**Why fast and pray?**

Sometimes people fast when they face a difficult life decision. At other times a whole church may come together to fast. This may fall before some kind of mission or outreach event, or perhaps where the church needs to seek God about the future.

However, it is important to understand that we do not fast in order to "get something” out of God - whether this be for an answer to prayer or for some kind of direction or decision. The reason we fast is to **draw close to God**.

Therefore, try to fast in the hours/days leading up to your prayer slot so we are spiritually ready when we come to pray for Lucas.

See Jesus’ example in Mark 9, when Jesus is able to bring healing when the disciples could not, telling them afterwards: “This kind can come out by nothing, except by prayer [and fasting].” Mark 9:29

**Practical tips for spiritual fasting**

* It may not be appropriate or medically advisable to fast food - e.g.: if you are pregnant or involved in extensive physical exercise.
* The purpose of fast is not to lose weight! It is to draw near to God.
* Fasting can mean skipping one or two meals, not eating at all between meals, not eating for a day or even multiple days.
* Consider fasting things other than food. Whatever might get in the way of you drawing closer to God can be used as a fast, e.g.: Facebook, chocolate, tea or coffee, computer games, etc.
* When you feel hungry, or thinking about the thing you are fasting from, use that time instead to pray and to focus upon God.
* Make sure you continue to drink water regularly during your fast.