

AMPLIFY

2022

21 days of prayer & fasting

Welcome to this year's **AMPLIFY**, our 21 Days of Prayer of Fasting. You know, a lot can happen in just 21 days.

Think about the days before Pentecost, when the disciples were praying and fasting in the Upper Room, and then God opened the heavens and poured out the Holy Spirit, birthing the Church. For three years the disciples had been with Jesus, learning from him and trying to figure out what it all meant. Then, within days of the Holy Spirit being poured out, they began to turn the world upside down with the Kingdom of God, the effects of which continue to impact our lives today!

This year's **AMPLIFY** seeks to remind us afresh of who God is, and out of that be refreshed as we once more focus on him and not our circumstances! It is my prayerful hope that over the next 21 days God will once more captivate you with himself and how he is *more* than enough for you as we seek to be Hope Carriers in our generation.

A lot can happen in just 21 days so let the Holy Spirit speak to you about turning your prayers and devotion into meaningful action in your life, your family, your community and the world.

A lot can happen in just 21 days and I can't wait to hear your story and, one day, to stand with you and look back at all that happened because of the next 21 days!

Let our Journey together begin!



IF YOU HAVE NEVER FASTED BEFORE, HERE'S A FEW POINTERS.

What is fasting?

Fasting is deliberately abstaining from the normal routines of life. Its purpose is to spend focused time in prayer and the study of God's word, seeking to align our lives with God's will. Ultimately, fasting is more about *replacing* than *abstaining*. It is filling our lives with God's Word instead of with food, social media or entertainment. It is finding satisfaction and enjoyment in God and in God alone. Fasting helps us humble ourselves before the Lord and positions us to experience spiritual breakthroughs in our lives.

Mathew Henry writes, "Fasting is of use to put an edge upon prayer." Have your prayers lost their zeal? Has your devotional life become dull? Fasting has a way of sharpening our souls and making us more sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Fasting is not about changing your world, but about letting God realign your heart toward his purposes!

What types of fasts do we do at ALC?

Although the Bible mentions a number of different types of fasts; from a liquid fast where you only drink liquids like juice and water, to giving up a meal a day. We encourage you to fast according to your faith! We also urge you to stop all those extra activities that are not essential to your daily responsibilities such as social media and other forms of entertainment that serve as distractions from life.

HOW TO GET STARTED...

1. Pick your fast

- Full Fast: Drink liquids only. Please consult your doctor first if in doubt.
- Partial Fast: Not eating one or two meals a day or abstaining from certain kinds of food.
- All-day Fast: Abstaining from food one day or more days per week.

2. Set aside time to read the Bible

Fasting is ultimately an expression of humility and dependence on God. It is about replacing the daily intake of food, entertainment and human contact with focused times of prayer, spending large amounts of time feeding on the Word of God and spiritual listening.

3. Open your life before God

One of the great benefits of spiritual fasting is a heightened awareness of God's presence and power in our lives. It is not that God has moved but that we have. Fasting has a great way of moving us towards a deeper spiritual dependency and away from wilful self-dependency. The greatest breakthrough will take place when you make time to examine your life and discover what areas most need refreshing and breakthrough.

4. Expect God to move

Enter your fast by faith. The Bible reminds us that, "without faith it is impossible to please God, for anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Spiritual fasting is a supernatural endeavour that has shaped and transformed God's

people for centuries. If you have doubt, ask God to meet you in your doubts and lead you in overcoming them, just as the apostles prayed, "Increase our faith!" (Luke 17:5).

DURING FASTING...

What battles can I expect during my fast?

As you begin fasting, you may experience a variety of symptoms including intense headaches, fatigue and more. Keep in mind that during the first days of your fast your body will experience weird and out of the ordinary symptoms. If these symptoms persist and become an obstacle for your daily responsibilities first, contact your doctor and then seek guidance from a person with experience in fasting. The first three days are typically the time when your body is being flushed and drained from all the impurities and excesses of our regular "unhealthy" practices.

