



24

CHURCHWIDE
PRAYER +
FASTING

*the spirit
of the lord
is upon us*

PRAYER & FASTING GUIDE

Petra's theme for the 2024 year is ***“Empowered.”*** For fasting week, we will look at Isaiah 61:1-3. This scripture begins with the ever-famous words, *“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me.”* Jesus quotes this scripture in the temple in Luke 4:18. In this moment, Jesus claims to be God come in the flesh, the Messiah, the only Son of God. As we come to him, declaring he is Lord of our lives, we find that he has also anointed us with his Spirit to continue his work on earth until his return. We want to use this week of fasting to focus our attention on the many ways Jesus has anointed us to continue his work.

Each day, we will look at a small portion of Isaiah 61 to understand, in deeper ways, how we have been Empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue his work here on earth. As a community, we will pray that God would lead us in growing in these works.

Here is the Daily Focus:

- January 15: The Spirit's Anointing
- January 16: Proclaim the Good News
- January 17: Bind up the Broken-Hearted
- January 18: Freedom for the Captives
- January 19: The Year of the Lord's Favor
- January 20: Comfort for All Who Mourn
- January 21: Oaks of Righteousness

What an exciting time to be a part of God's kingdom! Just imagine Jesus working through our church, working through you to bring his love, healing, and hope to the world! We invite you to read, fast, and join in the prayers of everyone here at Petra Church. Ask God how he would have you fast for the upcoming week. Thank you for your participation in Petra's 2024 week of Prayer and Fasting!

Brian Coles

Lead Pastor

fasting week events

Monday, January 15

Prayer Stations | Sanctuary

EDGE 78 will join at 7 PM

Tuesday, January 16

Prayer Stations

Family Prayer Night* | Sanctuary, 6-8 PM

Wednesday, January 17

Prayer Stations | Sanctuary

High School Ministry will join at 7 PM

Thursday, January 18

Prayer Stations | Sanctuary

Petra Young Adults will join at 7 PM

Friday, January 19

Deeper Night* | Sanctuary, 7 PM

Childcare provided for Babies through Pre-K. Registration Required.

Saturday, January 20

Saturday Night Prayer* | Sanctuary, 7-8 PM

In-Person Only

Sunday, January 21

Communion* | Sanctuary, 9 & 11 AM

**Churchwide Event*



The Sanctuary will be open Monday - Friday from
6 AM - 8:30 PM for a time of personal prayer.
10 Interactive prayer stations will also be set up during these times.

Prayer Sessions

Monday - Sunday | Various Times & Locations

*For a list of our group prayer sessions,
turn to page 45 or visit petra.church/fasting.*

Lunchtime Prayer with Petra Staff*

Monday - Thursday | Sanctuary, 12:15-1:00 PM

Livestreamed on all our platforms. Open to the Community.

Follow us on Social Media @PetraChurchNewHolland!

Daily Vlogs will be posted on Facebook and Instagram



fasting dedication prayer

God, you are a good, good Father. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus to live as a man, being tempted in every way like us. We praise you that Jesus died for our sins. We also thank you for anointing Jesus with the Holy Spirit to show forth your glory on earth and to usher in your kingdom. God, you desire us to be endowed with that same dynamite power and anointing of the Holy Spirit so that we, too, can further your kingdom on earth and show forth your glory. We praise you that you do not leave us alone but that you are always with us. May we give freely to others what you have freely given us. Lord, use us to bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty for the captives, and release for those in bondage to darkness. May we comfort those who mourn and supply hope for those who are grieving. Let us proclaim the year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God. Lord, establish us as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord so that we can show to others the splendor of you, our King. God, as we fast and pray, lead, guide, and direct us to serve you more fully. We ask all these things in the precious name of your Son, Jesus.

Amen

2024 theme verse

*As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’
Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out
demons. Freely you have received; freely give.*

MATTHEW 10:7-8

fasting week scripture

*The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.*

ISAIAH 61:1-3

ADULT DEVOTIONS

PAGE 9

KIDS' DEVOTIONS

PAGE 29

*All materials for the children's daily activity
can be picked up at the Kids' Hub.*

daily prayer focus

MONDAY | Pray for the Anointing of the Holy Spirit

- To further God's kingdom on earth
- To be God's hands and feet right where we live
- To show forth God's glory to all those around us

TUESDAY | Share the Good News with the Poor

- Boldness to witness to the lost
- Clarity, love, and compassion in our testimony to others
- God to reach the unsaved in our cities, states, and around the World

WEDNESDAY | Bind up the Broken-Hearted

- Healing for those with trauma and those suffering from abuse
- Breakthrough for inner healing in ourselves and in others
- The balm of the Holy Spirit to cover all bruises, cuts, and wounds

