



New Life Christian Community

Join Us As We
Celebrate Only Jesus

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024

VOL. 17, ISSUE 25

"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

Pastoral Pondering

GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY

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 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 am, we will break our fast with communion followed by a pot-luck breakfast. It is one of our favorite meals of the year. Following breakfast, our regular service will start at 9:30 am, 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. We don't fast to ensure that God listens to our prayers. We fast in order for God to work *in us*. We fast because we long to be 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 would God call us to fast at all? Here are a few reasons to consider:

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. Let not our bellies be our god. In this way, with practice, it can help us to begin our decision-making process with God Almighty.
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.

Continued on next page ...

Pastoral Pondering

...Continued

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.

Want to know what to pray for? Continue reading for some suggestions and please add your own to the list.

1. Pray for family members who don't yet know the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Pray that God might give you an opportunity to talk to your neighbors about Jesus Christ.
3. Pray for missionaries who are overseas. Pray for missionaries who are not overseas.
4. Pray that the good news of Jesus Christ would continue to be spread to all those in the St. Croix River Valley. That we would not stop ministering here until everyone knows Jesus Christ!
5. Pray that God would give you new eyes - to see the world as He does.
6. Parents, pray for your children. Children, pray for your parents.
7. Pray for the marriages at New Life.
8. Pray for your children's grandchildren - though they may not yet exist - we can still pray for them (Jesus prayed for all of us in John 17).
8. Pray that God would be pleased and glorified through all that takes place at New Life Christian Community.
9. Pray that God would continue to knit our hearts together - that the body of Christ would be actively visible to all who look on.
10. Pray for those in our congregation who might not yet know Jesus as Lord and Savior.
11. Pray that God's Word would transform each of us (including your imperfect pastors).
12. Pray for the body of Christ as Paul does in Colossians 1:9-14.

There is really an endless list of things that we could be

MINISTRY DIRECTORY

Building & Grounds Ministry

Jim Judkins 715.338.8837
Daniel Lipp 612.229.2893
oldoutboardjim@hotmail.com

Coffee Ministry

Ana Smith: 715.566.3740
anajoy87@gmail.com

Finance Administration

Colleen Firkus (Treasurer): 612.889.7581
financeministry@newlifechristiancommunity.org

Greeting Card Ministry

Lynn Nelson: 651.373.1426
lynnjimmnelson@gmail.com

GriefShare Ministry

Robin Mattson: 715.566.1945
robinmattson27@gmail.com

Immerse Ministry

Mindy Havlish: 715.494.0410
havlishm@gmail.com

Meal Train Relief Ministry

Kristin Stephan: 651.235.1681
kristin@kageinnovation.com

Music Ministry

Jeff Warren: 715.553.2405
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com

Missions Outreach

Lorraine Milner: 715.557.0661
lrmilner@gmail.com

Newsletter Administration

Dawn Holm: 715.472.8453
djholm@lakeland.ws

Resource Center

Cory Mattson: 715.417.0945
cory79mattson@hotmail.com

Sunday Meal Services

Barbara Judkins: 309.269.0556
bjdamell@hotmail.com

Transportation Services

Art Behr: 715.557.1890
behrden1@charter.net

Video Ministry

Jim Mabee: 651.470.4172
jmabee@centurytel.net

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Eldership Team:

Pastor Tony Minell	715.417.1982
galatiansii20@yahoo.com	
Pastor Paul Linzmeier	320.226.5581
pastorpaul.nlcc@gmail.com	
Pastor Jeff Warren	715.553.2405
pastorjeff.nlcc@protonmail.com	
Cory Mattson – Secretary	715.417.0945
Zachary Fugate	715.379.2918
Brian Gates	651.230.6554
Matt Leko	651.465.3154
Dale Mattson	715.566.2302
Greg Mattson	715.417.2444
Rene Milner	715.557.0185
Brian Nelson	651.323.4253
Jim Nelson	651.283.2132
Jay Swisher	763.587.3472

This Week's Scheduled Events:

Mon	Prayer Night/Barton's– 6:30 pm
Tues	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Wed	Every Man's Battle– 6:00 am
Wed	Immerse– No Meeting
Thurs	Men's Bible Study– 6:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– 10:30 am
Thurs	Ladies Bible Study– Noon
Thurs	Ladies Precept Study– 6:30 pm
Thurs	GriefShare– 6:30 pm (Adults & Youth meet separately)

March Memory Verse:

Ecclesiastes 12:11 (ESV)

"The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd."

March Fellowship Tip:

Share a favorite memory verse with someone today. If you don't have one, begin to memorize God's Word and practice reciting it to others.

Sunday Meals and Fellowship:

March 24	Meal Team 2 ~ Salads
March 31	Easter Potluck 8:00 am

Contact **Barbara Judkins** if interested in being on a meal team or a helper.

Check Out New Life Online
newlifechristiancommunity.org

- **Hall of Men:** Hall of Men **tonight 6:30pm**. Men young and old, let's look again at the mighty redeeming work of Jesus in the life of another man of the Faith in history.
 - **Good Friday Service:** Good Friday Service is **Friday, March 29th at 6:30pm**. We will end this service taking the bread and the cup. As a part of reflection, we encourage each person to fast in some form and be in prayer beginning this evening anticipating Easter morning and His triumph over sin and death. **Our Easter service, March 31st, will begin at 8:00am** breaking our fast and again partaking of the bread and the cup in celebration which then will lead into an Easter Brunch meal. Our regular service begins as usual 9:30am.
 - **Easter Breakfast:** Our Easter Morning Breakfast will be a potluck meal. Please consider bringing a dish to pass if you are able. Look for a sign-up sheet on the welcome table.
 - **Upcoming Men's Retreat:** Brochures and registration for the 2024 St. Croix Valley Men's Retreat are now available. Coming up **April 12-13** men, young and old, from all over the valley will gather at Oak Forest Retreat Center in Frederic for a rich time in receiving the preaching of the Word, engaging the text in group discussions, and enjoying fellowship with one another in Christ. If you have any questions about the retreat or registration just talk to Pastor Paul. For father's who are planning to take their sons to the Men's Retreat, here are some cost breakdowns based on age:
 - ~13 and up pay the adult rate.
 - ~3 and under are free.
 - ~Reduced rates for 4 - 12yrs old:
 - Full retreat including lodging and 3 meals \$75
 - Full retreat with 3 meals and NO lodging \$55
 - Saturday only, with 2 meals \$40
- REMEMBER THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND TOO available as needed, including for fathers with multiple sons
- **No Meetings This Week:** Reminder this week, both the Genesis study and Immerse classes will *not be meeting*.

Continued from previous page ...

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, at 8:00 a.m. when we gather to receive communion together, followed by breakfast. Our service will start at 9:30 a.m.



Jesus

According to Samuel

TODAY'S PASSAGE:

Pastor Tony's message is from the
Old Testament book,

1 SAMUEL 20:26-42

SERMON NOTES: