

### **Cumberland Consecration 2026**

Cumberland Consecration is a time of prayer and fasting for our entire church family. In the long tradition of those devoted to the Lord, we choose to discipline our *natural appetites*, in order to stir up our *spiritual hunger*. Our current Sunday message series, *The Time is Ripe*, provides a sobering wake up call for the current condition of our society, and we are compelled to respond. We must decide that we will not grow weary in righteousness, despite the sweeping tide of a rebellious world. As ambassadors of the kingdom of God, we are called to overcome. Over the course of this fast, we'll take time to reflect on 1 John 5, and consider the apostle's timely encouragement to overcome the world in 1 John 5.

I invite you to join us in this opportunity, as we align our faith and challenge ourselves to aggressively seek after God - because *the Time is Ripe!*

Seeking His face,



Pastor Court

#### **Fasting Guidelines**

- The framework of our fast will unfold progressively over the course of 3 weeks, with a total fasting commitment of 9 days. It should build over that time, starting as a 1 day fast, and then, a 3 day fast, and concluding as a 5 day fast in week 3. The goal is to do only water for 24 hours on the first 4 fast days, and then for the final 5 days, commit to water from 6am-6pm. One small meal, after 6pm, is encouraged in week 3 as a way to close each day.
- The priority of fasting is on seeking the Lord, not just skipping meals. If a full day is too much for your body or soul, start smaller. Skip breakfast and break the fast at lunch or 3 p.m. Remember: The ultimate goal is to make fasting a regular part of your life, not try it once or twice, hate it, and never try it again. Start where you are, not where you feel like you "should" be.
- Whatever faith step you chose in one week, be sure to challenge yourself even more for the next week. This progressive approach is intended to help stretch your faith - no matter where you start. Remember, fasting is a means of demonstrating our commitment to, and our dependence, on God.
- Please modify as needed for health reasons, and also consider whether it would be supportive for you to meet with a therapist or doctor as you think about engaging in this practice. As a community, ask how you can support and include others who may need to modify this practice.
- Avoid comparing yourself to others. One person's sacrifice may look very different from another, so be careful of any judgmental attitudes. Fasting is a challenge for all, so we'll need the grace of God, and the encouragement of each other to finish strong. Be sure to sign up for Breadcrumbs from Pastor Court, to receive encouragements, scriptures, and prayer focus during our time of consecration.

<b>2/25</b>	<b>Week 1 Challenge: 1 Day Fast (Wednesday)</b>
<p>Fast for 1 full day on Wednesday, drinking only water and focusing on offering yourself to Jesus. If possible, do this together as a community; which will help to encourage and enliven your weekly practice. You may want to send encouraging texts, or scriptures to each other throughout the day, as a reminder that we are to overcome this world by faith.</p>	
<p><b>Week 1 Scripture Reflection:</b>  <i>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.</i>  1 John 5:1-5 (NIV)</p>	
<b>3/3 - 3/5</b>	<b>Week 2 Challenge: 3 Day Fast (Tuesday - Thursday)</b>
<p>For this week, fast for 3 full days, from Tuesday - Thursday. Again, drink only water, and replace food with a focus on time in prayer. In the time you'd normally be grocery shopping, cooking, eating, or cleaning, give yourself to prayer. Let your desire for food point you to Jesus as you open yourself to him. In your dedicated times of prayer, or each time a hunger pain comes, remember that the struggles of this world are only temporary. As you go about your day — your morning commute, caregiving, email, errands — allow God's commands to guide you and His promises to comfort you, as you rest in the security of eternal victory that only He provides.</p>	
<p><b>Week 2 Scripture Reflection:</b>  <i>6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.</i>  1 John 5:6-12 (NIV)</p>	
<b>3/9 - 3/13</b>	<b>Week 3 Challenge: 5 Day Fast (Monday - Friday)</b>
<p>For the final week, fast for 5 days, from Monday through Friday. For this week, commit to drinking only water from 6am to 6pm, and then, end each day with a small meal of gratitude. Reflect on the final verses of 1 John 5, and consider the responsibility we have in light of a world gone wrong. In what ways are we to balance immediate urgency with our eternal security, and how should that offer hope to others?</p>	
<p><b>Week 3 Scripture Reflection:</b>  <i>13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him. 16 If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death. 18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. 19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. 21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.</i>  1 John 5:13-21 (NIV)</p>	

Fasting Schedule						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Feb 15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 <b>Fasting Day</b> (only water)	26	27	28
Mar 1	2	3 <b>Fasting Day</b> (only water)	4 <b>Fasting Day</b> (only water)	5 <b>Fasting Day</b> (only water)	6	7
8	9 <b>Fasting Day</b> Water from 6am-6pm; 1 small meal afterwards	10 <b>Fasting Day</b> Water from 6am-6pm; 1 small meal afterwards	11 <b>Fasting Day</b> Water from 6am-6pm; 1 small meal afterwards	12 <b>Fasting Day</b> Water from 6am-6pm; 1 small meal afterwards	13 <b>Fasting Day</b> Water from 6am-6pm; 1 small meal afterwards	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21