

My name is Sarah Boonstra. I'm a wife and a mom of three. I consider myself a professional volunteer, investing time in the rising generations. The most important thing to know about me is that years ago God walloped me over the head with the message to read my Bible every day and that has forever changed my relationship to Him. That practice has also impacted on every other relationship in my life. I live in Colorado but am connected to the River CRC through my brother Scott, who has been kind enough to believe that I have good things to share.

Fasting

### **Monday, February 16**

Prayer to begin:

Lord, we invite you into this space, turning our attention towards you. As we begin an intentional journey that will end with a celebration of your resurrection, we do not want to miss the gifts that you have for us. Please speak to us as we turn our hearts towards you.

Lent begins this Wednesday. There are many ways to look at the 40 days leading up to Holy Week. Many people spend this time fasting. Some relish giving up a bad habit, or a vice for 40 days. Others do strict fasts, giving up specific types of food for all of Lent. I've given up chocolate and social media or fasted for one day a week. I have never done a full 40 day, no food, fast. I have difficulty with a 36-hour fast. By the end, I have thought of every food I'd like to eat to break the fast. And when I do finally hit the end, I feel incredibly proud of myself. I would not describe myself as radiant. Which tells me that there is something for me to learn from the story of Moses on Mount Sinai because Moses ends his 40-day full food fast looking *radiant*.

*Read Exodus 34:1-30*

We open our reading with Moses cutting two new stone tablets to record the Ten Commandments and then heading up Mount Sinai to meet with God. During those 40 days and forty nights, Moses ate no bread and drank no water. The last verse of the text describes Moses' appearance at the conclusion of his time. In between, God told Moses what He, God, is like and then provided Moses with instructions for how the Israelites were to live as God's people.

Moses provides us with an example of how to approach these next 40 days that could help us end Lent knowing in our head and heart that God meets our every need.

Moses first sought out **intentional time** in the presence of God.

God met him and began by helping Moses **know the character of God**.

Moses' **humbled** himself and **worshipped**

Moses' time on Mount Sinai ended with him **listening to God's instruction**.

This week, as we examine fasting as a way to understand that God meets our every need, we will look first at the example of Moses' and also at Jesus' fast in the desert as a model. My prayer is that we step into Lent with more than an intent to give things up. Let's step into Lent, looking for God's gifts to us.