THURSDAY | Freedom for the Captives and Release from Darkness

- Liberty for those bound by the enemy
- Opening of prison doors to those in spiritual prisons
- Freedom from long-term struggles with sin and bondage

FRIDAY | Proclaim the Lord's Favor

- That the unsaved would see God's goodness through us
- That God's Word would be proclaimed in our world
- That we would sow good seed and bear fruit for God's kingdom

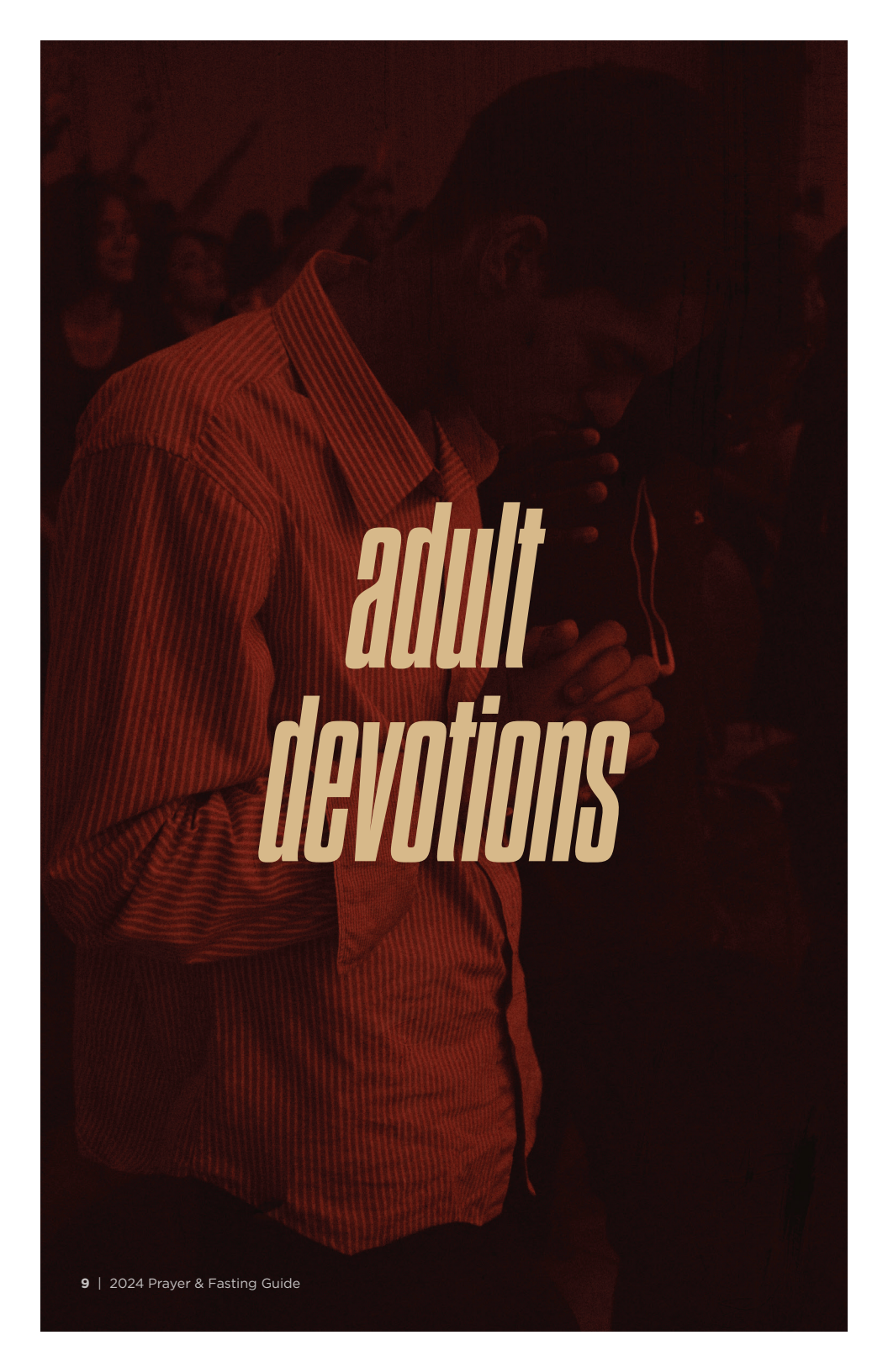
SATURDAY | Comfort all who Mourn

- Those who have experienced a loss would receive comfort and release
- God would turn our mourning into joy and dancing
- Those with despair, discouragement, and depression would be uplifted

SUNDAY | We would be the Planting of the Lord

- That we would plant our roots deep in the Lord
- That we would be like oak trees and not bend with every circumstance
- That we would thrive where the Lord has planted us

Along with the daily devotion, here is a list of prayer points for each day. This is a way for our congregation to agree together in prayer during our fast. This list is just a guide; please listen to God's voice when you take time to pray each day!

