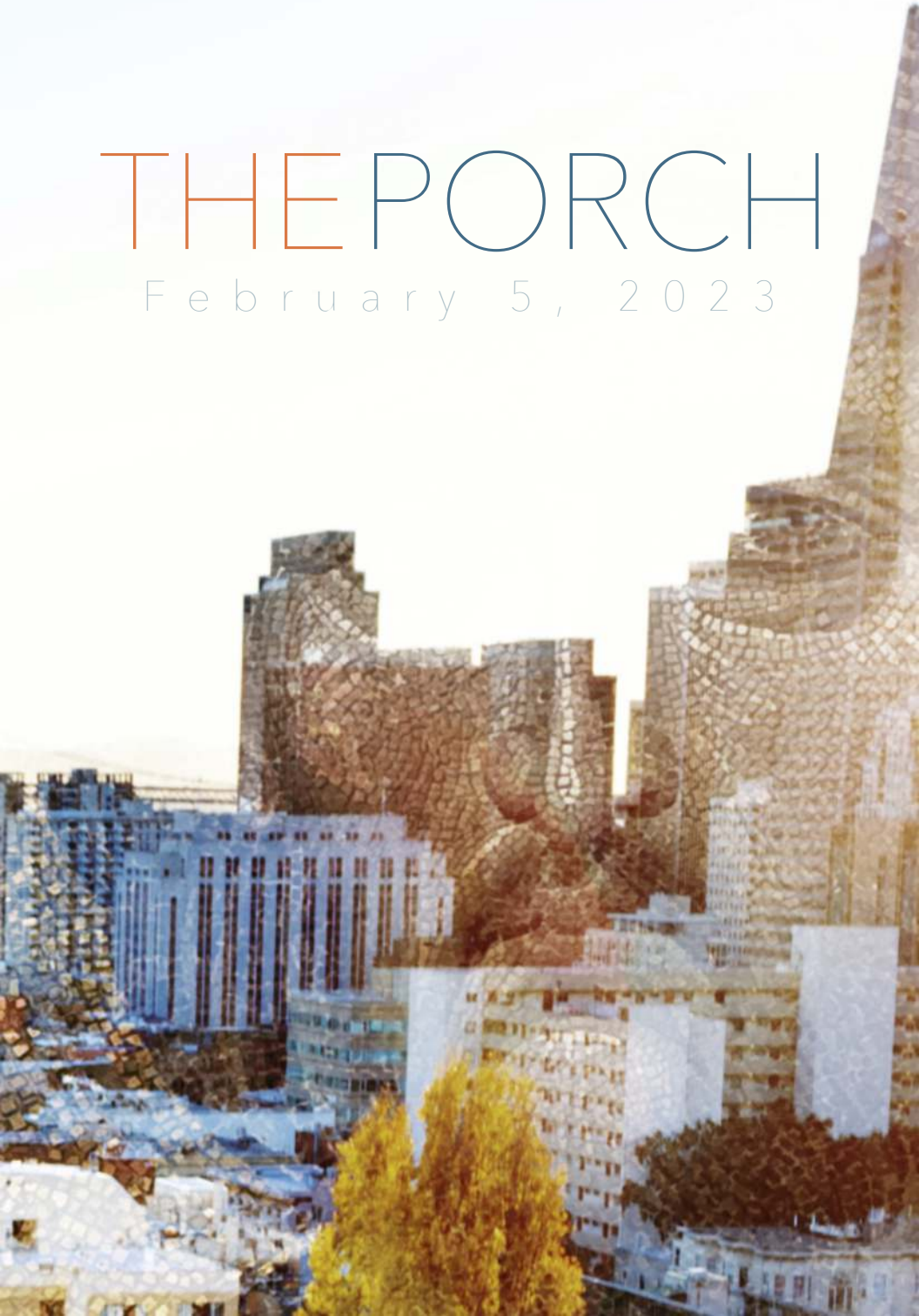


THE PORCH

February 5, 2023



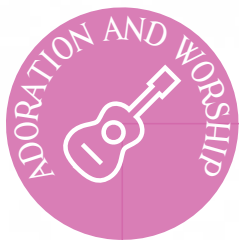
About Our Liturgy

We are all creatures of habit. Habits and rhythms shape who we are. Our Sunday gatherings are designed to help us press the story of Jesus into our souls and change who we are by repeating that same story over and over again.

Every week we gather to remember and celebrate these same old gospel truths: that we are sinners but we have a great savior. That the death and resurrection of Jesus brought his kingdom here. That we have been adopted into the family of God. That he has called us to love each other and our city. That we were created for a perfect world, and that this world is not all there is.

