

THE HUNGER REMAINS



When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?

Mark 8:19

preparation pack

lent 2015

What is Lent?

Lent 2015

The season of Lent is a time of preparation and discipline. While advent prepares us for the birth of Christ, in Lent we prepare ourselves for Easter, the commemoration of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

In the early church, the 40 day period of Lent was a time when new converts to Christianity would prepare themselves for their baptism. This period of preparation was marked by; taking vows of *abstinence* (choosing not to do something for a period of time) in order to physically discipline the body; devotion to *prayer* in order to spiritually align oneself with God; and *almsgiving*, performing acts of charity to demonstrate ones love for God through service. Over time the tradition evolved to also include old converts who would use the celebration of Lent as a means of remembering their own baptism, and re-dedicating themselves to Christ.

At cession|community we observe lent as a way of spiritually realigning ourselves. This year we are exploring our need – our hunger – for God. In line with this theme the lent goal challenge is to *Feed* (encourage a new habit or practice) and *Starve* (stop a habit or activity) for the 40 days of Lent. In 2015, Lent runs from Wednesday 18 February (Ash Wednesday) to Saturday 4th April (day before Easter Sunday)(excluding Sundays).

Shrove Tuesday

prep for Lent

Shrove (or Pancake) Tuesday is a celebration, the last day before the period of lent begins.

Traditionally, families would have a big feed of pancakes to use up all the eggs and fat in their kitchen cupboards before holding to a vegan diet during Lent (ie. starving for those of us who think “meals without meat” is an oxymoron). Shrove Tuesday is 17th February – how about a pancake party with your cell group or as a family? For some weird and wonderful recipies see <http://alturl.com/7r5kv>

Action: Organise a gathering with friends and family to and celebrate with a meal of pancakes. As you eat together, share about the things which you feel really grateful for in your life and some of the changes that you would like to make to who you are and how you live your life. Talk about how you might support one another in making those changes.

Ash Wednesday

Lent 2015

The season of lent officially begins with the observance of Ash Wednesday – a day of reflection and repentance. Ash Wednesday is 18 February in 2015.

Join us at 6.30pm @ the Depot for a short Ash Wednesday service

The day derives its name from one of the ‘rites of confession’ that have traditionally been practiced on the first day of Lent; The palm leaves used to celebrate the entry of Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (celebrated one week before Easter), are kept and carefully dried out and burned. The ashes from these palms are kept until Ash Wednesday of the following year. These ashes are then used to mark the sign of the cross on the forehead of all those who wish mark their decision to repent and devote themselves to Christ.

“Examine me O God and know my heart, test me and discover my thoughts, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23,24

Action: As Lent begins, reflect on the following:
How hungry are you for God?

What things fill your life but fail to really satisfy?

What life/attitude changes are needed in your life in order for you to follow Christ more closely?

Is there something that you could *Feed* or *Starve* that would help you to be open to God’s Spirit as he make these changes?

Ash Wednesday Prayer (from *A New Zealand Prayer Book*):

Jesus, holy and strong, by your fasting and temptation teach us self-denial; control and discipline us, that we may learn to obey.

Almighty and merciful God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent; create in us new and contrite hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins we may receive your full and perfect forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

God of the desert, as we follow Jesus into the unknown, may we recognise the tempter when he comes; let it be your bread we eat, your world we serve and you alone we worship.

Choosing a Hunger Goal

Lent 2015

When setting Lent goals, many think: What is something that I can handle giving up for 40 days?

While this can be valuable, it doesn't quite get to the heart of what celebrating Lent is all about. While giving things up can be an important part of the process, the real goal is seeing our lives transformed into a greater likeness of Christ and more hunger for God.

When considering your Lent goals for 2015 begin by asking yourself: What are you hungry for? This is your hunger goal.

What do I need to *Starve* (stop a habit or activity) to help me reach this goal?

What do I need to *Feed* (encourage a new habit or practice) to help me reach this goal?

What are some practical steps that I can take during Lent in order to starve and feed?

Who are the people I need to talk to about my hunger goal so that they are able to help support me and keep me accountable to the decisions I have made?

Examples

- Hungry for better relationships: starve anger, feed patience
starve bitterness feed forgiveness
- Hungry to be free from depression: starve discouragement, feed hope
- Hungry to get fit: starve laziness, feed enthusiasm
- Hungry for authenticity: starve insincerity, feed truthfulness
- Hungry for satisfaction: starve comparisons, feed contentment
- Hungry for acceptance: starve self-hatred, feed love
- Hungry for community: starve individualism, feed relationship
- Hungry for God: starve busyness, feed aloneness
- Hungry to be more loving: starve selfishness, feed compassion

Example of practical steps for the last example

- I am going to let others take the first choice at food, tv show, etc
- I am going to have a conversation with a homeless person in Queen St.

hunger buddies

Lent support

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