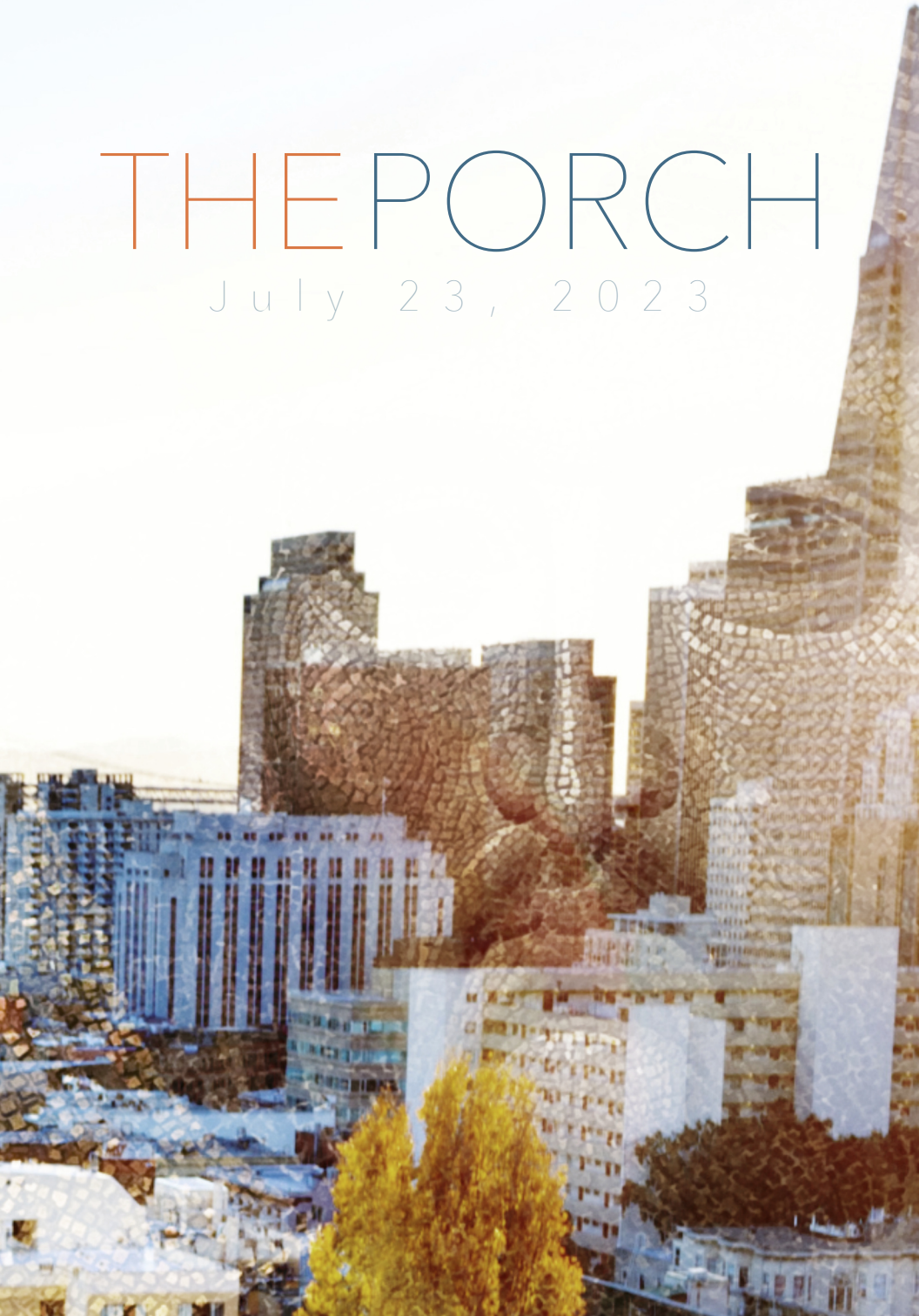


# THE PORCH

July 23, 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.