So we invite you to participate with us as a group of imperfect people who tell the same story over and over again, the story of King Jesus.





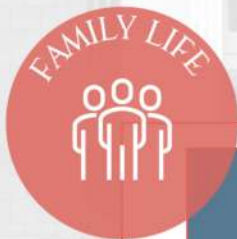
Call To Worship

Singing

* The American author David Foster Wallace wrote, "In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." This is a powerful statement from a man who was not a follower of Jesus. He was 100% correct. We all have something at the center of our lives. Something that we believe will make us happy. Something that will fulfill us. Even those who follow Jesus often find that we are serving idols, something that ultimately won't fulfill us.

The gospel story tells us what will: Jesus Christ. Only he can fulfill us. Only he can redeem us. Only he can heal our deep spiritual wounds. Only he can give hope. Serving him as king is why we were created. This is why we open our gatherings with worship. Music touches our souls in a way that nothing else can. And so we use music as the people of God have done for thousands of years to remind ourselves that we serve an amazing King and that only he should be at the center of our lives.





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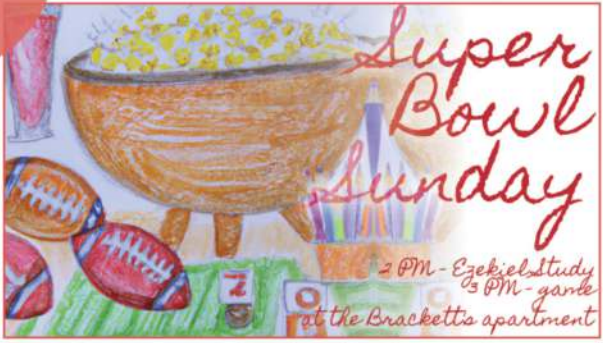
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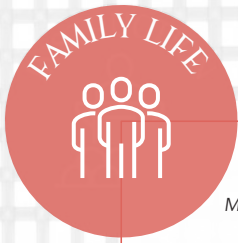


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* One of the beautiful facets of the gospel is how it brings all kinds of people together (Galatians 3:28). We are God's people. We are called to live our lives together and to love one another. In this part of our gathering, we celebrate this truth. We pray for each other. We chat while getting coffee and tea. We talk about what's going on in the life of the family.





Prayer

Monthly Schedule

Week 1: We read a prayer from church history.

Week 2: We take requests and pray for each other.

Week 3: Congregational Prayer.

Week 4: Praying the Psalms.

Week 5: We take requests and pray for each other.

Coffee

This quick time of greeting isn't a break in the worship but rather a continuation of our worship. Take five minutes to grab a cup of coffee and say hello to someone you haven't met yet.





New City Catechism

Question 4: How and why did God create us?

Answer: God created us male and female in his own image to know him, love him, live with him, and glorify him. And it is right that we who were created by God should live to his glory.

Question 5: What else did God create?

Answer: God created all things by his powerful Word, and all his creation was very good; everything flourished under his loving rule.

* 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." God's word is precious. This time is less about the words of the preacher and more about the words of God. So here at The Porch we usually go through an entire book of the Bible verse by verse. We want to soak up the truth. We want to see Jesus on every page. We want to know the gospel better than we did yesterday. When that happens, we will be more loving, more humble, more hopeful, more joyful, and more blown away by what we learn about our King.



Scripture Reading *Isaiah 58:1b-7 (CSB)*

"Tell my people their transgression
and the house of Jacob their sins.
They seek me day after day
and delight to know my ways,
like a nation that does what is right
and does not abandon the justice of their God."

**'Why have we fasted, but you have not seen?
We have denied ourselves, but you haven't noticed!'**

"Look, you do as you please on the day of your fast,
and oppress all your workers.

**You fast with contention and strife
to strike viciously with your fist.**

You cannot fast as you do today,
hoping to make your voice heard on high.

Will the fast I choose be like this:

**A day for a person to deny himself,
to bow his head like a reed,
and to spread out sackcloth and ashes?**

Will you call this a fast
and a day acceptable to the Lord?