A photograph of a man in a striped shirt, seen from the side, with his hands clasped in prayer. He is looking down. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, though out of focus. The entire image has a dark, reddish-brown color cast.

adult devotions



day one

BY JOLYN ESH

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me*

ISAIAH 61:1a

Jesus speaks these words in Luke 4:18, declaring he is the fulfillment of the promise and prophecy Isaiah penned over 700 years before. His name, Christ, Messiah (from the Hebrew Mashiach), means “Anointed One,” and as Christians, we are more than just Jesus followers; we are “the anointed.” The purpose of Jesus was to carry out God’s kingdom here on earth, and as those who carry his Spirit, we are called to establish his kingdom here, too.

Do we know that the same power that raised Christ from the dead lives inside us? (Romans 8:11) That means that we always have access to his Spirit and power, without measure, and it is to be flowing out of us continually. It is not something we have to externally lay hold of, but something we receive through his Spirit’s indwelling. Anointing is defined as “God on flesh doing those things that flesh cannot do.” 2 Corinthians 4:7 tells us that the all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. In other words, anointing is God doing, through people like us, what we couldn’t do on our own.

Paul also speaks of this power at work within us in Ephesians 1:19-20. He pens these words while chained in prison, imparting to us that no matter what happens in our lives or what challenges we face (such as his own imprisonment or Christ’s cross), God will absolutely fulfill

all his purposes for us and his promises to us. Our situations may appear hopeless at times, as Paul's and even Jesus' did to those watching, but look at what God has done through Paul's ministry and, even more astoundingly, through Christ's work on the cross, eternally defeating death and the grave!

The same power that did those things is alive and working in us today! The anointing didn't end with Jesus. After he was crucified and right before he ascended into heaven, Jesus told his followers to wait in Jerusalem until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit and received "*power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.*" (Acts 1:4-5,8) If you are "in Christ," there is an anointing for everything you are called to do, no matter how great or small the task.

PRAY

Jesus, we thank you for coming to fulfill every prophecy and every promise. We thank you for sending your Spirit to us so we can walk in the same anointing you carry. Open our eyes to see you rightly and our minds to understand what it means to be your anointed ones and to establish your kingdom. Thank you for your promise that we can do all things through you, the Anointed One, and through your power at work within us. We open ourselves up to receive from you today. Amen



day two

BY **ANDREW ZEISET**

...proclaim good news to the poor.

ISAIAH 61:1b

This verse speaks of Jesus—the Anointed One. The King who was appointed to sit on the throne of an everlasting kingdom yet anointed to proclaim good news to the poor. A victorious King with power to vindicate and authority to release justice—yet anointed to heal, full of overflowing mercy and compassion. His voice awakens hearts to the good news as he cries out, “Come unto me!” He is not calling to those who think their own good deeds will save them. He is calling to the ones who recognize their need for a Savior. He says:

I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners and need to repent.

LUKE 5:32 NLT

Can you hear the passion in his voice as you yield to his Holy Spirit? “Taste and see that the Lord is good!” I can hear him say, “Struggle no more. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly at heart. Here, you will find rest for your soul! Leave your old life behind and receive my life. I give you my Spirit.” He will join with your spirit and teach you how to live as the new creation you now are. He will never leave you and never forsake you.

This is good news, but it doesn’t end here! It seems this anointed King has anointed you and me with his own anointing. It is to

proclaim this same good news. “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone,” he says.

Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.

Mark 16:15-18 NLT

What a marvelous mission this is! How can it be that he has anointed me? Yet I feel uncertainty disappear as his voice beckons us to come unto him closer still. “Receive my name and the authority it carries,” I hear him say, “Live as I live, and walk as I walk. Allow the power in my Spirit that now lives in you to heal others as I am healing you. Proclaim the same message that I am proclaiming to you. You will experience the same outcome that my Word carries as you speak my Word. You are my son. You are my daughter. I give you my anointing because you are my child. Abide in me because I abide in you. Be victorious because I have already made you so. Be prosperous because I have already caused you to be so. Do not be afraid, and do not be discouraged, for I am with you now and forever!”

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank you for the good news of who you are and what you have done for me. I ask you, Father, for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to open the eyes of my heart to the wonderful anointing and calling you have given me as an ambassador of your kingdom. May your kingdom come, and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen



day three

BY **CANDACE HAHN**

...bind up the brokenhearted

ISAIAH 61:1c

Deep pain can fracture the soul.

Like a ship battered to pieces where turbulent waters and rocky shorelines converge, the human heart can experience a brokenness so deep that only the power of God can mend it. When life's unexpected and relentless waves pound against the sides of a sailing sojourner, the force can be too much to endure, and once beautiful craftsmanship fragments into a dysfunctional shipwreck. Leftovers lie smashed and stranded on the shore, wedged between rocks and buried in sand.

