

# FASTING CHALLENGE

## FOR THE HUNGRY

This Lent, we offer a special invitation and challenge towards justice for the hungry.

**Fast:** If you are medically able, we invite you and your family to skip one meal each Friday (e.g., dinner). We have two goals: that our temporary physical hunger will grow our spiritual hunger for God, and that we would develop deeper empathy for those who go hungry every day.

**Give:** We invite you to be moved to compassion, mercy, and justice by donating the money you save from that skipped meal. You can give it to any charity of your choice that feeds the hungry.

**Pray:** To deepen our fasting together, we created a professional recording of a liturgy read by 9 kids, teenagers, and adults from across our campuses. Allow them to read this beautiful prayer-liturgy over you and your family as you fast together.



We hope you will join us in this practice, and we hope that God meets you in it.

# LITURGY

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## Hear the words of Jesus, who says in Matthew 6: 16-18

When you fast, do not look somber 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.

But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 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.

*pause*

In this season of Lent,  
We slow our steps and quiet our hearts.  
We come carrying hunger—  
some of it physical,  
much of it spiritual.  
We come before God not to prove our strength,  
but to name our need.  
Not to display our devotion,  
but to receive mercy.  
Lord, meet us in our hunger.

*pause*

Lent calls us into practices that feel unfamiliar,  
sometimes uncomfortable—  
practices like fasting.  
Fasting is not punishment.  
It is not a test of willpower.  
It is a prayer we pray with our bodies.  
When we fast,  
we willingly step into hunger—  
not because hunger is holy,  
but because God meets us there.

*pause*

# LITURGY

In fasting, we feel the ache of an empty stomach,  
the distraction,  
the irritability,  
the longing for satisfaction.

And in that feeling,  
we are invited to remember those  
for whom hunger is not chosen,  
not temporary,  
not spiritualized.

We remember neighbors who are food insecure,  
families who must choose between groceries and rent,  
children who arrive at school already hungry,  
workers whose labor does not earn them enough to eat well.

*pause*

Our fasting becomes an act of solidarity.

By going hungry,  
We refuse to forget those who live with hunger every day.

By abstaining,  
we train our hearts to notice injustice.  
We let discomfort awaken compassion.

We let absence create awareness.

Fasting clears space—  
space for empathy,  
space for generosity,

space for righteous anger at a world where abundance and scarcity exist side by side.

*pause*

Jesus speaks directly into this longing when he says in Matthew 5, verse 6:

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.”

To hunger for righteousness  
is to ache for a world made right.  
It is to long for justice that feeds the poor,  
systems that honor dignity,  
and communities where no one is invisible.

*pause*

# LITURGY

Our fasting reminds us  
that righteousness is not abstract.  
It is as real as bread.  
It is as urgent as thirst.  
As we deny ourselves,  
we ask God to shape our desires—  
that we would crave justice  
as much as we crave comfort,  
that we would pursue mercy  
as fiercely as we pursue satisfaction.

*pause*

God of abundance,  
when our stomachs growl,  
turn our attention outward.  
When we feel emptiness,  
fill us with resolve.  
Teach us to see hunger clearly—  
in ourselves and in our world.  
Teach us to respond not only with prayer,  
but with action, generosity,  
and lives bent toward justice.  
Fill us with what is right.

*pause*

As we continue this Lenten journey,  
may our fasting soften our hearts,  
sharpen our vision,  
and align us with Your kingdom.  
May we hunger not just to be full,  
but to see the hungry fed.  
May we thirst not just for comfort,  
but for righteousness that restores all things.  
We close with the words of Jesus as he preached them on the sermon on the mount  
“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.”  
In this season of Lent - we wait.  
We listen.  
We hunger.  
**Amen.**