Isn't this the fast I choose:

**To break the chains of wickedness,
to untie the ropes of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free,
and to tear off every yoke?**

**Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
to bring the poor and homeless into your house,
to clothe the naked when you see him,
and not to ignore your own flesh and blood?"**



Ezekiel | Theology of Exile

Genesis 15:18-21 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, 19 the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

Blessings - Deuteronomy 28:1-13

(1) "Now if you faithfully obey the LORD your God and are careful to follow all his commands I am giving you today, the LORD your God will put you far above all the nations of the earth. (2) All these blessings will come and overtake you, because you obey the LORD your God:

(3) You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

(4) Your offspring will be blessed, and your land's produce, and the offspring of your livestock, including the young of your herds and the newborn of your flocks. (5) Your basket and kneading bowl will be blessed. (6) You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

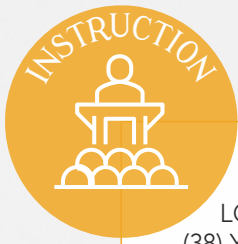
(7) The LORD will cause the enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you. They will march out against you from one direction but flee from you in seven directions. (8) The LORD will grant you a blessing on your barns and on everything you do; he will bless you in the land the LORD your God is giving you. (9) The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he swore to you, if you obey the commands of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. (10) Then all the peoples of the earth will see that you bear the LORD's name, and they will stand in awe of you. (11) The LORD will make you prosper abundantly with offspring, the offspring of your livestock, and your land's produce in the land the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. (12) The LORD will open for you his abundant storehouse, the sky, to give your land rain in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow.



(13) The LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you will only move upward and never downward if you listen to the LORD your God's commands I am giving you today and are careful to follow them."

Curses - Deuteronomy 28:25-57

(25) "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will march out against them from one direction but flee from them in seven directions. You will be an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. (26) Your corpses will be food for all the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, with no one to scare them away. (27) The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, tumors, a festering rash, and scabies, from which you cannot be cured. (28) The LORD will afflict you with madness, blindness, and mental confusion, (29) so that at noon you will grope as a blind person gropes in the dark. You will not be successful in anything you do. You will only be oppressed and robbed continually, and no one will help you. (30) You will become engaged to a woman, but another man will rape her. You will build a house but not live in it. You will plant a vineyard but not enjoy its fruit. (31) Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat any of it. Your donkey will be taken away from you and not returned to you. Your flock will be given to your enemies, and no one will help you. (32) Your sons and daughters will be given to another people, while your eyes grow weary looking for them every day. But you will be powerless to do anything. (33) A people you don't know will eat your land's produce and everything you have labored for. You will only be oppressed and crushed continually. (34) You will be driven mad by what you see. (35) The LORD will afflict you with painful and incurable boils on your knees and thighs--from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. (36) The LORD will bring you and your king that you have appointed to a nation neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you will worship other gods, of wood and stone.



(37) You will become an object of horror, scorn, and ridicule among all the peoples where the LORD will drive you.

(38) You will sow much seed in the field but harvest little, because locusts will devour it. (39) You will plant and cultivate vineyards but not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them. (40) You will have olive trees throughout your territory but not moisten your skin with oil, because your olives will drop off. (41) You will father sons and daughters, but they will not remain yours, because they will be taken prisoner. (42) Buzzing insects will take possession of all your trees and your land's produce. (43) The resident alien among you will rise higher and higher above you, while you sink lower and lower. (44) He will lend to you, but you won't lend to him. He will be the head, and you will be the tail.

(45) All these curses will come, pursue, and overtake you until you are destroyed, since you did not obey the LORD your God and keep the commands and statutes he gave you. (46) These curses will be a sign and a wonder against you and your descendants forever. (47) Because you didn't serve the LORD your God with joy and a cheerful heart, even though you had an abundance of everything, (48) you will serve your enemies the LORD will send against you, in famine, thirst, nakedness, and a lack of everything. He will place an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.

(49) The LORD will bring a nation from far away, from the ends of the earth, to swoop down on you like an eagle, a nation whose language you won't understand, (50) a ruthless nation, showing no respect for the old and not sparing the young. (51) They will eat the offspring of your livestock and your land's produce until you are destroyed. They will leave you no grain, new wine, fresh oil, young of your herds, or newborn of your flocks until they cause you to perish. (52) They will besiege you within all your city gates until your high and fortified walls, that you trust in, come down throughout your land. They will besiege you within all your city gates throughout the land the LORD your God has given you.



(53) You will eat your offspring, the flesh of your sons and daughters the LORD your God has given you during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you. (54) The most sensitive and refined man among you will look grudgingly at his brother, the wife he embraces, and the rest of his children, (55) refusing to share with any of them his children's flesh that he will eat because he has nothing left during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you in all your towns. (56) The most sensitive and refined woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her refinement and sensitivity, will begrudge the husband she embraces, her son, and her daughter, (57) the afterbirth that comes out from between her legs and the children she bears, because she will secretly eat them for lack of anything else during the siege and hardship your enemy imposes on you within your city gates.

Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day..

Psalms 137:1–4 By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. 2 On the willows there we hung up our lyres. 3 For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" 4 How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?





Singing

* In the sermon we listened to the gospel preached. Here, we respond with worship. We sing the praises of the God who has saved us and given us hope.



