



WEEK OF

PURSUIT

# CONTENT

- 03 Welcome Page
- 04 Participant's Overview
- 05 About Lent
- 07 Prayer By Colour
- 08 Prayer Walk
- 09 Day of Repentance
- 11 Concert of Prayer
- 12 Family Prayer
- 15 Fasting
- 18 Daily Prayer

# WELCOME

*February 11-16th, 2024*

The kingdom of God advances on its knees. Our King invites us to come to him, asking, seeking and knocking. For Crosspoint, we want to see the kingdom of God come crashing into earth, as it is in heaven. We aspire to be a praying church, where knowing and seeking God becomes as natural as breathing. This year, our theme is “Your Will Be Done!” and we are asking how we are to go about doing His will in this new season.

## HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN WEEK OF PURSUIT?

Week of Pursuit is dedicated to prayer, both corporately and privately. We invite you to seek God daily and connect with other Crosspointers to pray and pursue God during this time. Something powerful happens when God's people come together to pray. Jesus said he is with us when we gather in his name with others. We intend to form a united front of prayer against the forces of darkness.

The details for each of these options are found in the pages that follow.

<b>LENT</b>	On Ash Wednesday, commit to give something up for forty days so that you can take hold of God.
<b>FASTING</b>	Set aside a time during the week to let go of your appetites and focus your attention on God.
<b>EVENTS</b>	Join us for at least one of three unique prayer events on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday.
<b>FAMILY PRAYER</b>	Have your family join together to pray in moments that are creative and memorable.
<b>DAILY PRAYER</b>	Join us as we pray twice a day, morning and evening.

# LENT

## GIVING UP AND TAKING HOLD

The season of Lent is drawing near, and we are inviting you to join us in this time of repentance, fasting, and prayer.

Lent is the six-week period before Easter. You've probably heard about it but might not know how it came to be part of the Christian calendar. It's not a biblical command or tradition, but has been practiced by the church from as early as the second century. While it was originally just three days of fasting, the Council of Nicaea (325 AD) decided upon a forty-day fast to honour Christ's forty days in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-2). The intent of the fast is to demonstrate repentance in preparation for Easter. The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, then continues for the following forty days (not including Sundays) right until Palm Sunday.

In many ways, the purpose and practice of Lent has become skewed in the modern world. For some, it is a competition: Who can fast the best? Who will give up the most? This is not what God intended fasting to become. In Isaiah 58, the Israelites wonder why God has not responded with favour to their fasting. This is what He says to them: "Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure and oppress all your workers. Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high" (Isaiah 58:3-4). In their fasting, the Israelites maintained an incorrect heart posture; their actions reflected that they had remained unchanged. Fasting is intended to be a time of repentance, self-denial, and undivided devotion to God.

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Lent is a time to prepare your heart for remembering the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a time to draw near to God, by **giving up** something that might be hindering you from living in relationship with the Creator of the universe. Letting go of something that has a hold on your time and attention will allow you to refocus on God through reading His Word, reflecting in prayer, and taking time to worship.

**What might you give up during Lent so that you can take hold of God?** We encourage you to take inventory of your life; what is taking away from your time with God?

As you consider how you might participate in the practice of Lent this year, we invite you to join us at Crosspoint Church on Ash Wednesday for an interactive time of repentance. May your experience of Lent this year be intentional and life-giving, transforming your relationship with our almighty God.



# MONDAY

# PRAYER

# BY

# COLOUR



Join us on Monday,  
February 12th at  
6:30pm as we use art  
and creativity to  
connect with God. All  
ages and skill levels  
are welcome!

We will begin by learning how to do doodle prayers, then meditate on Scripture as we create individual art projects. You are welcome to bring your own art supplies, or use the basic supplies that we will provide.



TUESDAY

# PRAYER WALK

Join us on Tuesday, February 13th, at 6:00 pm as we meet at the Crosspoint Campus and set out to pray for our neighbourhood!