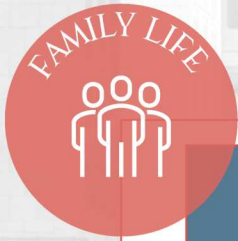
## Call To Worship

### 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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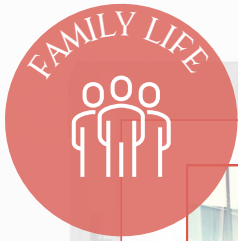
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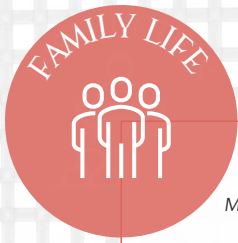


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\* One of the beautiful facets of the gospel is how it brings all kinds of people together (Galatians 3:28). We are God's people. We are called to live our lives together and to love one another. In this part of our gathering, we celebrate this truth. 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 32:** What do justification and sanctification mean?

**Answer:** Justification means our declared righteousness before God, made possible by Christ's death and resurrection for us. Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness, made possible by the Spirit's work in us.

### Scripture Reading *Psalm 119:105-112 (CSB)*

Your word is a lamp for my feet

**and a light on my path.**

I have solemnly sworn to keep your righteous judgments.

I am severely afflicted;

**Lord, give me life according to your word.**

Lord, please accept my freewill offerings of praise,

**and teach me your judgments.**

My life is constantly in danger,

**yet I do not forget your instruction.**

The wicked have set a trap for me,

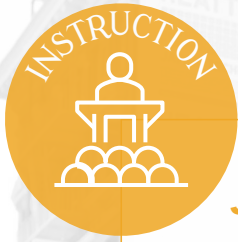
**but I have not wandered from your precepts.**

I have your decrees as a heritage forever;

**indeed, they are the joy of my heart.**

I am resolved to obey your statutes to the very end.

\* 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.



## Ezekiel 33 | Watchman & Jerusalem Has Fallen

### Ezekiel as a Watchman

#### The Idea of the Watchman

**Ezekiel 33:1** The word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Son of man, speak to your people and tell them, 'Suppose I bring the sword against a land, and the people of that land select a man from among them, appointing him as their watchman. 3 And suppose he sees the sword coming against the land and blows his trumpet to warn the people. 4 Then, if anyone hears the sound of the trumpet but ignores the warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his death will be his own fault. 5 Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but ignored the warning, his death is his own fault. If he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. 6 However, suppose the watchman sees the sword coming but doesn't blow the trumpet, so that the people aren't warned, and the sword comes and takes away their lives. Then they have been taken away because of their iniquity, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.'

### Ezekiel Called in Public

7 "As for you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, give them a warning from me. 8 If I say to the wicked, 'Wicked one, you will surely die,' but you do not speak out to warn him about his way, that wicked person will die for his iniquity, yet I will hold you responsible for his blood. 9 But if you warn a wicked person to turn from his way and he doesn't turn from it, he will die for his iniquity, but you will have rescued yourself.





## **Moral Responsibility**

**God's judgement is fair because he takes no pleasure in it**

10 "Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'You have said this: "Our transgressions and our sins are heavy on us, and we are wasting away because of them! How then can we survive?" ' 11 Tell them, 'As I live—this is the declaration of the Lord God—I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked person should turn from his way and live. Repent, repent of your evil ways! Why will you die, house of Israel?'

**Mark 1:14–15** After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God: 15 "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

**Luke 5:32** I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

**Luke 24:45–47** Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. 46 He also said to them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead the third day, 47 and repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

## **A Changed Life**

12 "Now, son of man, say to your people, 'The righteousness of the righteous person will not save him on the day of his transgression; neither will the wickedness of the wicked person cause him to stumble on the day he turns from his wickedness. The righteous person won't be able to survive by his righteousness on the day he sins. 13 When I tell the righteous person that he will surely live, but he trusts in his righteousness and acts unjustly, then none of his righteousness will be remembered, and he will die because of the injustice he has committed.