What if I fail?

Temptations are always tough and during a fast the smallest thing might become a huge battle. Every person who has made a serious commitment to fast can tell stories about how a long-lost friend shows up to treat you to dinner at the exact moment when you have just begun fasting. Yes, fasting can be tough! But think of this: God is not a slave master; he is your loving heavenly father. Choose to seek him not out of duty but out of love. So, If you stumble in your fast... get up, dust off and press on. Share your daily struggles with God and allow him to help you in them.

AFTER FASTING...

What can I do to ensure the effects of my fast become permanent?

1. Respond in worship to all the blessings you receive and what God speaks to you and shows you in the Bible. You may want to voice the testimony of your fast in your Connect Group, at our Sunday celebration, or on social media.
2. Make a list of the blessings, insights and words God gives you and allow those to help shape and grow your faith and direction in serving his purposes.

Day 1: God is compassionate

*The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, “Yahweh! The LORD! The **God of compassion and mercy!** I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin. Exodus 34:6-7*

Fasting Thought

In the midst of life, we tend to look at our circumstances instead of to God and forget that his love is unfailing! That means he isn't withholding good things from you, nor is he punishing you by what is happening around you. So, take some time to worship the Lord and fix your eyes upon him and not your circumstances. Start choosing to not let your circumstances determine your faith.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

DAY 2: God will provide

*When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. At that moment the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Yes,” Abraham replied. “Here I am!” “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!” the angel said. “Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son.” Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh, [Jehovah-Jireh] which means “**the LORD will provide**”. Genesis 22:9–14*

Fasting thought

It is not only God’s desire to provide for your needs, but it’s his nature because he is *Jehovah-Jireh*; the God who provides! To walk by faith is to trust that God will provide *when* we need it and not before. Often his provision comes in ways and forms we weren’t expecting, yet are exactly what we needed! So take some time today to slow down and let the Lord remind you of how he has provided for you in the past. As you recount those, let faith arise afresh because just as he provided yesterday he will provide today and he will provide tomorrow!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

DAY 3: God is our peace

*The LORD said to him, “I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man.” Gideon replied, “If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me. Don’t go away until I come back and bring my offering to you.” He answered, “I will stay here until you return.” Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and with a basket of flour he baked some bread without yeast. Then, carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was under the great tree. The angel of God said to him, “Place the meat and the unleavened bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it.” And Gideon did as he was told. Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he had brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, “Oh, Sovereign LORD, I’m doomed! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!” “It is all right,” the LORD replied. “Do not be afraid. You will not die.” And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it Yahweh-Shalom which means **“the LORD is peace.”** Judges 6:16–24*

Fasting thought

In the midst of the busyness and weariness of life, the only real place to find true peace is with God; *Jehovah-Shalom*. That’s why Jesus promised us that he would “leave us with a gift - peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid” (John 14:27). During these 21 days, make a list of the things that stress you and rob you of the peace God has for you. Invite the Lord into those situations and allow him to give you his peace so that you are no longer stressed or anxious about them.

DAY 4: God is our healer

*Then Moses led the people of Israel away from the Red Sea, and they moved out into the desert of Shur. They travelled in this desert for three days without finding any water. When they came to the oasis of Marah, the water was too bitter to drink. So they called the place Marah (which means “bitter”). Then the people complained and turned against Moses. “What are we going to drink?” they demanded. So Moses cried out to the LORD for help, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. Moses threw it into the water, and this made the water good to drink. It was there at Marah that the LORD set before them the following decree as a standard to test their faithfulness to him. He said, “If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his sight, obeying his commands and keeping all his decrees, then I will not make you suffer any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians; for **I am the LORD who heals you.**” Exodus 15:22–26*

