FOOD AWARENESS PLAN

Food is one of God's best gifts. But a gift can quietly start running the show. This plan is a simple way to slow down, pay attention, and make sure you're eating the food… and the food isn't eating you.

The antidote to gluttony isn't giving up food. It's **awareness**: noticing what we let pass our lips, and why. Jesus refrained at his last meal, trading the immediate for the eternal. This journal is a small way of following him to that table.

> ***Before you start:*** *if you've struggled with food in the past, or have been diagnosed with an eating disorder, please talk with your doctor before making any changes. Your plan may look like eating regularly and gently with their help, and that's a faithful plan too. This journal is for the majority of us who simply haven't given food the attention and awareness God asks of us.*

HOW IT WORKS

1. **Monitor:** write down everything for 3 days.
2. **Assess:** look for your patterns.
3. **Make decisions:** choose your plan.
4. **Keep going:** journal for one more week and ask, "Is this nourishing me?"

You can use this sheet, a notebook, or an app on your phone.

What matters is that you write it down.



STEP 1: MONITOR (first 3 days)

For the next three days, write down everything you eat and drink: meals, snacks, coffee, the handful of candy on the way past the kitchen. Don't change anything about your habits yet - just take notice.

Day	Time	What I ate or drank	Where and with whom?	Was I hungry?	How was I feeling?
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					

Tip: "How was I feeling?" column is important! Were you bored, stressed, tired, celebrating, lonely? Sometimes what we reach for when we're afraid or worn out tells us something.

STEP 2: ASSESS

Look back over your three days. Pope Gregory noticed that gluttony isn't just about *what* we eat, but *how* we eat. He named five ways it shows up. Tick any that sound like you.

	The way	What it looks like	Sounds like me?
1	**Excessively — too much**	**Opening the bag "for a few" and finding the bottom. Seconds and thirds when you were full after the first plate.**	☐
2	**Hastily — too soon, or the wrong time**	**Eating in the car between pickups. Snacking while you cook, so you're full before dinner.**	☐
3	**Ravenously — with intense desire**	**Inhaling lunch at your desk without tasting it. Standing at the open fridge at 11pm.**	☐
4	**Sumptuously — the expensive, rare or better-than**	**The specialty drink that's become a daily non-negotiable. Spending more on takeout than groceries.**	☐
5	**Daintily — a fuss that distracts from what matters**	**A whole morning ruined because the café ran out of oat milk. Hosting friends and not enjoying them because the food isn't perfect.**	☐

Which way do I most identify with?

What patterns did I notice? (times of day, feelings, places, people)

What do I reach for when I'm afraid, stressed or tired?

STEP 3: MAKE DECISIONS

Now make a conscious plan to be aware of everything that passes your lips. Before you eat or drink, ask three questions:

1. **Is it for my benefit?**
2. **Is it the right time?**
3. **Is it needed?**

Then choose one or two practices that fit what you noticed in Step 2. Start small. You can always add more later.

Practice	What it looks like	Helpful if you're…	I'll try this
Set meal times	**Eat only at set times, until you've trained yourself.**	**Hasty**	☐
Set a menu	**Choose simple foods ahead of time. Porridge, eggs, toast, fruit, veggies, or rice, beans and lentils can sustain you.**	**Sumptuous or dainty**	☐
Set times to refrain	**Fast from a meal, a daily treat, or a drink for a season. Use hunger as a prompt to pray.**	**Excessive or ravenous**	☐
Set decisions to simplify	**Decide once so you don't decide every time. (examples: no snacks after dinner or one coffee a day)**	**Any of the five**	☐
Set practices	**Only eat or drink sitting down at a table, ideally with people. Or open your Bible while you eat, nourishing your soul as you nourish your body.**	**Hasty or ravenous**	☐

> **** note: Fasting from food isn't safe for everyone, including during pregnancy, with diabetes, or with a history of disordered eating. If this is your situation, you can choose to fast from something else instead, like social media.*

My plan this week:

Who will I share my plan with? (my community group, my partner, a friend)

STEP 4: KEEP GOING

For the next seven days, keep journalling as a spiritual practice. Write down what you allow into your body, and for each one ask: **"Is this nourishing me?"**

Day	What I ate or drank	Is this nourishing me? ☐ Yes ☐ Not really	Did I keep my plan?	One thing I noticed

Missed a day, or blew the plan on Friday? That's okay. Just notice, and start again tomorrow.

Need support?

If food or drink has had a hold on you, you're not alone, and there is help.

- **Call 811** (Health811) to be connected to support in Ontario.
- **Talk to your doctor** before making changes if you've struggled with an eating disorder.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** offers meetings and support if alcohol is a struggle for you. Stopping on your own isn't always safe, so reach out first. Call **416-487-5591** or visit **aatoronto.org**
- **Fill out our care form** at **onechurch.to/care**. We'd love to pray with you and walk alongside you.

