of water or fruit juices.

### 3. Why?

- That our hearts may be turned to the Lord.
- That we would not only fast, but spend time in prayer.