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February 10, 2021

Dear Community,

I hope this letter finds you well, rested, and ready for the year ahead!

Some things are so important they are worthy of repeating. So let me say, once again, while our building is closed, the life and ministry of Community Church has never closed! Our worship, witness, and worth in our community and beyond are still tangibly present.

Please know that I am proud and thankful for the way you have continued to engage with our church and each other in the midst of this historically challenging time.

Here's a laundry list of upcoming events and opportunities.

Ongoing Ministries | Various Days & Times

As a reminder, all virtual events and weekly activities including our Sunday Morning Worship Service at 10 a.m.; Wednesday Bible Study at 7 p.m.; and Thursday Intercessory Prayer at 7 p.m. can be accessed through Community's Zoom conference call line. At the scheduled time log on to: <https://zoom.us/j/404-755-4100> and Enter Passcode 4100. You can also listen by phone by dialing (929) 205-6099, Enter Meeting ID (404) 755-4100 & Press #, then Enter Passcode 4100 & Press#

February 21st | Women's Fellowship ~ 4 p.m.

The Women's Ministry will launch its 2021 year by celebrating Heart Month. The theme is Heart Smart: Taking care of the heart physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Ladies are encouraged to wear red during this virtual event.

February 23rd – April 3rd | Focus 40

Focus 40 is an initiative birthed out of the Church of God headquarters in Anderson, Indiana. I adopted the initiative and made it an annual tradition in Detroit, where we continued to observe it long after the movement stopped producing Focus 40 materials. That said, I would like to implement this tradition here and invite you to participate in this partial fast during the 40 days that lead up to Resurrection Sunday. You will find the parameters and a devotional reading guide enclosed with this letter.

February 27th | Couple Date Night ~ 7 p.m.

This is an opportunity for you to grab your beau and meet Pastor and Lady Precious online for a virtual dinner, conversation, and games. It's been a long time, but this is your chance to dress up, wear your suit jacket, favorite dress, cologne, and perfume to set the atmosphere for a great evening.

February 28th | Heritage Sunday ~ 10 a.m.

We will celebrate our 55th year as a congregation during our regular virtual service. We are thankful for our pioneers who paved the way, for our present parish would not be the same without their efforts. As we thank the Lord for those who faithfully worked publicly under the spotlight and the often unnamed workers who quietly served behind the scenes, we also celebrate our founding pastor, the Rev. Dr. Rudolph Smith. For those of you who want to express your love to him tangibly you can mail cards, gifts, or words of affirmation to 1609 Ezra Church Drive, Atlanta, GA 30314.

April 1st | Maundy Thursday Service ~ 7 p.m.

In the midst of the problems and pain caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the story of Jesus' passion reminds us of God's love, His commitment to right every wrong, and the torture the Lord took to make it possible for us to enjoy a pain free existence in eternity. Join us virtually as a variety of members work to paint the picture of Jesus' passion.

April 2nd | Good Friday Service ~ 12 - 3 p.m.

Church of God congregations from across the nation will partner with us as we host a virtual Good Friday Service in order to reflect on the crucifixion of Christ and the Seven Last Words He uttered from the cross.

April 4th | Resurrection Sunday ~ 10 a.m.

As the hymnist sings, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives." We will celebrate our resurrected, reigning, and redeeming Lord! Please dress up as if you were attending church in-person, be ready to observe Communion, and join us on Zoom for Virtual VICARS after service.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to set up an appointment with me, please call the church office at 404-755-4100.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kevin W. Earley
Senior Pastor



Community
Church

Focus 40 | 2021

Greetings Community!

I invite you to embrace a tradition I bring with me, called Focus 40. It is an annual time of prayer and fasting during the 40 days that lead up to Easter. The dates this year are February 23rd through April 3rd.

During this time, I ask that you participate in the partial fast, read through the Gospels, and pray that the Lord will move in mighty ways as we strive to be a multi-generational church that makes a significant impact in our immediate community and beyond. Let us also pray for wisdom and energy to function well post-pandemic.

For 40 days, I encourage you to participate in the partial fast that consists of forsaking fried foods, sweets, sugar-laden sodas, white flour, and other foods that tend to impair our bodies and prevent us from fully living the abundant life Christ offers us. Moreover, I urge you to eat lean protein, healthy carbs, healthy fats, and to drink 2 liters to a gallon (67–128oz.) of water each day. In other words, I ask that you commit to eating for 40 days the way some nutritionists suggest we should eat all year long.