# DAY OF REPENTANCE

## ASH WEDNESDAY

Week of Pursuit's Day of Repentance falls on Ash Wednesday. The "day of ashes" is a Christian holy day of prayer and fasting. It is preceded by Shrove Tuesday and falls on the first day of Lent, the six weeks of penitence before Easter.

Ash Wednesday is important because it marks the beginning of the Lenten season leading to Easter, where believers celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.

Ash Wednesday falls in the middle of our week of prayer. Traditionally, this day is set aside as a Day of Repentance. At Crosspoint, we want to take this opportunity to engage in the act of corporate and individual repentance where we can confess our sins and profess our devotion to our Lord Jesus.

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## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Come to a safe place to experience both the sting of sin and the hope of Jesus Christ. We have created an interactive space where you can literally approach the cross as an individual in an environment that fosters focus, silent reflection, and prayer.

We have done this by creating a place of prayer with an aesthetic that will engage your senses and guide you in the process of repentance, communion, and worship.

- We encourage you to prepare for your prayer experience in advance. First, thoughtfully **examine** your life and determine if you have outstanding and unresolved sin that is interrupting your relationship with Jesus.
- We ask that you **bring an item** with you into the prayer space. This item should be a symbol of your surrender to Christ. You will literally set it down at the foot of the cross and leave it behind.
- You could accompany this prayer with the act of **fasting**. Please check out the fasting section in this guide for more guidance on fasting.

The Day of Repentance tent will be available for booking at [thecrosspointchurch.ca/events](https://thecrosspointchurch.ca/events).

Here you can book a fifteen-minute slot between 9 AM and 9 PM on February 14th, 2024. Visit [thecrosspointchurch.ca/event](https://thecrosspointchurch.ca/event) to book your slot.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

- When you arrive for your booking, you will be checked in and provided with instructions.
- You will have the *option* of receiving a mark of repentance (ashes) for your forehead. This is applied with charcoal in the fashion of the cross.
- You will receive a simple prayer guide you can use during your time in the space.
- The attendant will then lead you from the campus lobby into the worship centre, where the prayer space is located.
- Once you are in the prayer space, the attendant will leave you alone and turn on contemplative music.
- Use this time to wait on the Lord, listen, confess, pray, and repent of your sins. If you brought an item, remember to leave your item at the foot of the cross as a symbol of your surrender to Christ.
- When your time slot has concluded, the music will fade to silence, and you can exit out the campus doors.

# FRIDAY

# CONCERT OF PRAYER

STARTS AT 7:00 PM

Our week of prayer will culminate with an evening concert of prayer. Join us on Friday, February 16th, as we gather together for Scripture reading, singing, and prayer.

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How can you  
teach the next  
generation to  
pray?

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## FAITH AT HOME

Prayer is better  
caught than  
taught.

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# TEACHING CHILDREN TO PRAY



ADAPTED FROM  
LEARNRELIGIONS.COM

## **Teach Prayer as a Conversation.**

Prayer is simply a conversation with God. We don't need formulas, and we don't want to recite words without meaning. We can and should speak to God in our own words.

## **Let Your Kids See You Praying.**

The best way for kids to learn about prayer is for you to pray in their presence. Look for opportunities to practice prayer in front of them. Praying before meals and before bed is valuable, but God wants us to come to Him with all things at any time. Let kids see you praying throughout the day for a variety of needs; this will show them that God is interested in all aspects of our lives.

## **Encourage Age-Appropriate Prayers.**

Keep the words and subjects appropriate to your child's age level and maturity. Remember that simplicity is key at every stage of the developmental journey.

## **Overcome Shyness.**

Some children feel shy about praying out loud—they might say they can't think of anything to pray. If this happens, you can pray first, then ask your child to finish your prayer. You can also ask your child to repeat your prayers, but in their own words.

## **Be Supportive.**

Reinforce that we can take everything to God. No request is too small or insignificant. Encourage your child to talk to God about whatever is on his or her mind, be it a fight they had at school, the weather outside, or an epic tea party.

# CREATIVE PRAYER

at home.

