**THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA**

**PRAYER AND FASTING FOR THE CHURCH**

**UCZ THEME 2021: “ALL ONE IN CHRIST”**

**(JOHN 17:21)**

**FASTING GUIDELINES AND NOTES**

**16TH TO 29TH MAY, 2022**

**FROM 06.00 HOURS TO 18 HOURS**

**INTRODUCTION**

Greetings to all of you beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I write to emphasize and remind you that Prayer and fasting is a spiritual discipline for a believer and as such, our members should be taught the importance of prayer and fasting and the results that accompany such.

It should be conducted uniformly at Congregation, Consistory, Presbytery as well as corporately at Synod levels. This discipline should always be practiced to help believers nourish their spirituality.

1. **HOW TO BEGIN YOUR FASTING**

How you begin and conduct your fasting will largely determine your success by following these four basic steps of fasting. You will make your time with the Lord more meaningful and spiritually rewarding.

1. **Step 1- Set Your Objective**

Why are you fasting? Putting in mind our annual theme, “ALL ONE IN CHRIST” drawn from “ JOHN 17:21”. I am fasting for unity for mother Zambia as we are approaching general elections, unity for our beloved Church as per our theme: ALL ONE IN CHRIST- JOHN 17:21, Pray for God’s intervention during this period of Covid-19 pandemic which have ravaged the world at large, Pray for spiritual renewal, for guidance, for special grace and anointing to handle any difficult situation or challenge which may come on the way, on the family, Congregation, Career, business and projects. Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify His leading and objectives for your prayer and fasting. This will enable you pray more specifically and strategically.

Through prayer and fasting, we humble ourselves before God, so that, the Holy Spirit will stir our souls, awaken our projects in Congregations, Presbyteries and heal our land according to 2 Chronicles 7:14. Make this a priority in your prayer and fasting time.

Moreover, during this period, participate in charity work, that is helping the poor, the sick, the vulnerable and show them love, as individuals, families, Congregations, Consistories, Presbyteries and Synod.

1. **Step 2 -Make Your Commitment**

Pray about the kind of fast you should undertake. Jesus in (Matthew 6:16-18; 9:14-15) indicated or implied that all His followers should fast.

Before you fast, decide the following up front:

1. How long you will fast? (Beginners should start slowly, building up to

 longer fasts).

1. During this period, decide the type of fast you want to undertake (such as dry fasting, water only, vegetable juice only (that is freshly made juice) or Nshima with vegetables only (that is vegetables without cooking oil) this should be lunch and supper for a day.

1. Note: Once you chose the type of fasting you want, please stick to it.
2. Our expectant (pregnant) mothers and those with serious medical cases or sickness can go up to 12:00 hours from 06:00 hours, but the rest shall start at 06:00 hours – 18:00 hours.
3. Please restrict yourselves from physical or social activities which are energy draining during this period.
4. Devote yourselves to thanks giving prayers and reading God’s word (Remember your heart is a prayer altar.
5. By the stripes of Jesus and the Holy Ghost fire in Isaiah 53:5-6, “I am healed, delivered, blessed, out of the cage, more than a conqueror, a victor the devil is a loser, etc. in Jesus’ name, Amen!
6. All prayer points should be based on scripture and as you do this, you will see the power of God in all your petitions and supplications to Him.
7. Those who will be working, decide the time how you will devote to prayer and reading God’s word. (Remember your Heart is a prayer altar).
8. Fasting will start on Sunday the 16th of May, 2021, therefore, we can appreciate if members can remain on Sunday at Church after service and pray together with fellow believers and break at 18:00 hours. The other days it will be the same.
9. All intercessors in Presbyteries should be in the forefront to guide our

 members how to do our prayer and fasting from 16th to 30th May, 2021.

1. Appended below are some of the scriptures you can use for your prayer points during your prayer and fasting period:
* Rev. 12:11, “And they overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death”.
* John 19:30, by the authority of scripture in John 19:30, thank you Lord it is finished, my prayer or our prayers have been answered, I am/we are healed, delivered, saved, blessed, etc.
* Luke 10:19
* Ephesians 1:7
* Romans 16:20
* Colossians 2:13, Colossians 2:15
* Galatians 3:13, Galatians 3:14
* Psalms 91:3
* 2 Timothy 4:18, etc

**NOTE:**

Making these commitments ahead of time, will help you sustain your fast when physical temptations and life’s pressures tempt you to abandon it.

