

40
days
of
SPIRITUAL
FORMATION



2530 Eastern Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49507

www.tabernaclecommunity.org



BUILDING IMPACT2025

Tabernacle Community Church exists to make new and better Christ followers who influence the culture and impact the city and the world for the glory of God

We are becoming the *Tsaddiqim* in our city, pursuing the multi-ethnic vision of the Kingdom.

Spiritual Formation

Spending Time with Jesus – God is personal. Spending daily time with God centered around His Word and prayer and other spiritual disciplines are pathways to experience His presence.

Community Formation

Engaging in Community – God is creating and making alive His church. Regularly participating in close association with other followers of Jesus serve the purpose of growing us in community.

Stewardship Formation

Giving of Myself – God sacrificed for others. We express love by giving of our time, treasure and talents for the blessing and benefits of others.

Witness Formation

Sharing Christ - Jesus calls us to spread his name by effectively telling others about Him and how He has given us new life and new purpose.

INTRODUCTION

Beloved,

Welcome to 2020!

The 40 Days of Spiritual Formation is designed to give attention to your personal formation as a follower of Christ. This journal serves as your guide. The 40 Days are intended to align you with the purposes of God and unite us in the mission and vision of Tabernacle Community Church. It is designed to set us on a path to become a people who embody the love of Christ and are shaped and sent by the gospel to influence the culture and impact our city and world for the glory of God.

During these 40 days, we invite you to regularly engage in a number of formative practices like the 21-day fast, prayer, scripture reading and memorization, journaling, and other day-to-day practices.

It will require an investment of time, and you must be willing to slow down and learn to listen to the Spirit.

Among them will include the four habits of Tabernacle Community Church. We want to equip every person at Tabernacle Community Church to learn to order their whole person toward love through these four formational habits by the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe these four practices lead to life.

SHARING CHRIST
GIVING OF MYSELF
ENGAGING IN COMMUNITY
SPENDING TIME WITH JESUS

I'm excited for what God is going to do this year in your life. Get ready to change the patterns and rhythms of your life. I pray that the next 40 days will lead to a sharper attentiveness to God in your everyday rhythms and will ultimately form you into greater Christlikeness day by day.

May Christ be formed in you, and together may we embody his love and be deeply engaged as a Jesus community for our city.

Artie Sr.

Pastor of Spiritual Formation

21-DAY CORPORATE FAST

We are setting aside the first 21 days of this year to dedicate ourselves to the Lord and seek his face as a community.

As you engage in this fast, ask God for increased spiritual awareness and deeper intimacy in your relationship with Him this year. We would also ask that you join us in seeking the Lord for the following.

1. Unity of the body in purpose and calling.
2. Greater clarity and alignment in the 2025 vision for Tabernacle.
3. Our formation as a community of Jesus followers who embody his love.
4. Growing embrace of the "one another's" lived out within the fellowship.
5. Transformational stories of changed lives as we engage in the 4 formational habits.
6. Be a more effective agent of his glory in the world.

INTERMITTENT FASTING:

Eating allowed only between 11am – 7pm

No eating food before 11am and after 7pm. But water, juice, coffee and tea are encouraged. During the times of eating, we encourage a restricted diet.

AVOID	all sweeteners including but not limited to sugar, raw sugar, honey, syrups, molasses and cane juice.
AVOID	all deep-fried foods including but not limited to potato chips, french fries and corn chips.
AVOID	all refined and processed food products including but not limited to artificial flavorings, food additives, chemicals, white rice, white flour and foods that contain artificial preservatives.
INCLUDE	fruits – fresh, frozen, dried or juiced.
INCLUDE	vegetables – fresh, frozen, dried and juiced.
INCLUDE	whole grains – brown rice, millet, quinoa, oats, barley, grits, whole wheat pasta, rice cakes and popcorn.
INCLUDE	nuts and seeds.

SLOW DOWN TO ABIDE

Establishing a Rule of Life

RULE OF LIFE – A tool that comes out of the early desert fathers and mothers. They formed these communities where they set up rhythms in their life where the love of God would be at the center. The word “rule” comes from the ancient Greek word for trellis. A trellis is a tool that enables a grapevine to get off the ground and grow upward, becoming more fruitful over time. Similarly, a rule of life is a trellis that helps us to become more spiritually fruitful. It’s a kind of scaffolding to use to build the spiritual structure of our lives with God. The goal is to be with God and to love him in everything we do. What scaffolding needs to be in place for you to walk with God and love others?

