



***Devoted***

5th-14th January 2024  
Devoting 2024 to God through prayer,  
fasting, worship and praise

# Prayer Guide

[www.goldhill.org/ten-days-of-prayer-5-to-14-january/](http://www.goldhill.org/ten-days-of-prayer-5-to-14-january/)

As we step into the New Year it is wonderful to be able to take longer, intentional times to pray together as a church family and extra times in personal prayer. We are seeking as a church to **multiply fully devoted disciples of Jesus** and it is the concept of 'devoted' that we take as our theme for the times of prayer at the start of the year. We want to take time to devote ourselves, our church and the year ahead to Jesus.

Becoming or being devoted to God isn't just to be an act of obedience or duty. I wholeheartedly believe that God's desire is for us to experience and encounter more and more of his love and devotion for us and as a response, as an act of thankfulness and worship, we reply with love and devotion back to God.

1 John 4:19 tells us (in the context of loving others), that we love because God loves us first. It is the same with devotion to God. We devote ourselves to God because **He is utterly devoted to us.**

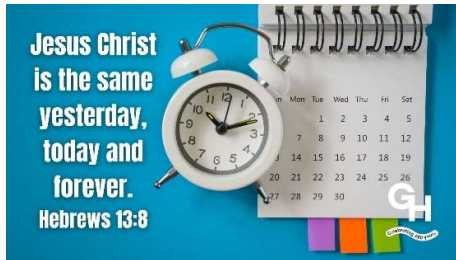
Can I invite you to allow that truth to sink in across this period of prayer? **God is devoted to you.** He will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5). He loves you with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3), a love that is stronger than death (Song of Songs 8:6).

Take time to dwell on that as you take time talking and listening with Jesus over these coming days.

In this booklet there is a timetable of the prayer gatherings and some explanation as well as information about fasting. During the week, can I encourage you to also use the Upper (Prayer) Room which can be booked via [www.goldhill.org/prayerroom](http://www.goldhill.org/prayerroom).

We pray to our Father God, **with expectation** that He delights in us, loves to speak with us, will hear us and answer. We pray, **reliant on the Holy Spirit**, following His leading as we commit ourselves and our Church to His purposes and plans for the year ahead. We pray prayers **saturated in God's Word**, declaring His truth prophetically over our lives, our church, our community and our nation.

## DAILY THEMES



Instead of having daily themes that are set centrally we are encouraging those who are leading different prayer meetings to ask God to highlight a passage in Scripture that reminds us something of Jesus. We will then respond in prayer, believing that He hasn't changed, but is the same even today.

## ZOOM PRAYER CALLS

Over the 10 days there are daily morning prayer meetings online, as well as some evening ones. We will use the same Zoom link for each of these prayer times.



### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85241322667?pwd=eWpKOGJBMHQ2TnBXdm8zQWFySWWh2Zz09> will take you to the Zoom calls.

Meeting ID: 852 4132 2667 Passcode: 562279

## EARLY MORNING PRAYER TIME 7:00-7:30AM

*In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly. Psalm 5:3*



Between 7:00 and 7:30 each morning during the 10 Days of prayer we will gather on Zoom and take time seeking God together. This verse from Psalm 5 summarises something of what we will do during that call. We will call out to God in prayer and wait expectantly on Him. Grab a coffee and join in the prayer time before work. Maybe as a family you could join this call one morning before the craziness of the school run.

## **EVENING PRAYER 8PM-9PM**

On a number of evenings throughout the week there will be opportunity to gather online or in person for a time of evening prayer.

## **PRAYER FOR REVIVAL: TUESDAY 8PM**



As we gather on Tuesday evening we will be praying over our nation and seeking God for a powerful outpouring of His Spirit across this land. This will be our norm as a church on the first Tuesdays of each month during 2024.

## **PROPHETIC ART SESSION: THURSDAY 7:15PM**

This session is part of our normal monthly pattern of creative worship. These sessions provide opportunities to listen to and respond to God through creativity and art. Material and resource will be provided. Room 4.



# FASTING

**WHAT IS FASTING AND WHY SHOULD I GIVE IT A GO?** If I start with the second question. Simple answer is that Jesus expected his disciples to fast. It isn't a command, but as part of their spirituality and prayer lives, Jesus expected that the disciples would fast. In Matthew 6 Jesus teaches his disciples about giving to the needy (v2&3). He doesn't say *if* you give to the needy, he expects that his disciples will do it. The passage goes on and Jesus teaches his followers about prayer (v5,6 &7) and says '*when you pray*'. There is an expectation that followers of Jesus will pray. Then in v16 and v18 Jesus shares his expectation that followers of Jesus will fast.