ADAPTED FROM TEACHING KIDS AUTHENTIC WORSHIP BY KATHLEEN CHAPMAN

**CHAIR PRAYER.** Place an empty chair in the room to help kids visualize God joining them. Have everyone tell God one thing He means to them or one thing for which they want to thank Him. You may want to stand in front of the chair or speak to God from your seat- allow everyone to talk to God in the way they are most comfortable. Afterwards, explain that prayer is simply talking directly to God.

**WORSHIP ALTAR.** Gather a pile of rocks, Lego, or other material that can be easily stacked. Read Joshua 4:1-7 together and discuss why God commanded His people to build an altar. Next, build your own altar out of the material you gathered. Each time you put a piece on it, say one thing that we should remember about God (He is good, He protects, etc.). If possible, leave your altar up as a reminder for a couple of days.

**GOD'S FAVOURITE THING.** Ask everyone in your family to name things they know God loves (they know because the Bible says it). For older kids, challenge them to find the verse that proves God loves a particular thing. (Examples: David was His beloved, God loves the righteous, God loves obedience.)

**WORSHIP WITH SINGING.** Sing a worship song together, such as "Our God Is an Awesome God". Tell everyone to listen carefully to the words they sing. Afterwards, ask what they heard about God- maybe something new they learned, or something about Him they had forgotten or hadn't thought of in a while. Sing the same song again, thinking about all that was just said.

# ABOUT FASTING

During this Week of Pursuit, we are inviting our Crosspoint family to fast for one meal, two meals, or an entire day. What is fasting? In a nutshell, it means abstaining from food or other necessities, in order to connect with God in worship and prayer.

When we fast, our attachments to food and other cravings emerge and are made obvious. When we deny ourselves, we are reminded that only Jesus can truly satisfy the deepest longings of our souls.

Jesus practiced fasting (Luke 4:1), as did Paul (2 Corinthians 11:27), and the early church (Acts 13:2-3). Jesus also assumed that his disciples would fast: "When you fast..." (Matthew 6:16).

Fasting isn't an attempt to manipulate God into doing what we want. It's not a means of self-aggrandizement (Matthew 6:17-18). We fast in order to focus our attention on God in worship and to let go of our appetites.

When we fast our physical emptiness reminds us of our spiritual emptiness and need for Jesus. It reveals the things that sometimes control us and helps us grow a more balanced perspective on them. Fasting also facilitates our effectiveness in prayer, guidance in decisions, and deliverance from bondage.

There are four basic types of fasting:

Normal—Eating nothing

Partial—Veggies only, or juice only

Absolute—No food or water

Special—Abstain from controlling influences like television, social media, junk food, coffee, comforts

Keep in mind that humans can survive forty days without food, three days without water, and forever without fast food or Netflix!

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# GUIDELINES FOR FASTING FROM FOOD

Adapted from Adele Ahlberg Calhoun in *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*.

- Don't fast when you are sick, travelling, pregnant or nursing. People with diabetes, gout, liver disease, kidney disease, ulcers, hypoglycemia, cancer and blood diseases should not fast.
- Stay hydrated. Always drink plenty of water and fluids.
- If you are new to fasting, begin by fasting for one meal. Spend the time with God that you would normally be eating.
- Work up to longer fasts. Don't attempt prolonged fasts without guidance.
- Check with your doctor before attempting long periods of fasting.
- If you decide to fast regularly, give your body time to adjust to new rhythms of eating. You may feel more tired on days you fast. Adjust your responsibilities appropriately.
- Begin a fast after supper. Fast until supper the next day. This way you miss two, rather than three, meals.
- Don't break your fast with a huge meal. Eat small portions of food. The longer the fast, the more you need to break the fast gently.

- Don't fast if you are in a hurry and are fasting for immediate results regarding some decision. Fasting is not magic.

## WHAT TO DO IN THE TIME SET APART FOR FASTING:

- Bring your Bible and a glass of water during your fast.
- Relax and breathe deeply. Place yourself in the presence of God. Offer yourself and your time to God by repeating Samuel's words "Speak Lord, your servants is listening." Or simply say, "Here I am."
- Spend some time worshiping God for his faithfulness. Thank him for where he has come through for you. Psalm 103:1-5 also provides a starting point for praise.
- Bring your desires to God. Ask him if this desire is in line with his will and his word for you and the church.
- Be still and listen. Offer your desires and prayers to God.