1. What regular practices help you to receive, remain in, and respond to the love of God?
2. What brings you life and helps you stay close to God?
3. What practices help you deepen your relationship with others?
4. What regular practices can address the sinful patterns of your life and help you cooperate with the grace of God?

DAY 1

THE RHYTHM OF A WEEK

Approximate how you spend your time in a week.

God has given you 168 hours a week.

What are your observations?

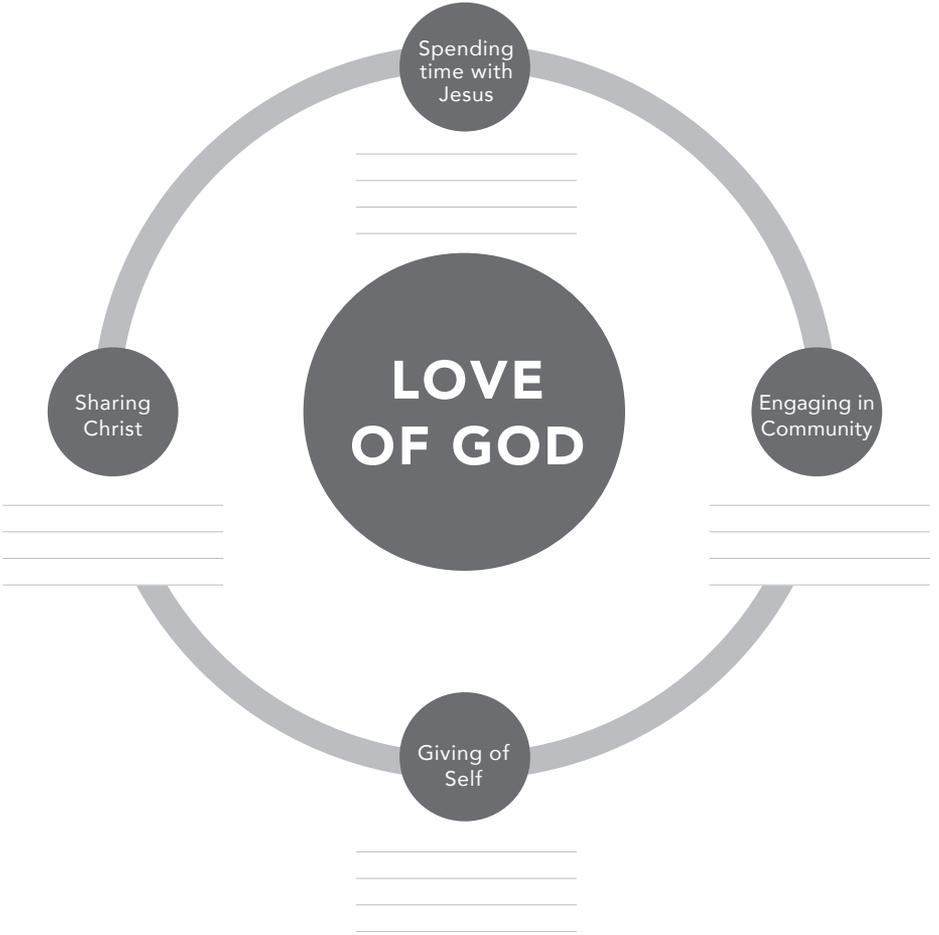
What is the Spirit highlighting?

Begin creating a rule of life.

CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST

or create your own activities that will help you develop a rule of life around the 4 formative habits of Spending time with Jesus, Engaging in Community, Giving of Myself, Sharing Christ. Place your selection in the diagram on page 8.

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- | | |
|---|---|
| Reading and praying Scripture | Steward my body |
| Silence and solitude | Grow in generosity |
| Bible study | Create Beauty |
| Practicing regular times of rest | Give thanks |
| Placing parameters around your time and commitments | Engage in missional work as a family |
| Activities that bring renewal and recreation | Silent Retreat |
| Play dates | Journal |
| Laughter | Go on a hike |
| Meals with others | Play board games with friends |
| Serving the poor | Fast from all forms of technology |
| Cross-cultural engagement, listening and learning | Engage in life giving practices |
| Tending to your mental and emotional health | Bring Beauty, Justice, shalom and creativity to the world |
| Spending time with not – yet Jesus followers | Be an ambassador of restoration and reconciliation |
| Give Money | Unplugging |
| Participating in a small group | Meditating on Scripture |
| Walking | Confession and repentance |
| Exercise | Worship |
| Sleep 8 hours | Singing to God |
| Quality time with family | Communion |
| Fast | Hospitality |
| Date night | Scripture memorization |
| Read for personal growth | Share a meal with a not yet Jesus follower |
| Serve | Talk to others about Jesus |
| Time with spouse with God | Intentionally bless Christ followers, non-believers and those different than you. |
| Invest in friendships | |