Fasting thought

The truth is that whether it be emotional, physical, or spiritual, we all have areas in our lives that need healing. At some point we have all experienced the bitter waters of a broken world. Our God is *Jehovah-Rophe*, the God who heals. God alone provides the healing our soul cries out for. Acknowledge those areas of our life that need healing, that relationship, that disappointment, that medical condition, that feeling of being alone or forgotten, and allow him to begin to bring touch them afresh with his healing.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 5: *God is Almighty*

*“Joseph is the foal of a wild donkey, the foal of a wild donkey at a spring - one of the wild donkeys on the ridge. Archers attacked him savagely; they shot at him and harassed him. But his bow remained taut, and his arms were strengthened by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, by the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. May the God of your father help you; May the **Almighty bless you** with the blessings of the heavens above, and blessings of the watery depths below, and blessings of the breasts and womb. May my fatherly blessings on you surpass the blessings of my ancestors, reaching to the heights of the eternal hills. May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph, who is a prince among his brothers.” Genesis 49:22–26*

Fasting thought

When we live in response to our circumstances, and not by faith, we are living out of our own strength and not God's! He never intended for you to do life alone. He is El-Shaddai, God Almighty, and desires to bless you and to strengthen you so that you can be everything he has called and made you to be! Where do you need to allow God to be become greater in your life as you become less? Where do you need God to fight for you? Now start to allow him to do that and watch what happens!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 6: *God is our strength*

*Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will rejoice in the LORD! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! **The Sovereign LORD is my strength!** He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights. Habakkuk 3:17–19*

Fasting thought

The most common name for God in the Old Testament is *Elohim*. It simply means ‘Strength’ or ‘Power.’ No matter what is happening around you. No matter what you are facing at the moment, God is more than able because he is sovereign, he is all powerful, and he is faithful to his covenant with you through Christ! Let his strength empower and encourage you as you draw near to God today.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 7: *God is our Father*

you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "**Abba, Father.**" For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory.

Romans 8:15–17

Fasting thought

Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father", and the Holy Spirit teaches us to cry, "Abba, Father," an intimate Aramaic term similar to "Daddy." Think about that for a moment. God isn't some distant God. He wants us to know him as a child knows their own father; as one who is loving, joyful, and always there for us. That means you are only as close to God as you choose to be. He wants to hold your hand and lead you. He desires to share himself and his resources with you. What would it take for you to allow him to do that?

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 8: *Our God is merciful*

*But from there you will search again for the LORD your God. And if you search for him with all your heart and soul, you will find him. “In the distant future, when you are suffering all these things, you will finally return to the LORD your God and listen to what he tells you. For the LORD your God **is a merciful God**; he will not abandon you or destroy you or forget the solemn covenant he made with your ancestors. Deut 4:29–31*

Fasting thought

Sometimes when we live in response to our circumstances, instead of by faith, it can feel as if God doesn't care about what we are going through. Yet nothing is further from the truth! God *is* with you. He has not left you or forsaken you. Its often when we forget this that we feel weary and alone. In Matthew 11:28–29 Jesus calls us to *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Take some time today to let him refresh you and allow him to show himself to you in the midst of your weariness.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 9: *God is full of grace*

*God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for **the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. Ephesians 1:5–7***

Fasting thought

Sometimes we forget that because salvation is by faith and not works, it means that no matter how much we may think we don't deserve God's grace, he *wants* to pour out his underserved favour and kindness towards us! Let that sink in for a moment. No matter what you're down. No matter how you have responded to those you disagree with. No matter how guilty you may feel about the gap between how God wants us you to live and how you are, God never changes his love for you! So mediate on this passage and let God refresh you by his grace!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 10: God is our comforter

*All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. **He comforts us** in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. 2 Corinthians 1:3–4*

Fasting thought

Just as how in winter on cold nights when the rain is beating down and the wind is getting up, it is comforting to snuggle now in the blankets, so too in the weariness of life God wants to comfort and refresh you! Maybe the last two years with Covid has taken a toll on you. Maybe life has taken more turns that you can handle right now. Perhaps you are looking back and have some disappointments about how life hasn't panned out the way you had hoped. Or maybe you are surrounded by people but feel alone. Let Abba Father, 'Daddy' God, comfort you in order that out of that you can then help comfort others!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 11: *God is love*

*Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**. God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love - not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. 1 John 4:7–10*

Fasting thought

God maybe the creator of the heavens and the earth, but his love embraces *you* personally and intimately. God's love is so great that he gave his only Son to bring us into fellowship with him. That means he is *with you* through the ups and downs of your life. Maybe you have been doing life as if it all depends upon you. Let God come alongside and carry you in his love as he refreshes, renews and guides you.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 12: *God is good*

*You have done many good things for me, LORD, just as you promised. I believe in your commands; now teach me good judgment and knowledge. I used to wander off until you disciplined me; but now I closely follow your word. **You are good and do only good**; teach me your decrees. Psalm 119:65–68*

Fasting thought

In the midst of everything that is happening in our society, and around the world, we can sometimes wonder if God really cares. Yet the Psalmist reminds us that because God is good, he only does good. Even though we may not see it at the time, or even believe it, God is at work doing good and working everything together for your good according to his purposes for you. That means you don't need to be anxious or fearful. You just need to trust him and remind yourself: "God is good and does only good."

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 13: God is omnipotent

This message came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 27 “I am the LORD, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?” Jeremiah 32:26–27

Fasting thought

God is omnipotent or all-powerful. That means nothing is too difficult for him. He spoke all things into being, and all things - every cell, every breath, every thought - are sustained by him. That means that *whatever* you are going through right now, it's not beyond God. Whatever you are facing, however big, however worrying, however terrifying, God is *more* than able to carry you safely through it. Whatever you are facing today, he is right by your side so not be anxious; let him make a way!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 14: God is Omniscient

*O LORD, you have examined my heart and **know everything** about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! Psalm 139:1–6*

Fasting thought

God is omniscient or all-knowing. In other words, even before you think something, he knows what's on your mind. It means that he knows tomorrow as if it were yesterday. That's why Jesus says not to be anxious because if God is all-knowing then there is nothing in your life that can catch God off guard. Our enemy, the devil, wants us to lay in bed at night, tossing and turning unable to sleep because of what's on your mind, because then we face the new day already tired and anxious. So whatever it is that keeps you awake, that draws your attention away from good things, allow God to carry it because he already knows the outcome.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 15: *God is omnipresent*

*I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night – but even in darkness **I cannot hide from you.** Psalm 139:7–12*

Fasting thought

God is omnipresent or everywhere at the same time! And that is great news for you and I! So often when we sin, when we do something that comes between us and God, or us and other people, in our embarrassment or shame we do what Adam did and try and hide from God. Yet even the night is as the day to God and so we can't hide from him. All we can do is try and hide from ourselves. Yet because God is Love, he calls to us to as he called to Adam, not to punish us but to comfort and refresh us in his presence as we turn to him. When do you try and hide from God? What do you try and hide? He already knows so why not turn to him and allow him to refresh you!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 16: *God is sovereign*

*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. **Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD, and this is your kingdom.** We adore you as the one who is over all things. Wealth and honour come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. 1 Chronicles 29:11–12*

Fasting thought

Think about this for a moment; if everything is God's and he freely gives us our daily bread, why do we spend so much time and energy chasing careers, promotions and trying to get more? In Haggai 1:5-6 God observes that, *"You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!"* In other words, because you look to yourselves and not me, you're tired, you're worn out and no matter much you try, your best efforts don't deliver. Because God is sovereign, he not only knows what you need, he will provide for that if you allow him because he loves and cares for you. Maybe today is the day to stop trying to do everything outside of yourself and hand the reigns over to God so that you can enjoy the life he has given you!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 17: God is wise

By wisdom the LORD founded the earth; by understanding he created the heavens. By his knowledge the deep fountains of the earth burst forth, and the dew settles beneath the night sky. Proverbs 3:19–20

