



WHAT IS AWAKEN 2021?

Awaken 2021 is a multi-church movement of prayer and fasting unifying thousands of people to strategically pray for Medina County households by name.



WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?

God wants you to walk every day of your life in fellowship with Him. Jesus made it clear when He was on the earth that prayer is a top priority. Our humility before God opens the door for the Holy Spirit to do what He does - empower us to boldly represent Jesus in our daily lives. We believe awakening starts with the church, and then spreads because no person is beyond the reach of God's transforming love.



WHEN IS IT?

Awaken will begin for First Baptist on Friday, September 10th with a night of worship at 6:30 pm. Sunday, October 10th will be our celebration Sunday when we remember that Jesus is returning someday soon.



WHERE IS IT?

This month-long journey of prayer and fasting will take place wherever you are located day in and day out. In other words, this is not about a big event. Rather, this is about the Church being mobilized to pray in unity no matter where we are scattered each day as individuals.



HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

Follow the instructions provided in this intro guide and register at www.firstmedina.org/awaken/ where you can print all the Awaken materials.

FAST. PRAY. UNITE.

AWAKEN is not just for church on Sunday. It's something for your family to participate in daily. Here are some tips to help you lead your family through this 30-day adventure.

FAST.

We are not asking you to go 30 days without eating. We do want you to fast from something. Fasting is giving something up in order to focus your attention on God. Fasting is a way to humbly show God we need Him. Before *AWAKEN* take the time to talk about fasting and decide together with your household how to fast in a way that works for the everyone. The Fasting Guide is a resource to help you with this.

PRAY.

Every day we encounter people who don't go to church or who don't know that Jesus came to give them hope. As a family pick three people that you can expect to see on a regular basis during *AWAKEN*. It could be people from school, work, your neighborhood, sports teams, clubs, local businesses, or even family members. Write down their names and then take time to pray together for them every day. If you miss a day, don't give up, just jump right back in the next day.

UNITE.

Maybe you're already in a Life Group. Maybe you have friends you have meals with. Plan to meet together with other people from First each week to pray for the three people on your list as well as the people on their lists. You could meet at home, in a restaurant, or even walk through your neighborhood and pray. Asking God together to help you to show and speak His love, and asking God to open people's eyes to see Jesus for who He really is, is a great way to grow together as a church.

BONUS: ACTS OF KINDNESS

Set aside a few different days during AWAKEN as a family to serve the people on your list. Maybe you can help them with a project, invite them to dinner, bake them a pie, write them an encouraging note, or play some games together. There are all kinds of ideas for how you can show kindness on our website: <https://www.firstmedina.org/kindness/>.

FASTING GUIDE

Have you ever fasted before? Maybe you had a medical procedure and weren't allowed to eat anything the night before. Maybe you fasted accidentally because you forgot to pack a lunch, or were working so hard that you forgot to eat. Biblical fasting is much more than just skipping a meal. Fasting is intentionally not doing something so that you can focus your attention on getting to know God better.

Here's a simple way to describe the purpose of fasting. If you miss a meal, you'll get hungry. You will want to eat food. When your stomach starts to rumble that's a great time to pray and say to God that He is more important to you than any meal. Ask God to make you hunger and thirst to know Him better.

30 DAYS OF FASTING

Many people have done total fasts where they have not eaten anything for many weeks. To be clear we are NOT calling the church to go 30 days without eating. We would love it if you would set aside extra time and attention that can be devoted to God through fasting of some type. This will look different for people depending on their age, health, and stage of life. Ask God to lead you as you figure out how He is calling you to respond.

FOOD FASTING

There are many ways to fast from food. We encourage you to continue drinking water, even during the times that you are fasting. We've listed a few ideas here for you to pray about and consider.

Intermittent Fasting - Intermittent fasting is simply going for extended hours during the day without eating. Typically, this is done in a 24-hour cycle with only certain hours of the day reserved for eating. One could choose to only eat between the hours of noon and 6 pm, or 4 and 9 pm.

Specific Food Item Fasting - Some people will choose to not eat chocolate, or not drink coffee for an extended time as part of their fasting plan. This option will work for most people.

Skipping Meals - This plan can help people who want to devote themselves to prayer. Rather than eating the individual can that time to pray.

Specific Day Fasting - Over the course of a 30-day time period, you may choose to fast every Monday, or every other Thursday.

Consult Your Doctor - Please consult your doctor when you are making plans to fast. Drinking water and good nutrition are an important part of healthy living. God is honored when you are wise with your fasting.

Developing a Fasting Habit - If you have never fasted, or you are just starting to figure it out, please give yourself grace and understand that it will take a while for your body to get used to fasting. If you want to fast for three days, for example, it may be best to start with an 18-hour fast, then a 20-hour fast, and over the course of time you can work up to a multiple day fast. Please consult your doctor as you make fasting plans.

ACTIVITY FASTING

There is only one type of activity fasting that is found in scripture. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 give married couples instruction about this type of fast. A specific activity fast does not need to be listed in Scripture to be spiritually beneficial for you. Anything that you're your time and attention could be on this list. Here are some possibilities for your family.