Try as they may, these skeletal remains can never seem to move forward in life. Other bits and pieces, once lovely and treasured, seem to have vanished entirely. Perhaps they will wash up someday, or perhaps the murky, menacing waters are a permanent grave. Indeed, those who know deep trauma may wonder if the beautiful pieces of their souls will ever be recovered.

To the untrained eye, a shipwreck can look strikingly similar to a garbage heap, and broken pieces can appear to be worth little more than firewood. "What a pity," some sigh. There goes another one, lost to the brokenness of this broken world. What are the odds of recovery after such severe damage? Statistically, not many can set

sail after experiencing a storm like that, a tragedy like that, an abusive relationship like that, a childhood like that, a neighborhood like that, a socioeconomic status like that. One could conclude that the only reasonable response is to warn nearby vessels and pray they can quickly steer to calmer waters.

But while preventing further damage has its place, what are we to do about the present victims of this fallen world's brutality? For some shipwrecked souls, there seems to be no amount of intervention that can undo all the damage. Their personalities are barely visible behind a myriad of self-protective reactions, and their cycles of dysfunction spin around like clockwork. The task seems as daunting as piecing a shipwreck back together by hand, one piece at a time. Is such a feat even possible?

Yes, it is. But it will require us to enter into the mess of the brokenness, and we will not do it in our own strength.

When Christ came to this earth, he experienced suffering. Instead of protecting himself from brokenness, he intentionally sailed straight into the most turbulent waters of loss, mistreatment, betrayal, rejection, poverty, and pain. He was moved with immense compassion for the hurting, and he was anointed by the Holy Spirit to bind them back together. And before he ascended back to heaven, he extended his ministry to us so that we may do the very works he did (John 14:12).

And so, as we leave the safe, calm harbors behind and traverse shipwrecked shorelines, the invitation lies before us. Will we, like Jesus, bind up the brokenhearted?

PRAY

Father God, give us your heart of compassion for the wounded and

hurting. Lead us to those who need to be mended and give us grace to enter into their brokenness with them. Holy Spirit, we know it is only by your power that shattered lives are made whole. Anoint us and send us that we may continue in the healing ministry of Jesus to bind up the brokenhearted. Amen



day four

BY JANICE BALDAUF

*...proclaim freedom for the captives,
and release from darkness for the prisoners.”*

ISAIAH 61:1d

As God's people—his precious, called-out ones—our hearts break for those held captive by the evil one. All of us know family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others who struggle with sin, sickness, fear, addiction, mental duress, spiritual oppression, and much more, which has locked them into a prison of hopelessness and pain. We recognize from 2 Timothy 2:26 that it is the *devil* who has taken them captive to do his will; he comes solely to steal, kill, and destroy.

God is the polar opposite—a God of mercy, love, power, and grace, delivering us from darkness into his glorious light! He proclaims freedom for the captives! He releases prisoners from darkness! He says to captives, “*Come out,*” and to those in darkness, “*Be free!*” (Isaiah 49:9)

Jesus, of course, came to fulfill *all* of Isaiah's prophetic declarations. Setting people free from demonic oppression and captivity was actually at the very core of Jesus' ministry. He came to “*destroy the works of the devil*” (1 John 3:8), healing “*all who were under [the devil's] power, because God was with him.*” (Acts 10:38) I've been extremely impressed over the years not only by the scope of Jesus' ministry (see Matthew 12:15 and Luke 4:40) but by its *depth and*

breadth, such as to the violent, demon-possessed man in Mark 5.

For those of us contending for the freedom of a loved one, we can be assured of the Lord's power to save. Just as Jesus confronted Satan and his demons with spiritual authority whenever they tried to attack him or others, we, too, must confront Satan through Jesus' authority and command. Our most powerful offensive weapon, as you know, is the Word of God. Through our fasting and prayer this week, let's willingly engage in spiritual battle on behalf of others—to the glory of the Lord and to the joy of all those who will be set free in Jesus!

PRAY

Father, grant us the courage, the grace, and the commitment to war in the spiritual places on behalf of those bound in sickness, sin, and every form of bondage. We recognize that Jesus came to set people free, and we appropriate his power and authority to proclaim freedom for captives and release for prisoners! Destroy the works of the evil one, Lord God! And set these precious people free—to wholeness, truth, righteousness, and peace! We trust in your mighty Name, O Lord—our Champion! Amen

*The LORD will march out like a champion,
like a warrior he will stir up his zeal;
with a shout he will raise the battle cry
and will triumph over his enemies.*

ISAIAH 42:13



day five

BY DWANE REITZ

*...proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,*

ISAIAH 61:2a

Growing up in a church that emphasized a lifestyle of peace, part of this verse felt uncomfortable to me. It was easy to embrace the proclamation of the Lord's favor, but the "day of vengeance of our God" sounded rather militant and violent. Shouldn't we just focus on God's goodness, love, and blessings?