14 " 'So when I tell the wicked person, "You will surely die," but he repents of his sin and does what is just and right—15 he returns collateral, makes restitution for what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing injustice—he will certainly live; he will not die. 16 None of the sins he committed will be held against him. He has done what is just and right; he will certainly live.

### **The Problem is with us, Not Him**

17 " 'But your people say, "The Lord's way isn't fair," even though it is their own way that isn't fair. 18 When a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits injustice, he will die for it. 19 But if a wicked person turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live because of it. 20 Yet you say, "The Lord's way isn't fair." I will judge each of you according to his ways, house of Israel.' "

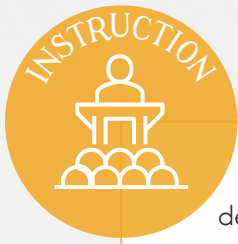
### **Fall of Jerusalem**

21 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, a fugitive from Jerusalem came to me and reported, "The city has been taken!" 22 Now the hand of the Lord had been on me the evening before the fugitive arrived, and he opened my mouth before the man came to me in the morning. So my mouth was opened and I was no longer mute.

### **Responsibility/Blame**

#### **Word for those Back in Judah**

23 Then the word of the Lord came to me: 24 "Son of man, those who live in the ruins in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one person, yet he received possession of the land. But we are many; surely the land has been given to us as a possession.' 25 Therefore say to them, 'This is what the Lord God says: You eat meat with blood in it, you look to your idols, and you shed blood. Should you then receive possession of the land?

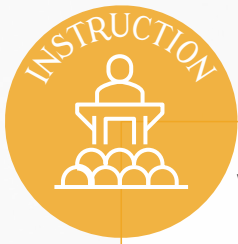


26 You have relied on your swords, you have committed detestable acts, and each of you has defiled his neighbor's wife. Should you then receive possession of the land?'

27 "Tell them this: 'This is what the Lord God says: As surely as I live, those who are in the ruins will fall by the sword, those in the open field I have given to wild animals to be devoured, and those in the strongholds and caves will die by plague. 28 I will make the land a desolate waste, and its proud strength will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will become desolate, with no one passing through. 29 They will know that I am the Lord when I make the land a desolate waste because of all the detestable acts they have committed.'

#### **Word for the Exiles**

30 "As for you, son of man, your people are talking about you near the city walls and in the doorways of their houses. One person speaks to another, each saying to his brother, 'Come and hear what the message is that comes from the Lord!' 31 So my people come to you in crowds, sit in front of you, and hear your words, but they don't obey them. Their mouths go on passionately, but their hearts pursue dishonest profit. 32 Yes, to them you are like a singer of passionate songs who has a beautiful voice and plays skillfully on an instrument. They hear your words, but they don't obey them. 33 Yet when all this comes true—and it definitely will—then they will know that a prophet has been among them."



## Where does boldness come from?

### 1- Gospel boldness comes from joy.

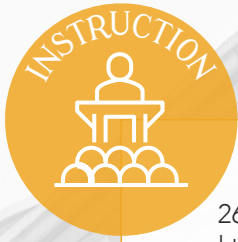
**C. S. Lewis** "I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed. It is frustrating to have discovered a new author and not to be able to tell anyone how good he is; to come suddenly, at the turn of the road, upon some mountain valley of unexpected grandeur and then to have to keep silent because the people with you care for it no more than for a tin can in the ditch; to hear a good joke and find no one to share it with. . . . The Scotch catechism says that man's chief end is 'to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.' But we shall then know that these are the same thing. Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him."

### 2- Gospel boldness comes from love.

### 3- Gospel boldness comes from a love for truth.

### 4- Gospel boldness comes from the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 4:23–31** After they were released, they went to their own people and reported everything the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Master, you are the one who made the heaven, the earth, and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You said through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David your servant:



Why do the Gentiles rage  
and the peoples plot futile things?

26 The kings of the earth take their stand  
and the rulers assemble together  
against the Lord and against his Messiah.

27 "For, in fact, in this city both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, 28 to do whatever your hand and your will had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.





## 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

### Romans 15:5-6

<sup>5</sup> May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.



\*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**

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