DAY 2

IDENTIFY SOMEONE WHO CAN BE AN ENCOURAGER FOR YOU AS YOU SEEK TO ORDER YOUR WHOLE LIFE AROUND LOVE.

Who will you ask to be your encourager?

DAY 4

11

SIT FOR 5 MINUTES IN SILENCE.

READ AND REFLECT ON LUKE 2:36-38.

**TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON
THESE THOUGHTS TODAY AND
JOURNAL YOUR RESPONSES.**

Give an example of how you know that your love for God is growing.

What in your life points to a growing affection for Christ?

DAY 7

**TURN OFF YOUR PHONE FOR
1 HOUR TODAY.**

CONSIDER HOW YOU TREAT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE.

Does it reflect the love of Christ?

Do something tangible today to demonstrate the love of Christ to others and then journal about your experience.

DO A MEDIA FAST FOR THE DAY!

Allow God's word to speak to you today.

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help and he will say: Here am I...Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

Is 58:6-9, 12

- Who is the Lord calling you to be? What is He calling you to do?
- How do you see this aligning with the vision of the church?

GOD HAS BLESSED YOU WITH TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE.

Evaluate your use of each of these in light of your love for Christ and love for others. What do you discover about yourself?

FOCUS ON VOCATION TODAY.

What are some specific ways you can love others through the work that you do today? This can be in both paid or unpaid work.

START YOUR DAY WITH A 10-MINUTE READING OF THE SCRIPTURE!

For the next 3 days let the Word of God be the first thing you allow your mind to consume. View it as an early morning appointment with the Father.

If you don't have a bible reading plan check out the You Version Bible App for multiple options. Otherwise, start with reading through the Gospels. Be challenged, inspired and transformed by the life and ministry of Jesus.

DAY 14

21

**BE OPEN TO THE SPIRIT TODAY AND
FREELY GIVE TO BLESS ANOTHER.**

**SPEND TIME PRAYING ON YOUR
KNEES TODAY.**

FIND SOME GOOD WORSHIP MUSIC

AND SPEND 15-20 MINUTES JUST SINGING AND PRAISING GOD. AT THE END OF THE TIME, THANK GOD FOR THE TIME TOGETHER.

**WRITE OUT YOUR PRAYER
TO GOD TODAY.**

DAY 18

25

TAKE A 15-MINUTE WALK WITH GOD TODAY.

Tell him about what's on your heart and mind.

READ THROUGH THIS PRAYER 5 TIMES TODAY.

SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY, MEDITATIVELY.

LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT AS HE MAY HIGHLIGHT
A WORD OR A PHRASE. WRITE IT DOWN.

ASK HIM WHAT DOES HE WANT TO SAY TO
YOU ABOUT THAT WORD OR PHRASE.

PRAY THEN LIKE THIS:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

Your Kingdom come,

Your will be done on earth as it is heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

Matthew 6:9-13

DAY 21

PRAY TO GOD THREE TIMES TODAY.

LET YOUR PRAYERS BE SHAPED BY YOUR LOVE FOR GOD AND LOVE FOR OTHERS.

MORNING

MID-DAY

EVENING

REFLECT ON THE GOODNESS OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE.

Make a list of at least three ways God has been good to you.

Choose one thing from your list and tell someone else about it.

MEDITATE ON THIS SCRIPTURE THROUGHOUT THE DAY:

PHIL 4:6-7 MSG

Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

DEMONSTRATE JESUS' LOVE

THROUGH A SIMPLE ACT OF KINDNESS TODAY.
TELL THEM YOU WANTED TO SHARE JESUS'
GOODNESS TO US WITH THEM.

- Reflect on this act of kindness and pray for the person you were able to share with.

MEDITATE ON THIS TRUTH TODAY.