As Christ-followers called to be the hands, feet, and mouthpiece of Jesus advancing his kingdom on earth, we absolutely must be proclaimers of the Lord's favor. However, it is impossible to walk in the fullness of his anointing without embracing the proclamation of both his favor and his vengeance. To clarify, we are not called to vengeance against people, but rather, against powers of darkness (Eph. 6:12; Rom. 12:19). 1 John 3:8 states, *"...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."*

Like a bear jealously protecting its cubs, there is vengeance in the heart of God against evil and the powers of darkness that wreak havoc, bondage, and destruction in our lives. We are called to share God's hatred of evil and actively enforce Jesus' victory on the cross—proclaiming God's vengeance against demonic squatters claiming territory in our lives and the lives of others. Only as the powers of darkness are bound and evicted can the fullness of God's

blessing and favor be released.

Twenty-some years ago, I was on a prayer team in a restricted Asian country, praying with mission workers serving in a region with 250,000+ people and only 6 known believers. Our team spent time praying for obstacles hindering the advancement of God's kingdom to be removed and for the release of God's favor to draw people to God. Three hours after our team departed for home, the mission workers answered a knock at their door. At their doorstep were three neighbors who wanted to put their faith in Jesus. The mission workers were amazed! Nothing like that had ever happened in their previous 6+ years of faithful service in that country. Spiritual breakthroughs came as we proclaimed both God's favor and vengeance in that land.

What areas in your life and sphere of influence need spiritual breakthrough? What ungodly attitudes, beliefs, habits, or behaviors need to be evicted? Ask God to give you his hatred for evil and declarations of vengeance—applying the all-powerful blood of Jesus against the powers of darkness at work in those situations.

But don't stop there! Release God's power, healing, freedom, and favor to flow into each area and relationship where the enemy has been stealing, killing, and destroying. Ask the Holy Spirit for his proclamations and impartation of favor and blessing that releases his transformational kingdom purposes in your life and in the lives of others.

PRAY

God, we repent for every area where we have allowed Satan's schemes to operate in our lives, relationships, communities, and nation. We invite your righteous judgments and vengeance against evil—eradicate it from our hearts, break its power from our lives. Set

us free to walk in the fullness of your kingdom authority.

Empower and use us to bring your life, healing, hope, and favor to those around us and to the world! In Jesus' all-powerful name,

Amen



day six

BY MIKE INGOLD

*to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.*

ISAIAH 61:2b-3c

When people mourn, they usually have suffered a loss of some kind. It may be the loss of a loved one, the death of a dream, a job loss, the severing of a relationship, the loss of good health, or the death of a beloved pet. Mourning and grieving are normal parts of life. 2 Corinthians 1:3 says that God is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. So, God is the best one to bring comfort to someone suffering a loss. God promises to comfort us. Isaiah 66:13 states, “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you: And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.” (NKJV) But comfort is not his job alone.

2 Corinthians 1:4 continues saying, “Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” So, God comforts us in every trial we face. What a great promise! But it doesn’t stop there. God comforts us so that we may comfort others who find themselves in trouble because we have

been comforted by God.

Wow! It is not enough to receive comfort; but we must be willing to share comfort with others. We are to lift other people from the ash heap of life and give them a crown of beauty. We are to share joy with them rather than mourning. We are to replace their clothing of despair with a cloak of praise. Why can we do these things? Because we know God, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort. Since he has blessed us with his comfort, we can freely give comfort to others. Freely we have received, freely we can give.

May we say with the psalmist David in Psalm 23:4, *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.”* (NKJV)
In our darkest times, God comforts us.

PRAY

God, you are truly the God of all comfort and mercy. You have blessed us with indescribable comfort during our losses. Because we have received from you, we can humbly pass on your comfort to others around us who are mourning or grieving. We thank you for this wonderful gift. Through Jesus, we pray, Amen



day seven

BY SUSAN MILLER

*They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.*

ISAIAH 61:3d

Oak trees are known for being slow-growing, resilient, and strong. They are symbols of strength and stability. They are places of refuge, safety, and strength. Their wood is prized in furniture making, flooring, and cabinetry because of its natural beauty, durability, and flexibility. The oak tree is known for its highly adaptable and deep root system. These root systems can extend up to three times the size of the tree's canopy. Because of this mighty root system, the oak tree can easily thrive for over 1000 years!

