



New Life Christian Community

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor 5:17

This Friday is the anniversary of the most profound display of love the world has ever known. The magnitude of love is matched only by the magnitude of sorrow that day represents. As such, we will be holding a very important service on Friday night at 6:30 pm. This is a service that you don't want to miss. If you are new to New Life Christian Community you may be surprised to learn (as I was –pleasantly) that we, as a body of believers, will be fasting from Good Friday night until Easter Sunday morning.

On Good Friday, we mourn (with a glorious hope!) the death of our Savior Jesus Christ. Though He would be raised three days later, it is our sin that required His dreadful death. That is a sobering thought. Our sin should move us to tears, especially when we remember that Christ chose to die for our sins. That being said, we should have the attitude of Nehemiah in Nehemiah 1:4. He writes, "As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven." May our sin move us to a time of fasting and prayer with the expected hope that awaits us on Sunday morning! At 8:00, on Sunday (April 1) we will break our fast with communion and a pot-luck breakfast. It is one of our favorite meals of the year. Following breakfast, the service will start at 9:30, as usual.

Please fast only if you believe that the Lord is calling you to participate. We do not believe that anyone can earn any kind of favor with God from our fasting. Fasting is something that is done to cause *us* to become more like Christ. Jesus fasted on several occasions (especially during times of trial and prayer). Furthermore, fasting is not necessarily abstinence from food. You may feel called to abstain from something other than food. Perhaps God would call you to give up your time on the internet. You may feel called to abstain from certain kinds of foods. Whatever you choose to refrain from (if God calls you to fast) let it be something that you wouldn't normally want to give up. You may be wondering... Why fast at all? Here are some reasons why we fast:

1. Fasting helps us to reorder our priorities. Too often we, as sinful beings, make decisions based upon our physical desires (not that this is always bad) rather than upon God's desires. When our physical desires contradict God's desires, and we choose our physical desires rather than God's, we sin. Fasting is a practical way to make decisions for reasons other than for our physical desires. It does not guarantee that we will be basing our decisions upon God's desires, but it certainly helps us to break the habit of making *all* our decisions because of physical delight. In this way, with practice, it can help us to begin our decision making process with God.

Continued --->

Ministry Directory

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Pondering Cont.

2. Fasting helps us to pray more emphatically.

I am not sure why, but there is a direct connection between food and our prayer life. When we are overly full (with a good meal), it can be very difficult to focus on any conversation at all (let alone one with God). We have all experienced this difficulty after a large meal (sleep calls us loudly!). When we fast we are more alert than ever! There is a "sense of God's presence as our bodies are freed from digesting and processing food. This enables us to focus on eternal spiritual realities that are much more important" (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 391). Those who have fasted can attest to this aspect of prayer and fasting.

3. Fasting helps us to humbly confess our sins to God. Just as a baby knows when she is hungry (while letting the rest of the world know), when we fast we too cannot help but acknowledge our *need* for food. This aspect of growth is also experienced when we go through a very trying time. When our physical weakness is obviously before us we are reminded that we truly *need* God. It forces us to acknowledge the fact that we are mortal beings. Thus, being brought low, we respond with a true humble confession and repentance.

In Scripture, almost always, fasting goes hand in hand with prayer. If you would like to aid your prayer life (and who wouldn't), I would strongly encourage you seek the Lord in some sort of fast. Please remember, we will be fasting in order that we might be in *prayer* together.

Easter is a time when we acknowledge that Jesus gave up everything for us. He, as Paul writes in Philippians 2, "*emptied Himself*" and became "*obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*" In Galatians 2:20 Paul writes, "*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*" If we have been crucified with Christ and are willing to become "obedient to the point of death", let us humble ourselves this weekend (of all weekends) and seek God's face fervently. Use

the time that you would have otherwise spent over meals and meal preparation to seek God's face in prayer. There is really an endless list of things that we could be praying for. However, let us unite around this one prayer, that God would be glorified and that His purposes would be our purposes and His will our will. For this is what it means to have the crucified Christ alive in us.

Matthew 6:16-18

"When you fast, do not put on a sad face as the hypocrites do. They neglect their appearance so that everyone will see that they are fasting. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you go without food, wash your face and comb your hair, so that others cannot know that you are fasting, only your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

***NOTE:** Our fasting will end on Easter Sunday, April 1, at 8:00 a.m. when we gather to receive communion together, followed by breakfast. Our service will start at 9:30 a.m.

New Life Video Ministry

This is an opportunity to serve those who are unable to join us in person on Sunday morning. Talk to anyone on the team about the ministry, or contact Jim Mabee @ 651-470-4172. We'd love to have you on the team.

GriefShare Facilitator (June/July/Aug)

Have you learned valuable lessons and experienced healing from the loss of a loved one and would like to help others? Then please contact Connie at 715.557.1431 or conjoh1@gmail.com to learn more and to serve our Lord with the GriefShare ministry. (Due to the nature of this ministry, there will be an interview and a background check.)

Check out New Life Online

newlifechristiancommunity.org

Find Links to:

- Events • Sermons Online
- Set Lists • The Table • & More

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March Memory Verse

"But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed." - Isaiah 53:5

meal [teams]

April 1st Easter Potluck

April 8th Meal Team 5

this week [events]

3.29 Men's study @ 6:30 am
No Immerse, Women's Study,
or GriefShare this week

Today's Passage

JUDGES
Our Desperate Need for the King

Pastor Tony will be teaching from the
Book of Judges.
Our passage for today is Judges 4:1-24.

New Life has an Instagram account! Follow us @newlifechristiancommunity

Sign up in the entry way to be added to New Life Connect

201 State Road 35 N, Dresser, WI ~Sunday service starts at 9:30 am
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