“You are valued and loved by God”

READ AND REFLECT ON LUKE 10:38-42.

- How will you position yourself to listen to Jesus on a daily basis?
- Identify what might serve as a distraction to your daily time with God?
- Spend time praying about that distraction and ask the Spirit to empower you to release it.
- Do you struggle like Martha where doing for Jesus is more important than being with Jesus?
- Reflect on the truth that God is our inheritance. Ps 73:25-26. In what ways can you treasure him?
- What are the implications of this truth in your life?
- Pass on this truth to someone who needs to hear it.

DAY 28

35

INVITE SOMEONE FROM CHURCH

OUT FOR COFFEE/LUNCH, OVER FOR DINNER
OR FOR A GAME NIGHT.

**TODAY FOCUS ON CULTIVATING
THE MIND OF CHRIST. READ
PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8.**

- What is the mind of Christ like?
- Ask the Spirit to help you operate in the mind of Christ.
- What did that look like for you today?

REFLECT ON PROVERBS 11:10A.

When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices...

The city rejoices because the *Tsaddiqim* (righteous) take all that they have from God; their wealth, gifts/abilities, relationships, knowledge/skills and education and use it for the common good. The *Tsaddiq* press so much value into the lives of those around them that they simply rejoice to be in their presence.

This is part of our vision as a church. We are called to join Jesus in the work of reweaving shalom back in the spaces where its been shattered.

Find the parts that are unraveling around you. What would it mean for you to be like these righteous ones spoken of in Proverbs 11:10?

What kind of church would we have to be in order for the people who are not yet followers of Jesus to say, "I'm not sure about everything they believe but I'm sure glad that they are here"?

SPEND TIME CONFESSING YOUR SIN TODAY.

Be specific with the Father.

Memorize the scripture below

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9 NIV

PRAY TO THE LORD FOR THE FLOURISHING OF ALL PEOPLE IN OUR CITY TODAY.

Seek the peace and the prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Jeremiah 29:7

- In 2015, Forbes magazine named Grand Rapids as the second worst city in the country for African Americans to live in.

MAKE READING SCRIPTURE YOUR NUMBER #1 PRIORITY TODAY.

Before email or text messages. Before scrolling through your newsfeed or FB feed.

BUT SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM
AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE
THINGS WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU AS WELL.

MATTHEW 6:33

What does it look like for you to seek first his kingdom today?

42 DAY 35

**ENJOY A MEAL WITH AT LEAST ONE
OTHER PERSON TODAY.**

JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A BIG DEAL FOR GOD.

Read Jeremiah 22:3, Psalm 146:7-9, Proverbs 31:8-9

1. Do you have the same heart for those oppressed as God does?
2. What can you do to help those who are vulnerable and being taken advantage of?
3. How is God calling you to practically love your neighbor as yourself based on the reading for today?

DAY 37

FAST FROM SOMETHING FOR 24 HOURS.

- What will you fast from today?
- Listen for what the Spirit may be saying today?

BE A SERVANT TODAY.

...You've observed how godless rulers throw their weight around, he said, : and when people get a little power how quickly it goes to their heads. It's not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. Whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave. That is what the Son of Man has done: He came to serve, not to be served – and then to give away his life in exchange for many who are held hostage."

Mark 10:42-45 MSG

- Reflect on what you did and how you served? How did it make you feel? What did you learn about yourself and the power of serving?

DAY 39

PRAY THEN LIKE THIS:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

Your Kingdom come,

Your will be done on earth as it is heaven...

NOTICE THE PRIORITIES OF THE KINGDOM

To hallow His Name

To bring His Kingdom

To do his will

on earth as it is in heaven

- What steps do you need to take to orient your life around promoting God's name, advancing His kingdom and living according to His will?
- Spend time praying that God would be honored through your life on this earth as he is already honored in the heavenlies.
- Live in light of the full anticipation of heaven coming to earth. How will that affect your daily habits?

PRAY THEN LIKE THIS...

...Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

We are able to pray for our deepest wholistic needs

1. Pray for daily provision
 - a. As you seek God to meet your daily needs ask him to open your heart to be willing to meet the needs of others?
2. Pray for daily pardon
 - b. As you seek God for his pardon ask him to empower and motivate you to pardon others?
3. Pray for daily protection
 - c. As you seek God for protection ask him to protect other believers that you know as well.
4. How do you think praying this way will transform your life?

