

THE PORCH

September 3, 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.





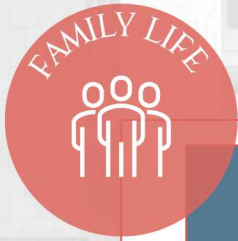
Call To Worship

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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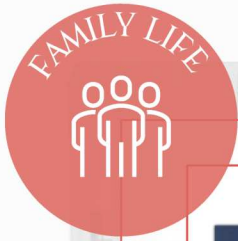
Message



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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.



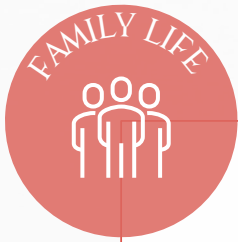
Ezekiel JOURNALS

NEW TEACHING SERIES STARTS FEBRUARY 5
GRAB YOUR JOURNAL ON THE BACK TABLE



OCTOBER 15 EXCELSIOR DISTRICT

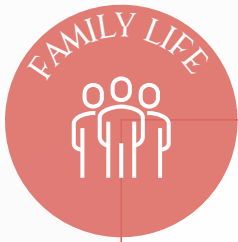
SUNDAY STREETS **LIVABLE CITY** **11AM-4PM FREE • GRATIS • LIBRE • 免費**



Missional Family Dinner Schedule

Wednesday Nights | 6:00-8:00 PM

- ① **September 6** | Brackett Home | Friends Night
- ② **September 13** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef
Homework: Bring your binder
- ③ **September 20** | Brackett Home | Chef Melissa
Homework: HTSTGB A1
- ④ **September 27** | Downstairs SFEFC | BYOE Dinner
Homework: HTSTGB A2
- ① **October 4** | Brackett Home | Friends Night
- ② **October 11** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef Dennis
Homework: HTSTGB A3



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 36: What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?

Answer: That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son, and that God grants him irrevocably to all who believe.

Question 37: How does the Holy Spirit help us?

Answer: The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, comforts us, guides us, gives us spiritual gifts and the desire to obey God; and he enables us to pray and to understand God's Word.

Scripture Reading *Psalm 119:33-35 (ESV)*

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;

and I will keep it to the end.

Give me understanding, **that I may keep your law**

and observe it with my whole heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments,

for I delight in it.

* 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 35-36 | A Better Heart and a Better Way to Life

Prophecy Against Edom

Ezekiel 35:1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Son of man, face Mount Seir and prophesy against it. 3 Say to it, 'This is what the Lord God says:

Look! I am against you, Mount Seir.
I will stretch out my hand against you
and make you a desolate waste.
4 I will turn your cities into ruins,
and you will become a desolation.
Then you will know that I am the Lord.

5 " 'Because you maintained a perpetual hatred and gave the Israelites over to the power of the sword in the time of their disaster, the time of final punishment, 6 therefore, as I live—this is the declaration of the Lord God—I will destine you for bloodshed, and it will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, it will pursue you. 7 I will make Mount Seir a desolate waste and will cut off from it those who come and go. 8 I will fill its mountains with the slain; those slain by the sword will fall on your hills, in your valleys, and in all your ravines. 9 I will make you a perpetual desolation; your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

10 " 'Because you said, "These two nations and two lands will be mine, and we will possess them"—though the Lord was there—11 therefore, as I live—this is the declaration of the Lord God—I will treat you according to the anger and jealousy you showed in your hatred of them. I will make myself known among them when I judge you.



12 Then you will know that I, the Lord, have heard all the blasphemies you uttered against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are desolate.

They have been given to us to devour!" 13 You boasted against me with your mouth, and spoke many words against me. I heard it myself!

14 " 'This is what the Lord God says: While the whole world rejoices, I will make you a desolation. 15 Just as you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it became a desolation, I will deal the same way with you: you will become a desolation, Mount Seir, and so will all Edom in its entirety. Then they will know that I am the Lord.'

Prophecy To the Mountains of Israel

Ezekiel 36:1 "Son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, 'Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord. 2 This is what the Lord God says: Because the enemy has said about you, "Aha! The ancient heights have become our possession," ' 3 therefore, prophesy and say, 'This is what the Lord God says: Because they have made you desolate and have trampled you from every side, so that you became a possession for the rest of the nations and an object of people's gossip and slander, 4 therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord God. This is what the Lord God says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, to the desolate ruins and abandoned cities, which have become plunder and a mockery to the rest of the nations all around.