When shallow-rooted trees face storms unprepared and succumb to them, the oak stands quietly. It stands strong and firm where it was planted and weathers the storm like the valiant warrior it is. Isaiah 61:3 reads, *"They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor."* Who is the prophet Isaiah referring to? As we look at the previous lines, we see he is referring to those who have had their hearts broken but mended by Jesus—those who have been healed, comforted, and set free by the Messiah. We are the ones Isaiah was referring to. We are the oaks of righteousness. We are the ones who stood firm and weathered the storms of life, knowing that the Lord is faithful and his promises are true. Over time, our hearts have been lovingly mended by God,

and we have become a display of his righteousness. We share our testimonies with others, pointing them to the Messiah who rescued and healed us, letting them know he can do the same for them. We are the Lord's oaks of righteousness, plantings of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

We stand tall, reflecting our Messiah's beauty as we stretch our roots and faith in him, standing firm in his truth, not wavering when the storms of life come our way. We are solidly grounded in him, looking to him for our strength and help to weather the storms of life as we reflect his faithfulness to the world. Because our roots are deeply rooted in the Messiah, we each can be a place of refuge, safety, and strength to those around us, knowing that as long as our roots are deep in the Messiah, we cannot be shaken and can display his splendor to them.

As Christ-followers, we carry the same anointing that was on Jesus so that we can further the kingdom of God here on earth. As we do this, we display his splendor to those around us and are an encouragement to them. Because we have freely received from Christ, we can freely share with others.

PRAY

Holy Spirit, may I learn to listen to and obey your voice. May I increase my faith, love, and intimacy with you and trust in you more every day. Give me a vision of how I can walk in my calling, serve you, and be a witness who displays your splendor to those who cross my path each day. Lord, when the storms of life, fear, doubt, insecurities, or loneliness try to overtake me, please help me dig my roots deeper into you. Help me to remember that I am secure in your strong, protective, safe arms. May I be a reflection of you and a place of refuge, safety, and strength to those who cross my path each and every day. Amen



kids' *devotions*

Hello families!

I know fasting can seem like a big unknown. And I know it can sound like something only adults do. But when kids participate in fasting, it gives them the tools they need to practice self-discipline and put God first. Kids like their desserts, their TV shows, and their video games. By actively choosing to fast in one of these areas, they learn that, yes, they do have the ability to make smart choices. Take time to discuss the fast with your children. Talk about what it means to fast and then let them decide what they might go without for the week. Even encourage them to ask Jesus what he wants them to give up. This makes it more personal for them, not just another thing mom or dad is telling them to do. You can even choose to fast something as a family. This is beneficial, especially for younger children.

This booklet includes age-appropriate devotions and activities for you and your children to walk through during the week. This will help them engage in what they are doing. This year's theme is **Empowered by the Holy Spirit**, based on Isaiah 61:1-3. Our devotional activities will include readings from this verse and other sections of scripture as well. Each day, you will have a small activity to work on that represents your daily reading. These activity bundles will be handed out at church.

We pray that as you go through these devotions and activities together, your family will experience the love and faithfulness of God in a new way.

Andrea Kauffman

Children's Pastor



Day 1: The Holy Spirit is With Me

BY PASTOR ANDREA KAUFFMAN

When we fast, it's important to start by focusing on God. It can be easy to focus on ourselves: our wants, our needs, our problems. But when we turn our eyes to God and focus on who he is, the small things in our lives can start to disappear. Our theme this week is Empowered by the Holy Spirit. What does empowered mean? Basically, it means to be given power and authority to do work. If the president of the United States gets hurt and has to have surgery, he gives the vice president the power to make all the decisions. He empowers her to do his job. When we ask Jesus into our hearts, he gives us a helper, the Holy Spirit. That's how he empowers us to do his good works. John 14:26a says, *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things..."* I am so thankful I have a Helper to be with me when I don't have enough strength or wisdom of my own.

ACTIVITY

Take a minute to pray and ask God what he wants you to fast this week. It could be a type of food, desserts, screens, or anything that you really enjoy and spend time doing. Write or draw the item/s in the 1st circle. Throughout the week, when you want to watch something or have a treat, think about God's love for you instead and thank him for helping you to grow closer to him!



Day 2: Empowered to Share Good News

BY **EMILY BUCK**

Do your grown-ups ever read the newspaper? My dad does it every day. Unfortunately, sometimes there is bad news in the newspaper, like wars, protests, car accidents, etc. But I will let you in on a secret—there is much more good news in the world than bad. People do good things every day that should be newsworthy. They hold the door for a stranger, they say please and thank you at a restaurant, they donate clothes to a shelter, and they volunteer. I bet you do some of those things, too!

But do you know what is the BEST good news? Jesus loves us! Jesus died for our sins, and we can go to heaven with him. He wants us to have a relationship with him here on Earth, too!

Look up 2 Timothy 4:2 in the Bible. *“Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.”*

When Isaiah wrote this verse in the Bible about proclaiming the Good News to the poor, he wasn’t talking about people who didn’t have any money – he was talking about people who didn’t know Jesus. Some grown-ups say, “poor in spirit.” The Holy Spirit empowers us to tell everyone about the love of Jesus. You can tell your friends, family, neighbors, and teachers!