Fasting thought

Everything God does is accomplished through his infinite wisdom. That means God always acts for our good because anything else would be foolishness – so our good and his glory are inextricably bound together. Therefore, no matter how confused the world is right now, you don't need to allow that to rob you of joy, purpose, or peace because God isn't confused! In fact wisdom calls you to walk by faith and start to see how God is at work in the midst of the confusion to reveal his truth, his wisdom, his goodness, and his glory!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 18: *God is Just*

*God says, "At the time I have planned, I will bring justice against the wicked. When the earth quakes and its people live in turmoil, I am the one who keeps its foundations firm. "I warned the proud, 'Stop your boasting!' I told the wicked, 'Don't raise your fists! Don't raise your fists in defiance at the heavens or speak with such arrogance.'" For no one on earth - from east or west, or even from the wilderness - should raise a defiant fist. **It is God alone who judges; he decides who will rise and who will fall.** Psalm 75:2-7*

Fasting thought

Although it may not seem so at times when we look at the injustice, the arrogance, and the defiance of many towards God and others, God *is* righteous, holy, and fair in all things. We can trust him to always do what is right – and in his good time accounts will have to be given. Until then, our best response is to turn all those things that cause us to despair – the injustice, immortality etc – into prayer, and to trust God and his timing. In that way we more easily maintain our peace and can be the Hope Carriers the world needs.

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 19: God is Holy

*Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, “**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty** - the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.” Whenever the living beings give glory and honour and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say, “You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honour and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.” Revelation 4:8-11*

Fasting thought

God’s holiness is not a better version of the best we know. God is perfect and without fault. His holiness stands apart - unique and incomprehensible! That’s why worship is so so important. Not simply singing but *worship* were we recognise and declare the holiness, the uniqueness, of God! To worship is to declare that God is perfect, without fault; holy. To worship this way is to be refreshed as our perspective is changed so that we begin to see from God’s perspective and not our own. As the old song goes: Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face; and **the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace**. Take some time to worship today, to turn your eyes on Jesus and behold his glory. As you do, allow him to change and refresh you.

Day 20: God is Faithful

*I will sing of the LORD's **unfailing love** forever! Young and old will hear of your faithfulness. Your unfailing love will last forever. Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens. The LORD said, "I have made a covenant with David, my chosen servant. I have sworn this oath to him: 'I will establish your descendants as kings forever; they will sit on your throne from now until eternity.' " All heaven will praise your great wonders, LORD; myriads of angels will praise you for your faithfulness. For who in all of heaven can compare with the LORD? What mightiest angel is anything like the LORD? The highest angelic powers stand in awe of God. He is far more awesome than all who surround his throne. O LORD God of Heaven's Armies! Where is there anyone as mighty as you, O LORD? **You are entirely faithful.** Psalm 89:1-8*

Fasting thought

No matter how it might feel right now, out of his faithfulness, God fulfils his promises to you and I. Even when we are unfaithful, God remains faithful and true to his promises. Think about that for a moment. If God has spoken to you through his Word, it will come to pass. If God has spoken to you by the Holy Spirit, in accordance with Scripture, it too will come to pass. So don't allow God's delay to drain you of Hope. Instead, press into him and look forward with anticipation to his promises being fulfilled in your life!

Take a few moments to journal what the Lord is saying to you today.

Day 21

Thank you for participating in AMPLIFY, our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting. I pray God has used this time to refresh, encourage and renew your faith, hope and love. As we enter into a new season, focussed on the Great Commission, I am convinced that God wants you to be part of what he plans to do in and through ALC. No one is more or less important than others: we are in this together!

How ever you fasted over the last 21 days, I trust that the Lord has met you, awakened new desires within you, and given you courage to put your hand in his as together we press into the plans of God for us.

As you spend some time with the Lord today to reflect on the last 21 days, and the things he has begun stirring within you, let draw our time to a close with the words of the missionary, St Paul from Philippians 1:9-11: *And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God."*

Ham. SL