



St Paul's Church

Dear all

Fasting

When you hear the word fasting, do you immediately think: giving up food, feeling hungry, being a size slimmer, that's what Muslims do, or that's really easy to do at Lent, I'll give up chocolate as last year I gave up meat!

Fasting in the Old Testament is portrayed as a spiritual practice involving abstaining from food due to mourning, repentance, seeking God's guidance, and expressing humility before God. In the New Testament fasting is mainly in the context of spiritual practices and preparation. Jesus himself fasted for 40 days in the wilderness, and his teachings emphasise the importance of fasting for spiritual growth and connection with God. The practice is presented as a way to seek God's will, express humility, and prepare for ministry.

So why am I talking about fasting when Lent is not until next year? I believe fasting from food is a lot easier than other practices that have become so engrained in our lives. One that has crept in so unassuming that I am becoming a sceptic!

Yep, the mobile phone. I tried to open a new bank account a month ago. You may not realise that the quickest way to do so is to download an App on your mobile phone. Seriously! No pen and paper required. HMRC sent me a letter to confirm if our youngest Christian was staying in education full time. If we wanted to receive child benefit for him, yep you guessed it, some government gateway App to verify this. When I dared to phone up from the landline to confirm he was continuing and that I didn't have a smart phone, the lady on the other end of the phone treated me somewhat like a leper. She now had to do paperwork, which would involve someone else calling me back.

What has this to do with fasting, I hear you say. On my way back from Belfast, having dropped my grandson home, I decided to people watch...because it's simply fun, or well it use to be. The first twenty or so people I saw had their heads buried in their phones, even couples. I was pleased to see a mother and daughter talking as they proceeded to get out books to read. A group were at the bar talking whilst working on their laptops.

So, my question is,

"Could you go one day without your mobile phone, an electronic device including the TV or radio?"

I'm going to choose a day and see how I get on. If you do manage this, write me a letter through snail mail.

SERVICES

SUNDAY 10 AUGUST – Trinity 8

10.30 am - All-Age Communion – Rev Claude

SUNDAY 17 AUGUST – Trinity 9

10.30 am – Morning Worship – Gwyn

SUNDAY 24 AUGUST – Trinity 10

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Canon Liz Walker

SUNDAY 31 AUGUST – Trinity 11

10.30 am – Celtic Service – Jenny Clifton

SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER – Trinity 12

10.30 am - Café Church – Café Church Team

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER – Trinity 13

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am – Morning Worship – Gwyn

EVENTS

SATURDAY 16 AUGUST @ 2.30 pm

Summer Afternoon Tea

THURSDAY 21 AUGUST @ 2.30 pm

Fellowship: Quiz

FRIDAY 29 AUGUST @ 7 pm

Crafts

FRIDAY 5 SEPTEMBER @ 9.30 am

Baby & Toddler Group

MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER @ 7 pm

Prayer Meeting – St Paul's

FOOD BANK

The next deliver will be Friday 29th August.

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 27th July 2025 – 10th August

'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.' (Romans 12: 12)

We give thanks for:

- The summer colours in so many of our public spaces and private gardens.
- Opportunities which we have had in our life; pray through any regrets and thank God for the worthwhile paths we took.

Please pray for:

- An end to wars and unrest, anger and bitterness that divides nations and neighbourhoods; for successful outcomes to peace and reconciliation negotiations taking place behind closed doors.
- Organisations, often church-based, continuing to tackle economic injustice through high-level advocacy and campaigning work.
- The basic essentials we all need in order to survive to be distributed fairly and wisely amongst all, especially praying for vulnerable, isolated, displaced and frightened people in our world.
- Young people and families who, instead of enjoying a time of joy and recuperation during the summer holidays, find it is a time of uncertainty and struggle.
- Our Church family, especially all who are lonely, unwell or grieving; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Sandra, Brenda, Elizabeth, Carol, Di, Ray, Percy, Paul and Brian W; and for Meaghan, Alan and Alison.
- God's wisdom, direction and provision as we go about our lives.

You may like to use this prayer during the next couple of weeks:

Loving Father, wherever I go and whatever I do, grant me the knowledge of your presence, the reassurance of your guiding hand, and the security of your loving grip. Amen.