Can you think of someone you know who may not know Jesus? Let’s pray for them right now.

Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us and dying for our sins. Thank you for empowering us with the Holy Spirit to share this Good News with other people. Please be with _____ today and help them to know you love them deeply. Holy Spirit, help me to share the Good News with them the next time I see them. Amen

ACTIVITY

Put a smile sticker on the newspaper as a reminder to tell the Good News to people all over!



Day 3: Empowered to Comfort Others

BY ERIKA SIFFORD

As humans, we experience many different emotions. Emotions like happiness, sadness, silliness, grumpiness, and many more. If you had a choice between feeling happy or feeling sad, which would you choose and why? I would guess that most, if not all of you, chose to feel happy over feeling sad. Happiness causes us to feel warm, light-hearted, relaxed, healthy, and grateful. Sadness is a heavy feeling that, at times, can seem like it will last forever. We try to avoid sadness as much as possible! Unfortunately, everyone will experience this emotion at different points in their lives. Even Jesus felt deep sadness (Luke 11:35). When you are sad, what helps you feel better?

When people are experiencing sadness, they often want others around them to comfort them and help carry the weight of their emotions. God designed us to desire friendship. He knew that relationships with other people would lighten the load when hard times come. The Bible tells us to *“Be happy with those who are happy, and weep (or cry) with those who weep”* (Romans 12:15). With the Holy Spirit’s help, you are empowered to bring comfort and joy to people in your life who feel sad. Give them a hug. Share a smile. Listen to their troubles. Remind them why you love them. Never underestimate the power God has given you to spread joy and comfort to the brokenhearted!

Dear God, thank you for empowering me to comfort people who are sad. Help me remember that a simple smile, hug, or encouraging word can go a long way in helping others experience joy in the midst of their sadness. Amen

ACTIVITY

Find the circle with the broken heart. Cover the heart with the bandage to represent being a comfort to those who are sad.



Day 4: Empowered to Proclaim Freedom

BY JENNY SENSENIG

Isn't it the "best day ever" when we get to have a playdate with our friends? Especially during the summer when you can go to the park and swing on the swings, climb, and play tag. The game of hide and seek is a favorite of many children. You run around trying to seek a friend who is hiding from you. You search and search and try to find them. And when you do find them, it brings you so much happiness, maybe both of you laugh. In that moment, you are filled with so much joy because you found your friend! You know what? That's exactly what God does for you. He searches for and seeks YOU! Because he loves you. Sometimes we make mistakes. Maybe we have hurt someone's feelings, lied, or we steal something. Afterward, we may feel sad and want to hide in our room and not come out. But no matter what, God still seeks you. You can't hide from him. God forgives us and still loves us. That's a BIG love!

Today, we are going to do a fun activity! Grab a flashlight and a grown-up or sibling. One of you go into a room, shut the door, turn your flashlight on, and turn off the lights in the room. The person outside the room can shout, *"Come out - Be Free!"* (from darkness/sin). The person in the room will open the door, run out, and say, *"I'm free, I'm free! God is with me!"*

Dear God, thank you for always seeking me and finding me. And always loving me, no matter what! Amen

ACTIVITY

Find your Day 4 circle and the cross stickers in your envelope. Put one cross sticker on each of the words to show that Jesus' love covers our sins and sets us free.



Day 5: Empowered to Bring Light to Darkness

BY ERIKA SIFFORD

When you spend time reading the Bible or talking to your grown-ups about Jesus, you probably will hear the words “light” and “darkness” being used. The “light” is Jesus and the goodness a relationship with him brings to your life—good things like love, joy, peace, gentleness, and kindness. The “darkness” is the enemy and everything that fights against Jesus and his kingdom—bad things like greed, hate, jealousy, selfishness, and cruelty. Darkness is part of the imperfect world we live in. When you have a friendship with Jesus, you want to see his goodness overcome the evil in the world.

Unfortunately, you will encounter darkness as you grow up. That might come in the form of a bully, a scary movie, sickness, or unfairness. Sometimes, the darkness in the world can be overwhelming, but Jesus gave us an important promise. In John 16, he said, *“Here on Earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”* Jesus has already defeated the darkness, and you are empowered by his Holy Spirit to proclaim God’s power over the bad things in this world. You have the power to pray Jesus’ light into darkness. *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it”* (John 1:5).

When you see or experience the bad things of the enemy, remember to pray for God’s goodness and Jesus’ light to shine over it all. If you meet someone who loves the darkness, pray for that person to experience God’s love through you! You have the power to bring goodness and light to the world!

Dear God, thank you for your goodness and your light. Thank you for defeating the darkness and for empowering me to spread your light and love to the world around me. Give me confidence to shine your light in this dark world. Amen

ACTIVITY

Find the circle that is filled with darkness. Put your sun sticker over the darkness to remind you that Jesus' light has overcome it.