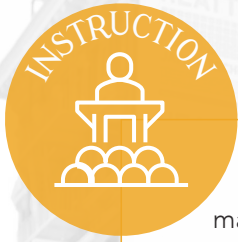
5 " 'This is what the Lord God says: Certainly in my burning zeal I speak against the rest of the nations and all of Edom, who took my land as their own possession with wholehearted rejoicing and utter contempt so that its pastureland became plunder.



6 Therefore, prophesy concerning Israel's land, and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: This is what the Lord God says: Look, I speak in my burning zeal because you have endured the insults of the nations. 7 Therefore, this is what the Lord God says: I swear that the nations all around you will endure their own insults.

8 " 'You, mountains of Israel, will produce your branches and bear your fruit for my people Israel, since their arrival is near. 9 Look! I am on your side; I will turn toward you, and you will be tilled and sown. 10 I will fill you with people, with the whole house of Israel in its entirety. The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. 11 I will fill you with people and animals, and they will increase and be fruitful. I will make you inhabited as you once were and make you better off than you were before. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 12 I will cause people, my people Israel, to walk on you; they will possess you, and you will be their inheritance. You will no longer deprive them of their children.

13 " 'This is what the Lord God says: Because some are saying to you, "You devour people and deprive your nation of children," 14 therefore, you will no longer devour people and deprive your nation of children. This is the declaration of the Lord God. 15 I will no longer allow the insults of the nations to be heard against you, and you will not have to endure the reproach of the peoples anymore; you will no longer cause your nation to stumble. This is the declaration of the Lord God.' "



Concern For My Name

16 The word of the Lord came to me: 17 "Son of man, while the house of Israel lived in their land, they defiled it with their conduct and actions. Their behavior before me was like menstrual impurity. 18 So I poured out my wrath on them because of the blood they had shed on the land, and because they had defiled it with their idols. 19 I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered among the countries. I judged them according to their conduct and actions. 20 When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned my holy name, because it was said about them, 'These are the people of the Lord, yet they had to leave his land in exile.' 21 Then I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they went.

22 "Therefore, say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Lord God says: It is not for your sake that I will act, house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you profaned among the nations where you went. 23 I will honor the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations—the name you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am the Lord—this is the declaration of the Lord God—when I demonstrate my holiness through you in their sight.

A Better Covenant

24 " 'For I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. 25 I will also sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.



27 I will place my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances. 28 You will live in the land that I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and make it plentiful, and I will not bring famine on you. 30 I will also make the fruit of the trees and the produce of the field plentiful, so that you will no longer experience reproach among the nations on account of famine.

31 " 'You will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and detestable practices. 32 It is not for your sake that I will act—this is the declaration of the Lord God—let this be known to you. Be ashamed and humiliated because of your ways, house of Israel!

33 " 'This is what the Lord God says: On the day I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the ruins will be rebuilt. 34 The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of everyone who passes by. 35 They will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden. The cities that were once ruined, desolate, and demolished are now fortified and inhabited." 36 Then the nations that remain around you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt what was demolished and have replanted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken and I will do it.

37 " 'This is what the Lord God says: I will respond to the house of Israel and do this for them: I will multiply them in number like a flock. 38 So the ruined cities will be filled with a flock of people, just as Jerusalem is filled with a flock of sheep for sacrifice during its appointed festivals. Then they will know that I am the Lord.' "



Romans 9:10–24 And not only that, but Rebekah conceived children through one man, our father Isaac. 11 For though her sons had not been born yet or done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to election might stand—12 not from works but from the one who calls—she was told, The older will serve the younger. 13 As it is written: I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau. 14 What should we say then? Is there injustice with God? Absolutely not! 15 For he tells Moses, I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then, it does not depend on human will or effort but on God who shows mercy. 17 For the Scripture tells Pharaoh, I raised you up for this reason so that I may display my power in you and that my name may be proclaimed in the whole earth. 18 So then, he has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy and he hardens whom he wants to harden. 19 You will say to me, therefore, "Why then does he still find fault? For who resists his will?" 20 On the contrary, who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? Will what is formed say to the one who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" 21 Or has the potter no right over the clay, to make from the same lump one piece of pottery for honor and another for dishonor? 22 And what if God, wanting to display his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience objects of wrath prepared for destruction? 23 And what if he did this to make known the riches of his glory on objects of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory—24 on us, the ones he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?





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

I Thes 5:23

²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming 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

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

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