Please understand, I am a pastor and not a food policeman; so ultimately, how you choose to participate, including foreseeable exceptions for birthdays, anniversaries, etc., is a personal decision between you and God. As you decide, consider consulting with your physician. Individuals challenged with hyperglycemia, hypoglycemia, cancer, blood or heart disease, anemia, and women who are pregnant should definitely discuss any significant diet change with their physician first.

On the page that follows, you will find sample foods to be consumed and avoided during this time and a reading plan that will guide us through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.



Rev. Kevin W. Earley

PARTIAL FAST GUIDELINES

GENERAL RULE

Eat three to six meals daily that each contain:

(A) lean protein; (B) healthy carbs; (C) healthy fats; and (D) water.

SAMPLE LISTING OF FOODS TO CONSUME

Lean Proteins Egg Whites, Fish, Ground Beef, Ground Turkey, Eye of Round Steak, Sirloin Steak, & Top Round Steak; Poultry, Protein Shakes, Shellfish

Healthy Carbs

Fruits: Apples, Apricots, Bananas, Blackberries, Blueberries, Boysenberries, Cantaloupe, Cherries, Cranberries, Figs, Grapefruit, Guava, Honeydew Melon, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Mangoes, Nectarines, Papayas, Peaches, Pears, Pineapples, Plums, Prunes, Raisins, Raspberries, Strawberries, Tangerines, Watermelon, 100% Fruit Juice

Legumes: Black, Kidney, Lima, Northern, Pinto, or Red Beans; Lentils; Black-eyed or Split Peas

Vegetables: Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chili Peppers, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gingerroot, Greens, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Mustard Greens, Okra, Onions, Parsley, Radishes, Rutabagas, Salads, Scallions, Spinach, Sprouts, Squashes, Sweet Potatoes, Tofu, Tomatoes, Turnips, Yams, Zucchini, 100% Vegetable Juice

Whole Grains: Basmati Rice, Brown Rice, Couscous, Cracked Wheat, Durum Wheat Flour, Ezekiel Bread, Grits, Millet, Oatmeal, Popcorn, Quinoa, Whole Rye, Whole Wheat Flour, Wild Rice

Healthy Fats

Almonds, Almonds Butter, Cashews, Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Flax Oil, Fish Oil Capsules, Grapeseed Oil, Pistachios, Peanuts, Peanut Butter, Pecans, Sunflower Seeds, Walnuts

Condiments/Spices

Cinnamon, Dijon Mustard, Hot Sauce, Ketchup, Mrs. Dash, Mustard, Mustard/Splenda Mix, Pepper, Salt, Salsa, Soy Sauce

Sweeteners

Agave, Honey, Maple Syrup

SAMPLE LISTING OF FOODS TO AVOID

Candy, Cakes, Fried Foods, Ice Cream, Nacho & Potato Chips, Refined Sugar, Regular Sodas, White Bread, White Potatoes, White Flour (often labeled as Enriched or Bleached Flour), White Rice.

Date	Text	✓	Date	Text	✓	Date	Text	✓	Date	Text	✓
23-Feb	Matthew 1-3		5-Mar	Matthew 25-26		15-Mar	Luke 7-9		25-Mar	John 4-5	
24-Feb	Matthew 4-6		6-Mar	Matthew 27-28		16-Mar	Luke 10-12		26-Mar	John 7-8	
25-Feb	Matthew 7-9		7-Mar	Mark 1-3		17-Mar	Luke 13-14		27-Mar	John 9-10	
26-Feb	Matthew 10-12		8-Mar	Mark 4-6		18-Mar	Luke 15-16		28-Mar	John 11-12	
27-Feb	Matthew 13-14		9-Mar	Mark 7-9		19-Mar	Luke 17-18		29-Mar	John 13-14	
28-Feb	Matthew 15-16		10-Mar	Mark 10-12		20-Mar	Luke 19-20		30-Mar	John 15-16	
1-Mar	Matthew 17-18		11-Mar	Mark 13-14		21-Mar	Luke 21-22		31-Mar	John 17	
2-Mar	Matthew 19-20		12-Mar	Mark 15-16		22-Mar	Luke 23-24		1-Apr	John 18	
3-Mar	Matthew 21-22		13-Mar	Luke 1-3		23-Mar	John 1-2		2-Apr	John 19	
4-Mar	Matthew 23-24		14-Mar	Luke 4-6		24-Mar	John 3-4		3-Apr	John 20-21	