

Call to Fast

We hired Micah Coate as an associate pastor in Nov. '23, understanding that it may take until June 24' to start. As the position is part time, the offer was contingent upon him finding a job. Micah has not yet found a part-time job that meets his family's needs. They are willing to move without the part-time job secured but are seeking confirmation from the Lord. The elders and the board have set May 14th as an end for the job offer. I am calling upon the church to set aside April 16th as a day to corporately fast and pray for God's guidance, provision, and confirmation in this situation. I want to give some instruction and direction on this:

In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus speaks of fasting. He says, "when you fast", he does not say *if* you fast. Fasting is something assumed that the follower of Christ will do. But for many, this is not something they are used to or have been given much or any instruction on.

We see many examples of fasting in scripture, but two examples that fit our current situation are in Acts 13:2-3 and 14:23. These texts speak of fasting and praying to the end of discerning God's will for missionary and church leadership selections. We see the early church setting aside time to corporately seek God in the decision-making process. *

This is what we want to do: set aside time to make our requests known to God, that He might guide and direct the Coates and us as a church.

Getting practical; when we fast, we are willingly foregoing food—a good thing that God has blessed us with. Two things that happen or may happen as a result: first, you have more time available to pray as you are not spending that time preparing and eating a meal. Second, when you forego a meal, you may feel hungry, as you feel hungry you can use that as a connection point to say 'God I feel a desire for food, but more than food right now I hunger for fellowship with You and direction from You.' In that way, fasting is like praying with your whole body.

Now some may not be able to fast or should not fast for medical reasons. If that is the case, I am just asking you to pray. Some may have never fasted before and aren't sure where to start. A simple way to join in fasting on the 16th would be to skip one meal and set that time aside to pray. Others may want to join in an all-day fast on the 16th, setting aside all three mealtimes for prayer. I encourage you to join in as you are able. On a practical note, please remember to drink water, and if you are a regular coffee drinker it would be a good idea to still have a cup of coffee in the morning.

We will meet at the church from 6:30-7:30pm on April 16th to have a corporate time of worship and prayer.

Here are some specific prayer points:

- For God's will to be done in this situation.
- To provide confirmation to the Coates by providing for their needs or giving them a supernatural peace.
- Provide for our needs as a church as we continue to grow.
- Unity as a church in God's plan.

* Some interpret the Matthew passage to mean that we should only fast in private, but the Matthew passage is putting a prohibition on fasting that is motivated by a desire to "be seen by others" (Matthew 6:18), not a prohibition on corporate fasting. If it were a prohibition on corporate fasting, then the church in Acts was in disobedience to God.