

Abundant Life Church

New Year Consecration

January 15th – February 5th, 2012

I - A Call to Fasting:

Entering 2012 provides a great opportunity to begin something new. This year, we will begin a New Year Consecration that focuses on contending for the faith. 1 John 5:4 says, *“For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith”* (NLT). Every born again believer has been given the faith to overcome the challenges of life. This year is your year to live victoriously in Christ no matter what your situation.

II - Why does Abundant Life fast as a church?

Fasting will bring us into a deeper, more intimate, and powerful relationship with the Lord by helping us develop discipline and sensitivity to his spirit. By removing foods from our diet, it trains us to exert self-control over our physical selves so we can cultivate the discipline necessary for spiritual growth. Furthermore, as we cut out distractions and press into God, our spirit becomes uncluttered by the things of this world and more sensitive to the Lord. Through fasting we put ourselves in a position where we can gain a greater sense of purpose and focus individually and collectively. Our desire is that this fast will move all of us to a new level of faith and fruitfulness.

III - When and how long is the fast?

Beginning on **Sunday, January 15th, 2012** – **Sunday, February 5th, 2011** the Abundant Life Church will observe a 21-day fast.

IV - Types of Fasts:

During the New Year Consecration we are asking everyone to fast in one of three ways: a partial fast, a Daniel Fast, or a liquid fast.

- 1) Daniel Fast: A Daniel fast is when you give up all animal products, sweets, processed food and caffeine, maintaining a healthy diet of whole grains, fruits and vegetables. In depth-guidelines for a Daniel Fast can be found on [page 5](#).
- 2) Partial Fast: A partial fast is when, instead of restricting the food you can eat, you restrict the time you can eat it. For example, you may choose to skip lunch each day or choose to not eat between the hours of 6am and 6pm.
- 3) Liquid Fast: A liquid fast is when you only consume liquids. Depending on the guidelines you set for yourself, liquids may include items like smoothies and protein shakes or be as restrictive as clear liquids or water.
 - a. Note: If you do a liquid fast be sure to drink at least 2 quarts of water a day. It is also wise to take vitamins and mineral supplements.

V - What should I consider when I fast?

A - Physical Considerations:

Fast Responsibly: While we are asking you to make a genuine sacrifice and encourage everyone to push themselves physically and spiritually during this fast, you must also consider your body and what you can handle. In considerations of medical conditions, pick a fast that is both sacrificial and safe for you.

If you are in poor health or have concerns about your physical ability to fast, please consult a physician before beginning. Your doctor can provide advice on how you can participate on this fast in a way that is healthy for you. Also, *do not hesitate to contact your doctor during the fast if you are experiencing symptoms in need of medical attention.*

Preparing for the fast: You will have less difficulty adjusting to the fast if, in the days before, your diet reflects more closely the restrictions of the fast. For example, if you will be doing a Daniel fast, eat less meats and sweets in the days leading up to it and limit your caffeine intake. If you are doing a liquid fast, eat smaller portions.

Drink plenty of water: Fasting has incredible health benefits as it cleanses your system and releases toxins from your body. Once released, however, these toxins need to be flushed out, if not, they can cause headaches. Drinking water will help keep you hydrated, eliminate these toxins, and reduce or resolve headaches.

Stay away from sugar and caffeine: No matter what type of fast you partake in, it is recommended that you stay clear of foods that are high in fructose and caffeine. Because of the effect these foods have on your metabolism and body functioning, they can cause headaches and eventual energy depletion which is intensified during times of fasting.

Don't overexert yourself physically: When fasting keep in mind that your body may not be able to function optimally. As a result, while exercise is encouraged, don't overdo it, save strenuous workouts for another time. Similarly, make sure you get plenty of rest.

Breaking the fast: When you break the fast, do so gradually. For example, if you haven't eaten solid food for three weeks, your first few meals should gradually reintroduce solid foods that are easier to digest, like fruits and vegetables. If you were on the Daniel fast, your first meal(s) back should contain smaller amounts of animal products. If you reintroduce items that you have not eaten for three weeks too suddenly, you may get an upset stomach.

B - Spiritual Considerations:

Remember that the purpose of fasting is not simply to conquer one's physical desires, but to hear from and be changed by the Lord. This can only happen if one is spending time with him in prayer and scripture reading. Fasting without prayer and Bible reading is little more than a diet. Don't just go on a diet, rather let your sacrifice enhance your spiritual disciplines and deepen your relationship with the Lord.

VI - Will we come together?

Yes! During the fast we will be encouraging everyone to join us for **Saturday Morning Prayer** from **8:00am to 9:15am**. This will be the designated time to corporately pray for the fast. It is important that you sacrifice and make time to worship, pray and fellowship especially during times of fasting. Doing so enhances the effectiveness of the fast, making your sacrifice more fruitful. It is the fruit of the fast, the ways God teaches and transforms you, that boost your faith and give you power to accomplish God's plan for your life.

