

A CALL TO PRAYER AND FASTING

We're still searching for a second minister at NBC. It's a fairly niche role, seeking someone with a passion for youth ministry, but who is also looking to serve the whole church. We knew it'd take time. We also know that prayer is fundamental to this entire process.

In our search team meetings we continue to pray for patience, wisdom and to trust in God's timing and provision. We enjoyed a well-attended church prayer meeting in April, and would like to invite you to a second prayer meeting.

This time however, we have felt challenged to go further and include a time of fasting in the week leading up to the meeting. For many of us the practice of fasting takes us into unfamiliar territory. So I'd like to share with you why it's worth considering, as well as some practical tips on what this might look like for you.

Fasting runs through the Bible as a response to moments of urgent dependence on God. When Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem's walls lay in ruins, he fasted before he prayed (Nehemiah 1:4). Esther called the whole Jewish community to fast before she risked her life before the king (Esther 4:16). The early church in Antioch was fasting when the Holy Spirit spoke about setting apart Barnabas and Paul for mission (Acts 13:2-3).

Notice they weren't fasting to get an answer. They were worshipping and fasting, and in that posture, clarity came.

Jesus assumed his followers would fast. 'When you fast,' he says in Matthew 6:16, not if. He doesn't legislate how often. He simply takes it for granted as part of a serious spiritual life.

Fasting is not a transaction with God. We're not skipping lunch in order to try and pressure God into sending us the right person! Isaiah 58 warns against exactly that kind of performance-fasting, where we go through the motions while expecting God to deliver. What fasting does is reorient us. It is a physical act that expresses a spiritual reality: That we are genuinely dependent, genuinely seeking, and willing to let that posture cost us something.

When we are hungry, we are reminded why we are hungry, and that remembrance shapes our prayer. It sharpens attention. It quiets distraction. It says, with our bodies as well as our words: we need God in this.

Calling a minister is one of the most significant decisions a congregation can make. We want to make it well. Fasting is one way of approaching that decision with the seriousness it deserves.

What might it look like?

There are no specific rules. This is between you and God. However, some suggestions if you've never done this before:

Skip one meal in the week of 19-25th June and use that time to pray for the search. Or why not skip one meal per day if it's medically safe for you to do so

Fast from something other than food: Social media, television, and redirect that space toward prayer.

A full day's fast if you are able and feel called to it, ending with the prayer meeting on the 25th.

If you have medical conditions that make food fasting unwise, please don't do it. This isn't about self-punishment. It is about intentional focus. We are asking God for something we cannot manufacture ourselves.

We'd love you join us on the 25th at 7.30pm for the prayer meeting. If you're able to fast in the week leading up to it, please do.

NOTICES



First Thursday

Join us for the First Thursday service and meal tomorrow (4th June) at 12 noon. We'd be grateful to know if you're coming, so please let us know either by booking your place [here](#), or by emailing fristthursday@newburybaptistchurch.org, or by getting in touch with Daph.

Men's Breakfast

Our very own Rev Wilbert Awdry aka Graham Coldman will share his passion for Model Trains, landscaping AND Scripture at our next Men's Breakfast... what a great combo! We will meet on 6th June at 8am. [Book your place here](#)

Ladies' Breakfast

Rowena will be sharing her story at our next Ladies' Breakfast meeting on 13th June. Join us at 8.30am for a relaxed continental-style breakfast with friends. [Please book your place here](#)

The Bible Course

The second block of 4 sessions of "The Bible Course" will start on 8th June (online) and 10th June (in person) following a break for half term.

BMS "Expect"

BMS is holding a series of events around the country, each one addressed by four mission staff or partners from around the world. Churches/ individuals are invited to attend. Some people from NBC have booked for the one in Guildford on 4 July, 1030 at Guildford Baptist Church. [Further details can be found here](#). If anyone would like to go along, please book directly with BMS and let Emma in the office know if you'd like to share lifts.

Bright Sparks

"The Bright Sparks group on a Sunday morning needs some additional helpers. Could you help our youngest members of the church family as we share bible stories in a fun and interactive way through stories, simple crafts, games, activities and music? If you would like to find out more please speak to Linda-Jean or Sian (sianc@newburybaptistchurch.org)"

Street Pastors

Would you like to volunteer as a church representative for Street Pastors? Each week, a representative from different churches leads the group in prayer before the shift on a Saturday evening. There is a rota which means it's only once or twice a year. Nick is already doing this on behalf of NBC< but it would be great if someone might join him - and provide cover if he's not available. Please speak to Emma in the office, or directly to Nick Freeman if you'd like to know more.

Save the Dates!

Don't forget to put these two dates in your diaries for church social events...

June 28th - Church Picnic and October 3rd - Barn Dance

Want to include something next week?

Email Emma by Weds, 9am: office@newburybaptistchurch.org

PRAYERS

Heavenly Father,

We place our search for a second minister into your hands. We know that you already know the person you are preparing for NBC, and we ask that you would give us patience, wisdom, and absolute trust in your perfect timing. We pray for someone with a passion for our young people, but also a heart to serve our entire church family.

As we prepare for a time of fasting and prayer, help us to look past our usual comforts and quiet the distractions around us. Lord, we want to show our dependence on You. When we feel hunger or miss the things we have stepped away from, let those moments serve as physical reminders to pray. Turn our hearts towards you, sharpen our focus, and let this time of seeking you cost us something genuine.

We pray for a powerful spirit of unity and expectation across our church. We ask that you prepare us for our prayer meeting on June 25th, that as we worship and seek You together, your Holy Spirit would grant us true clarity and discernment.

Amen.

Prayers for the Mahon Family

Dave and Michele Mahon who we support through BMS, have sent some prayer points relating to the work they are doing in Peru and asked their supporters to pray:

- Pray for an end to corruption in Peru and the end to the extortion of small businesses by criminal gangs
 - Prayer for the Peruvian Baptist Convention
 - Pray for Pastor Pedro (leader of the Baptist Convention) and Pastor Franz (leader of the Trujillo Baptist Seminary) for wisdom, humility and strength.
 - Pray for Ronal, Margia and their children who minister to people on the margins of society. Pray God would raise up co-labourers to help them.
 - Pray for Pastor Luis, his wife Noemi and their partnership with a missionary, Deber as they teach and evangelise in remote river communities
 - Pray for the Mahon family to remain strong in their devotion to the Lord, to enjoy good health and emotional wellbeing and to experience God's protection.
 - Praise God for the 75th Anniversary of the Peruvian Baptist Convention - for His faithfulness, goodness and mercy over the years.
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