Confession & Lament Communion Singing

* The gospel is not the story of what we do to earn God's love. The gospel is the story of what God has done to bring us back to life. The problem is that we are forgetful and we all constantly slip into moralism where we think that we need to live a certain way to earn God's love. This is the time in our gathering where we intentionally confess our sin and take communion to remind us of the grace of God. We remember that we are not redeemed by doing anything. We are redeemed by the death of Jesus in our place.

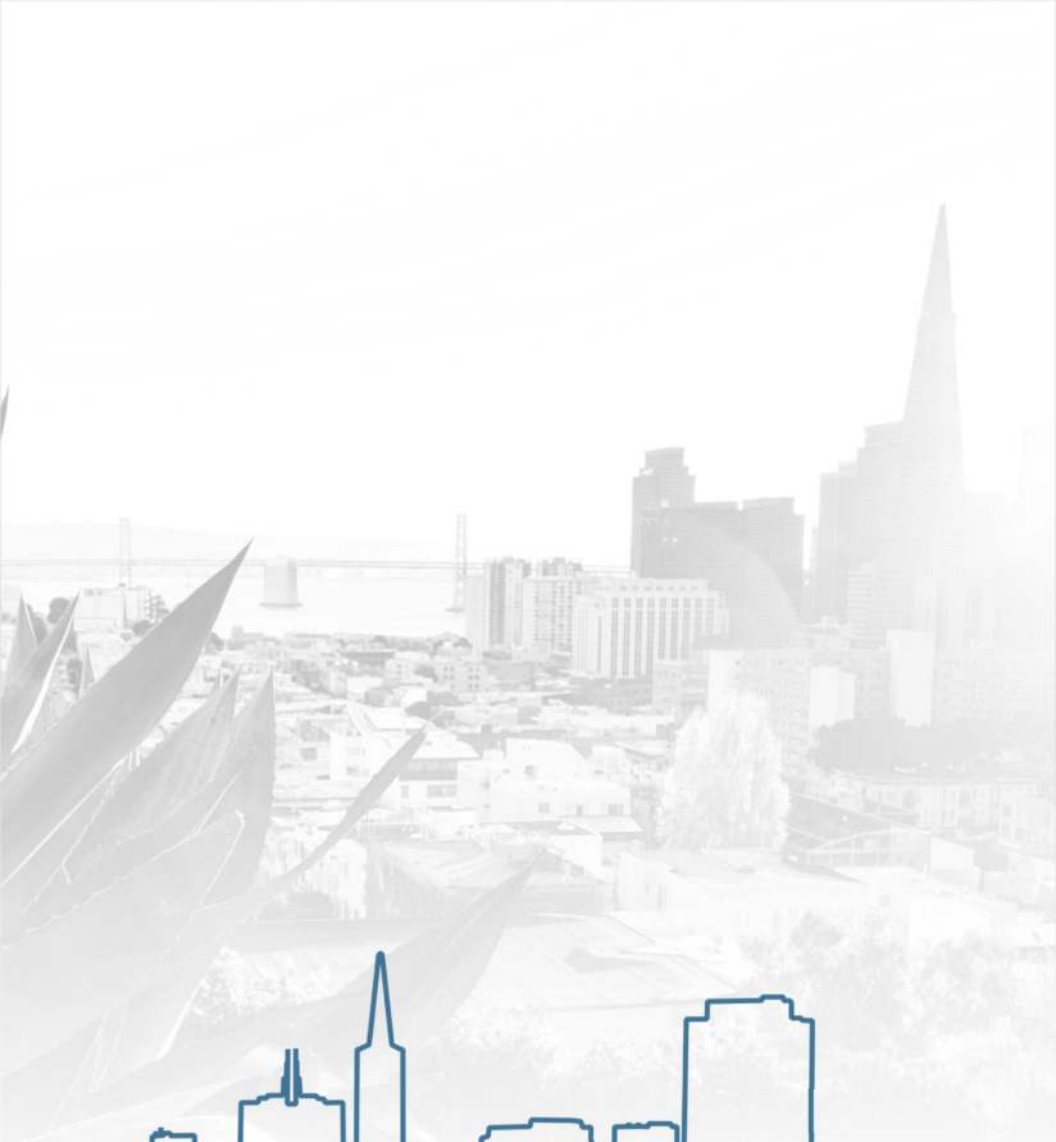


Benediction

II Thes 2:16-17

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

* We are not just followers of King Jesus for a few hours on Sunday morning. We are ambassadors of his kingdom everywhere we go. With our families. At work. With our friends and neighbors. So every week, we finish our gatherings by remembering that we represent him everywhere we go and that we are called to radically love people so that they see him in our lives.



THE PORCH
FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

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