Day 6: Empowered to Turn Sadness to Joy

BY **EMILY BUCK**

Think of a time you fell down or got hurt and started crying. I bet a grown-up or sibling was there to comfort you. Maybe they gave you a hug, maybe they wiped your tears, maybe they got you an ice pack or a band-aid. They were comforting you. Sometimes, when my kids would fall and get a brush burn, I would even give them a little popsicle. And even though their knee still hurt, the popsicle gave them a smile, and their tears eventually stopped.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to turn sadness into joy. Jesus tells us that we will have sad times in our lives – but he is there to comfort us. Close your eyes and picture Jesus giving you a hug, wiping your tears, or handing you an ice pack. He cares that much for you!

The Holy Spirit also empowers us to comfort others when they are sad. Let's look up 2 Corinthians 1:4. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

ACTIVITY

I bet you have comforted a sibling or friend when they got hurt. The Bible tells us that comforting someone who is sad is such an important job. Isaiah uses the picture of a beautiful crown to show us how powerful comforting each other is. Crowns are covered with expensive jewels and beautiful decorations. Take the jewel stickers and decorate and color the crown. Comforting others is such an important job!

Pray—Thank you for being the God of comfort and love. You care for us when we are sad. Help us to care for others when they are sad as well. Amen



Day 7: Empowered to Shine God's Glory

BY **PASTOR ANDREA KAUFFMAN**

We've spent all week learning about different ways the Holy Spirit helps us to help others. Now that we are at the end let's answer the question of 'Why'? Why does God want us to help others? Why does he want to empower us to do these good works? Part of the answer, and what we will focus on today, is the last part of our scripture reading for this week. The last part of Isaiah 61:3 says, *"In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the Lord has planted for his own glory."* The world wants us to focus on ourselves when we do good things. People often try to use their good deeds to gain recognition for themselves. If we are honest, sometimes we like the attention we get when someone notices something we've done. But that's not what God wants. God helps us do good works so we can point to him! When we help someone who is sad and they find joy, we should give that credit, or glory, to God, not ourselves! By doing this, others will see the goodness of our Heavenly Father and will want to know him as well. Our goal should be to point others toward God and his goodness, always.

ACTIVITY

For your last circle, draw and color a tree. Just like big, beautiful trees cause us to look up, remember that as you help others, you can encourage them to look up as well—not just to the sky, but to a loving Father who wants to have a relationship with them. Pray and ask God to help your life always bring glory to him.

Sunday Morning Congregational Prayer | 10:00-10:45 AM

- Focus on the morning services
- Meets in the Prayer Room (North 121)
- Led by Ed Eby and Ken Renno

Elanco Moms in Prayer Monday Morning | 9:00-10:00 AM

- Focus on New Holland Elementary School
- Garden Spot Middle and High School
- Meets in the Student Life Center
- Led by Mandy Hershey

Men's Tuesday Morning Prayer Group | 5:30-6:30 AM

- Focus on marriages, families, community, and church
- Meets in the Prayer Room (North 121)
- Led by Ryan Martin

Women's Wednesday Morning Prayer Group | 6:00-8:00 AM

- Focus on America, the nations, harvest, and church
- Meets in the Prayer Room (North 121)
- Led by Susan Miller

Thursday Morning Prayer Group | 6:00-7:00 AM

- Focus on addictions and regional revival
- Meets in the Prayer Room (North 121)
- Led by Matt Kauffman

Women's Friday Morning Prayer Group | 6:00-8:00 AM

- Focus on Petra, New Holland, Lancaster County, and PA
- Meets in the Prayer Room (North 121)
- Led by Susan Miller

Saturday Evening Congregational Prayer | 7:00-8:00 PM

- Focus on praying for Petra Church and community
- Meets in the Sanctuary
- Led by a team of Prayer Leaders

Sunday Afternoon Prayer Group | 2:30-4:30 PM

- Focus on personal prayer time, Petra, nation, and revival
- Meets at Ken Renno's home
- Led by Ken Renno

petra missionaries

Long-Term and Associate Missionaries

AJ

Mario and Jeanette Araya

Nacho and Merrilee Barrera

Trevor and Leah Derr

JC and Lois Ebersole

Marta Estrada

Gene and Steph Flewelling

Bruce and Joyce Heckman

Darryl and Joyce Henson

Daniel and Jamie Jones

Arlen and Keturah King

Joe and Jeniece Kingman

Randy and Bonnie Martin

Tina Moore

Ben and Kayte Musselman

Brad Ortenzi

Steve and Sara Petersheim

Barbara Stoltzfus

Alan and Carol Wert

Suzanne Yoder

Chris and April Zimmerman



565 Airport Road
New Holland, PA 17557