Entertainment - Our first world culture is obsessed with entertainment. This can easily eat up a lot of time out of your day. Making a simple adjustment can give your whole family time to devote to praying the three people on your prayer list. Rather than naming specific types of entertainment here, it may be best for you to ask yourself, "What do I love?" or "What do I not want to give up?"

Christian Music - A simple habit that is like a fast could be to switch to only listening to Christian music for a month. You may be surprised how a little change like that could affect your thoughts and your attitude.

Phone Advice - If you decide that you want to fast from social media or specific apps on your phone, there are many things you can do: 1) Delete the app from your phone, so you don't absent-mindedly just jump on your favorite app. 2) Another option would be to move that app to your last page of apps, or put it in a folder that makes it hard to find. 3) Many phones allow you to limit the number of hours you use individual apps each week.

Activity Restriction - Maybe you're not ready to walk away from an activity entirely. Would you consider limiting that activity to certain hours of the day?

DECIDE TOGETHER

If there is more than just you in your household, it's probably good to have a discussion about what will work for your family. Let everyone give input, then decide together what is best for everyone.

PRAYING TOGETHER

If all we do is fast, then AWAKEN will not be successful. Fasting is saying, "No" to something so that you can say, "Yes" to something else. Fasting and Prayer go hand in hand. Please fast and please pray.

PICK THREE

God loves every person on this planet. He wants every one of us to get to know Him. Every day we see people who need to be encouraged. They need us to help them see what Jesus is like. Please pick three people who you believe God wants you to intentionally reach out to - people you want to serve. Although it's important to pray for people who live in other areas or other states, the focus of AWAKEN is those who live and work in Medina County - the people we can expect to see every week. Maybe you have three individuals. Maybe your family or your group of friends wants to pray for people you all know. Ask God to show you who He wants you to pray for.

PRAY AS A GROUP

If you have two friends, you have a group. Whether your group is a life group, a class, or a walking club, we want to encourage you to pray together. Decide as a group when you will meet together each week to pray. On the days you're not together, pray for each other, pray for each other's list of three. We would love it if you would let First know about your group so that we can pray for you. Please register your group here: www.firstmedina.org/info.

SPECIAL EVENTS DURING AWAKEN

We have two special pray events scheduled for AWAKEN. This first is our church's kickoff for AWAKEN. The second is a special night for all of the AWAKEN churches to celebrate together.

- **Friday, September 10, 2021** - 6:30 pm - First Baptist Church
- **Saturday, September 18, 2021** 5:30 pm - Medina Public Square

AWAKEN OVERVIEW

Awaken 2021 is a group fast, calling our community to prayer and fasting for spiritual renewal. This overview is designed help you understand the specific things that we are asking God to do in us and in our community. As you discuss fasting and prayer with your family and friends take some time to look at God's Word and ask Him to lead each of us individually to respond to Him.

The *Awaken 2021 for Kids 30-day Calendar* has a prayer theme for each week and a Scripture for each day that is appropriate for all ages, including kids. This is a great tool to use as a family to focus your attention on God during Awaken 2021 and is something your older kids might use on their own. The weekly themes include:

Week 1 – ANSWERING GOD'S CALL - Jonah 1

A critical piece of seeking God is obedience. Jonah heard what God wanted him to do and rejected it. Sometimes we don't like what God says to us, and we want to do things our own way. God loves His children so much that he doesn't allow us to just walk away. He pursues us. As we begin AWAKEN, let's humble ourselves before God, confess sin to him, and ask God to empower us to obey Him.

Week 2 – CELEBRATING GOD'S SALVATION - Jonah 2

Nothing could have saved Jonah's life when the sailors threw him off the ship, nothing except God. It's a good thing that God loves to save! God saved Jonah from dying. Jesus gave His life to save us from spiritual death - separation from God. Let's remember God's amazing power to save and believe that He has work He wants to do in the lives of people in our community.

Week 3 – SPEAKING GOD’S WORD - Jonah 3

It can be unnerving to talk to other people about what God says. Sometimes they don’t want to listen to it. We are not responsible for how people respond. We are responsible for speaking His Good News to the people in our circles. Thankfully the Holy Spirit of God lives within us. If we humble ourselves and allow him to fill (control) our lives, He will empower us to speak the truth boldly and graciously. This week ask God to empower you by His Spirit to speak the truth.

Week 4 – EMBRACING GOD’S HEART - Jonah 4

God showed mercy on the people of Nineveh because of their repentance. Jonah didn’t like that because He didn’t share God’s heart for people who did not know Him. God was patient with Jonah and encouraged him to have compassion on the lost. How Jonah responded we’ll never know. This book of the Bible ends with a question. It’s a question we all need to answer. Do we care for people who don’t know God? Ask God to take control of your desires and to love others the way God loves them.

Week 5 – CELEBRATING CHRIST’S RETURN - 1 Thessalonians 4-5

All of the things that we are talking about throughout AWAKEN point us to a coming day when Jesus will return. If you follow Jesus this is a great joy for you. It’s also a reminder that the way this world operates is not how God wants us to operate. We represent His coming Kingdom. Please pray with us, “Even so, Jesus, come quickly,” and live each day offering to those around us the reconciliation that can be found in Christ.