VII - What should I focus on during the 21 days?

On the following page is a prayer list of items to focus on during the fast. We encourage you to join with us in prayer on Saturday mornings. Praying together in agreement is powerful and effective.

Abundant Life Prayer List

Personal Prayer Focus for Week 1 – January 16th -21st, 2011

Monday – Pray that God will give you the strength to fast, pray, and read His Word.

Tuesday – Pray that God will increase your faith and trust in Him.

Wednesday – Pray that God give you clarity about His will for your life.

Thursday – Pray that God will refresh your Spirit, Soul and Body.

Friday – Pray that God will open our eyes to see that heaven's resources are at our disposal.

Saturday – *Corporate Intercession 8:00am -9:15am*

Sunday – *Morning Worship 9:00am and 11:00am*

Church Prayer Focus for Week 2 – January 22nd – 28th, 2011

Monday – Pray that Holy Spirit will visit us powerfully as we gather for worship.

Tuesday – Pray for the fruit of the Spirit to manifest itself in a greater measure in 2012.

Wednesday – Pray for the gifts of the Spirit to flow in the congregation freely and orderly.

Thursday – Pray for our corporate prayer meetings to grow spiritually and numerically.

Friday – Pray for the protection of our church leaders, their teams and families.

Saturday – *Corporate Intercession 8:00am -9:15am*

Sunday – *Morning Worship 9:00am and 11:00am*

Community Prayer Focus for Week 3 – January 29th –February 5th, 2011

Monday – Pray for a compassionate heart for the lost.

Tuesday – Pray for God to increase your opportunities to share Christ with others.

Wednesday – Pray that our church outreach will be greater than before in 2012.

Thursday – Pray that God supplies all we need to reach our community with Christ's love.

Friday – Pray that generosity and love will flow from our church to the lost.

Saturday – *Corporate Intercession 8:00am -9:15am*

Sunday – *Morning Worship 9:00am and 11:00am – Fast Ends*

Food Guidelines for a Daniel Fast

Foods You May Eat:

Whole Grains:

E.g. Brown Rice, Oats, Barley

Legumes:

E.g. Dried Beans, Pinto Beans, Split Peas, Lentils, Black Eyed Peas

Fruits:

E.g. Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Oats, Figs, Grapefruit, Grapes, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangelos, Tangerines, Watermelon

Vegetables:

E.g. Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatoes, Turnips, Watercress, Yams, Zucchini, veggie burgers are an option if you not allergic to soy.

Liquids:

Spring Water, Distilled Water, 100% All-Natural Fruit Juices, 100% All Natural Vegetable Juices. You may also drink protein drinks.

Others:

Seeds, Nuts, Sprouts

Foods to Avoid:

Meat

White Rice

Fried Foods

Caffeine

Carbonated Beverages

Foods Containing Preservatives or Additives

Refined Sugar

Sugar Substitutes

White Flour and All Products Using It

Margarine, Shortening, High Fat Products

Food for Thought: Ideas to Enhance your Daniel Fast

Fasting takes a great deal of discipline, and sometimes, it can be made even more difficult when we have trouble finding food we can eat. After we eat the same dish over and over, it can be tempting to break the fast just to add variety to our diet. Below are some suggested meals to get you thinking about the possibilities you do have while allowing you to be faithful to the fast.

Breakfast:

- Oatmeal cooked with your choice of fruit (e.g apples, bananas, raisins)
- Whole wheat cereal or granola with soy milk
- Fruit salad
- Protein shake
- Fruit smoothie made without yogurt or with silken tofu instead of yogurt

Salads:

- Garden salads: consider topping with beans, nuts, or fruit for more substance & variety
- Whole-wheat pasta salad
- Three-bean salad
- Tempeh Salad

Soups:

- Vegetable, minestrone, or bean soup
- Vegetarian Chili
- Carrot ginger, sweet potato or butternut squash soup

Sandwiches:

- Hummus, vegetables, tempeh, and/or tabouli in a whole-wheat pita or wrap
- Falafel
- “Sloppy Joes” made with beans, tofu, or tempeh instead of meat
- Veggie, bean, tofu, or portabella burgers with baked potato wedges

Meals:

- Vegetable stir-fry
- Vegetable curry
- Indian lentils or chick peas with brown rice
- Corn, beans, onions, peppers and seasoned brown rice
- Vegetable fajitas in whole wheat tortillas
- Tacos made with chick peas or refried beans instead of meat
- Vegetable primavera or hearty vegetable marinara sauce on whole wheat pasta.
- Vegetarian casserole
- Maki rolls made with vegetables &/or marinated tofu and brown rice

For more ideas, Google “vegan recipes” or explore websites such as <http://vegweb.com/> or www.fatfreevegan.com/. These recipes may not conform to a strict Daniel fast.