1. **Step 3- Prepare Yourself Spiritually**

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is repentance. Without confession sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart;

1. Ask God to help you make a comprehensive list of your sins.
2. Confess every sin that the Holy Spirit calls to your remembrance and

 accept God’s forgiveness (1John 1:9).

1. Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who

have hurt you (Mark 11:25, Luke 11:4, Luke 17: 3- 4). Remember – forgiveness brings results- i.e. healing, deliverance, blessing, breakthrough, etc.

1. Make restitution as the Holy Spirit leads you.
2. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in

 Ephesians 5:18 and His promise in John 5:14-15.

1. Surrender your life fully to Jesus Christ as your Lord and master,

 refuse to obey your worldly nature (Romans 12:1-2).

1. Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power,

 wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion and others (Psalm 48:9-10;

 Psalms 103:1-8, 11-13).

1. Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expectant heart

 (Hebrews 11:6).

1. Do not underestimate spiritual opposition. Satan sometimes

 intensifies the natural battle between body and spirit (Galatians 5:16- 17).

1. **Step 4 -Prepare Yourself Physically**

Fasting requires precautions. Consult your physician first, especially if you take prescribed medication or have a chronic ailment. Some persons should never fast without professional supervision.

Physical preparation makes the drastic change in your eating routine a little easier so that you can turn your full attention to the Lord in prayer.

1. Do not rush into your fast.
2. Prepare your body, eat smaller meals before starting a fast, avoid high – fat and sugary foods.
3. Eat raw fruits and vegetables for two (2) days before starting your fast.
4. **WHAT IS GOD’S PURPOSE FOR OUR FASTING**
5. Undo the hands of wickedness and revive every area of our lives, families, Congregations, Presbyteries, unity for mother Zambia as we are approaching general elections, unity for our beloved Church as per our theme: ALL ONE IN CHRIST- JOHN 17:21 and to wipe out the Covid-19 pandemic which have ravaged the world at large.
6. Undo heavy burdens.
7. Set captives free, let the oppressed go free.
8. Break the yokes of wickedness.

Clearly God is waiting to do all of the above for us, only if we would be disciplined enough to do what we ought to do during fasting and refrain from wickedness. God is waiting to manifest our salvation, deliverance and work on many areas of our lives, families, Congregations, Consistories, Presbyteries and the Church at large.

1. **IN CONCLUSION**

What will be the benefits of our fasting?

1. Unity in Mother Zambia and the Church at large
2. Corporate Holistic Spiritual Revival on God’s faithfulness
3. Drawing near to God – James 4:8.
4. God Almighty will answer our prayers and He will wipe out Corana Virus pandemic
5. Overcoming the flesh.
6. Humbling ourselves – 1Peter 5:6.
7. Obtaining spiritual breakthrough – Daniel 10:1-14, Mark 9:29.

Though the ultimate victory was secured by Christ’s finished work on the cross, we live in an age where the spiritual battle is still raging. When Daniel prayed and fasted, it affected the spiritual battle which was going on in the Heaven realms. (See Daniel 10:1-14, Mark 9:29).

**MARK 9:29**

Some of the challenges, sickness, afflictions, etc will be broken through prayer and fasting. Jesus said in Mark 9:29, “This kind cannot be driven out by anything but, through prayer and fasting”.

There are things that God desires to happen in our lives, families, Congregations, Consistories, Presbyteries, the Church at large and Mother Zambia that cannot happen unless we fast. Fasting breaks strongholds, liberates people and moves us into a realm of realizing God’s power in our lives and the Church at large. The more time we spend with God, the more we are going to see the hand of God in our lives.

Please, this is the month of prayer and fasting, you cannot afford to miss. Join us and you will see the hand of God in every area of your life, family and the Church at large.

We would like to salute our leaders at Synod level for coming up with such an important assignment for the Church of this magnitude.

***Amen!***

**THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO THANK REV ANDREW CHULU SYNOD MISSION AND EVANGELISM SECRETARY FOR PREPARING THE MAY, 2022 PRAYER AND FASTING**

**GUIDELINES AND NOTES.**

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