

FUMCT 40 Days of Wellness for Lent 2024

Give up to Grow – A Personal guide for self-examination.

The FUMCT Wellness Ministry offers this challenge for Lent 2024:
Spend time every day reflecting on your personal spiritual growth.

For at least five minutes, think about how you are increasing your knowledge and understanding of God's Word and becoming more trusting and obedient to God's Will. (See Psalm 119, Ephesians 4:13). You can sit in a quiet place or think while moving or performing a routine task. Be honest and kind to yourself as you examine how your faith journey is impacted by your beliefs, intentions, thoughts, habits, and behaviors. Below are suggestions to guide your contemplation. Use all the topics, the ones that challenge or convict you, or replace them with your own questions.

What can you give up to grow closer to God?

To Grow in Self-Discipline and Commitment (Philippians 3:14, Matthew 4:1-11)

How often do you pray, study, meet with other believers, or perform acts of service? Do you need to give up self-centered activities that fill up your free time? Do you need to surrender a trait or habit so that you can manage your schedule better (such as laziness, indecision, apathy, or procrastination)?



To Grow in Close Connection to God (Romans 8:26, Psalm 100)

Do you experience the Presence of God throughout the day or are you hurrying or living on autopilot? Are your prayers God-centered or self-centered? Do you emphasize personal requests and intercessions or spend time adoring God, seeking His Will, and actively listening for His response? Do you express gratitude or take things for granted? What doubts, worries, or distractions can be released so that you worship wholeheartedly with gladness and joy (instead of "going to worship" as a more passive observer)?

To Grow in Understanding & Compassion (Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, Matthew 5:44)

Do you accept God's forgiveness and offer forgiveness to others? Do you need to surrender grudges or resentments or judgmental attitudes? Do you listen well and accept others' opinions and emotions? How compassionate are you with family, co-workers, friends, acquaintances, strangers, difficult people?



To Grow in Acceptance Psalm (139:1-4, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 2:10, 3:6-19)

Do you accept the identity as a beloved child of God or cling to your self-view? Do you need to give up self-doubt, self-criticism, or perfectionism? Do you need to stop believing negative self-talk or refuse to focus on past regrets, mistakes, or failures? Do you define yourself by God's standards or the world's, comparing yourself to others? Do you accept God's love in all circumstances?

To Grow in Self-Awareness and Trust (Philippians 4:6-7, Proverbs 3:5-6, Acts 17:28)

Do you depend on yourself, others, or God? Do you need to give up being a fixer or the person who is right and in control? Do you trust God to take care of you or hold on to worry, anxiety, defensiveness, or fear?

You grow, striving to be the person God created you to be, BY HIS GRACE.

FUMCT Wellness is here to help.

For other resources, challenges, or tips contact Janice Stewart, Wellness Coordinator at janice@fumct.org or 205 345-7261, ext. 120.