***"When you fast,** do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. <sup>17</sup> But **when you fast,** put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18)*

**WHAT IS IT?** If followers of Jesus are expected to fast, then we need to know what it is and how to do it.

Well, as this cartoon makes clear, fasting is not eating fast food. Put simply, fasting is giving something up in order to pray and seek God. It is an act of devotion and intentional desiring to seek and depend on God.



The word *fast* means to abstain from something. Within a spiritual context, fasting is abstaining from something in order as an act of intentional commitment and devotion. Often fasting is seen as

abstaining from is food or drink, but there is no need to limit it to this. Fasting social media or Netflix may for some people be the most helpful thing so that they can fill that time with focused prayer to God.

The prayers during a fasting season could be seeking God for a specific breakthrough in a situation or for clarity about a decision or it could be part of a pattern and rhythm of prayer. I described it recently to a group of people as giving up something to fill up with God. That group contained people who were of no faith, Christian faith and Muslim faith and they all seemed to agree that that was a helpful way of understanding it.

## **LET'S GET PRACTICAL.**

1. **Be gracious and kind to yourself.** It is likely that you will try to fast and stumble and have a piece of cake when you're trying not to eat that day etc. Don't beat yourself up over it. Be gracious.
2. **Be relational and not religious:** Fasting as a disciple of Jesus is not meant to be a religious thing but an intentional step to spend more time with Him. Fasting is not formulaic in terms of guaranteeing healing, breakthrough etc. However, intentional humble fasting + honest prayer will always lead to closeness with God.
3. **Be prayerful.** I know that praying and spending extra time with Jesus etc is one of the aims of fasting but also pray about fasting. Talk to God about it and how you feel about it and what your concerns are. Dietary or weight loss reasons for fasting should not be confused with spiritual ones.
4. **Be realistic and careful:** unless you are used to fasting don't jump straight to a three-day Esther fast (Esther 4:15-16). Build

up and be realistic. We also need to take care and not be so stuck on fasting that we end up ceasing to be fit for purpose. For some people also, they cannot fast food or drink etc. it would be physically dangerous to do so. They can still fast but simply find something other than food and drink to give up. Maybe if you are concerned, it might be worth checking with your doctor as to whether it is okay for you to fast food and drink...it will also provide an opportunity to have a conversation with them about why etc.

5. **Try it.** Give up and fill up. Lay something down in order to rely and focus more clearly and dearly on God our Father. Be sustained by His Spirit as you seek God. Here are some examples of ways you could fast during the 10 Days of Prayer.



***Fasting from food.*** This could be a meal, a day or for the full 10 days. It could also be like in Daniel (chapter 1 and 10) fasting of specific foods and only eating plants and no luxury/rich food. Jesus in the wilderness fasted food i.e. ate nothing but by implication still took on water. Esther and Moses also fasted both food and water for a period of time. (NB please take care when fasting food and drink as it could have medical implications for you. Check it out with a doctor if you have any questions/concerns...it could be a great way to have a conversation about faith with your medic.

***Fasting Social Media.*** In 2022 the average amount of time spent on social media was 151 minutes each day. This may not be your average but it might be surprising how much extra time you have to pray/worship if you make the decision to fast social media for a period. It is also interesting how, when you fast social media, there can be a moment where you realise how 'addicted' you are to different apps.





A “**media/entertainment fast**” is increasingly common as our phones, TV’s, video games, and social media have expanded into more and more of life. Even people in the world are recognizing the need to withdraw from the many screens in our life. An old school version of a media fast was abstaining from newspapers, novels, or other secular reading on the Sabbath.



# THE SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Event
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	12 noon	Prayer Time at Hub
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Evening Prayer on Zoom
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Prayer Walk around CSP
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Evening	Personal Prayer Time
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	8.45 and 10.30 am	Sunday Gatherings
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Evening Prayer at Hub
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	12 noon	Prayer time at Hub
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup>	8 pm	Evening Prayer on Zoom
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup>	12.30pm	Prayer time at Hub
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Revival Prayer Time at Hub

Date	Time	Event
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Midday	Personal Prayer Time
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Evening Prayer on Zoom
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Midday	Personal Prayer Time
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	7.15pm	Creative Prayer and Worship in Room 4
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	12 noon	Prayer Time at Hub
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Evening	Personal Prayer Time
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Morning	Prayer around the Hub, whilst cleaning and clearing
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Evening Prayer on Zoom
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	7-7.30am	Prayer Zoom
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	8.45 and 10.30 am	Sunday Gatherings
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	8pm	Worship Evening Room 4