# DAILY PRAYER

FIVE DAYS. TWICE A DAY. ONE VOICE.

Matthew 6:10

“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
*your will be done,*  
on earth as it is in  
heaven.”

We invite you to unite in prayer twice a day for five days. This will mean pausing every morning and evening. We are praying for spiritual discernment in our church in this season. The cry of our hearts is, *“Your will be done!”* We will publish a brief post every morning on our REALM platform and social media sites. As you pause and pray, you can use the guide provided on these posts and listed below, or you can pray in your own way.

Having set prayers at set times reminds us to start our day with God and to end our day with God. As a reminder, these set prayers are not designed to restrict us in prayer; rather, they are a framework to help guide us as we grow in prayer together.

# DAILY PRAYER: FEBRUARY 12

## MORNING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you  
as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and  
to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and  
will be forever. Amen.

Come, let us bow down and bend the  
knee: let us kneel before the LORD our  
maker.

*Pray through Psalm 106:1-18*

In our lives and in our prayer: may your  
will be done.

## EVENING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

### The Magnificent: The Song of Mary

Pray through Lk 1:46-55

### A Prayer for Mission

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out  
your arms of love on the hard wood of  
the Cross that everyone might come  
within the reach of your saving  
embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that  
we, reaching forth our hands in love,  
may bring those who do not know you  
to the knowledge and love of you; for  
the honor of your Name.

# DAILY PRAYER: FEBRUARY 13

## MORNING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

*Pray through Psalm 107:23-43*

In our lives and in our prayer: may your kingdom come.

## EVENING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### A Prayer for Mission

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

**Amen.**

# DAILY PRAYER: FEBRUARY 14

*Ash Wednesday: Day of Repentance*

## MORNING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *The Book of Common Prayer*

*Pray through Psalm 51*

**In our lives and in our prayer: may your will be done.**

## EVENING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Search me, O God, and know my heart: test me and know my thoughts see if there is any wicked way in me: and lead me in your way of life.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

*A time of silence is kept to review the day, celebrating signs of God's reign in the world, confessing sins, and lamenting the systems of death that still hold power in our world.*

# DAILY PRAYER: FEBRUARY 15

## MORNING PRAYER

Adapted *Book of Common Prayer* and Geneva Catechism

### Prayer upon beginning one's Work or Study

My good God, Father, and Savior, grant me aid by your Holy Spirit to now work fruitfully in my vocation, which is from you, all in order to love you and the people around me rather than for my own gain and glory. Give me wisdom, judgment and prudence, and freedom from my besetting sins. Bring me under the rule of true humility... And in all I do, help me to rest always in my Lord Jesus Christ and in his grace alone for my salvation and life. Hear me, merciful Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

*Pray through Psalm 115*

In our lives and in our prayer: may your kingdom come.

## EVENING PRAYER

Adapted *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the evening light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices.

*In word or song*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

# DAILY PRAYER: FEBRUARY 16

## MORNING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

Almighty and everlasting God, you kindled the flame of your love in the heart of your servant [insert your name] to manifest your compassion and mercy to the poor and the persecuted: Grant to us, your humble servants, a like faith and power of love, that we who give thanks for his righteous zeal may profit by his example; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*Pray through Psalm 116.*

**In our lives and in our prayer: may your will be done.**

## EVENING PRAYER

*Adapted Book of Common Prayer and the Common Prayer Pocket Edition*

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death: Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake up in your likeness; for your tender mercies' sake. Amen.

### Prayer of Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, who alone works great marvels: Send down upon our spiritual leaders and the congregations committed to their charge the life-giving Spirit of your grace, shower them with the continual dew of your blessing, and ignite in them a zealous love of your Gospel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

# WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

Let us know! Contact us at  
[pursuit@thecrosspointchurc.ca](mailto:pursuit@thecrosspointchurc.ca)



