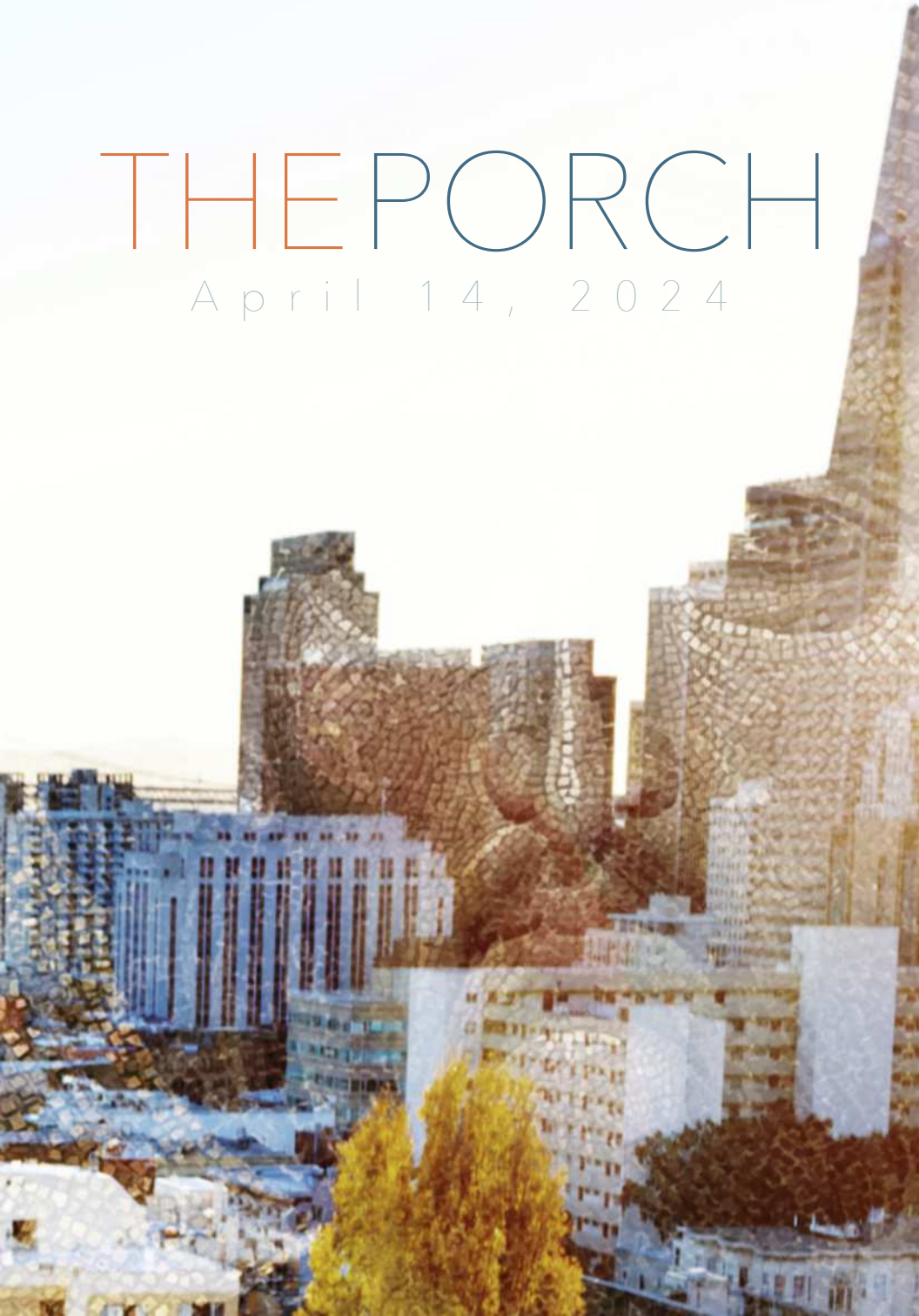


THE PORCH

April 14, 2024



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.





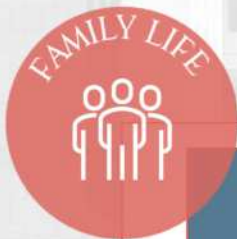
Call To Worship

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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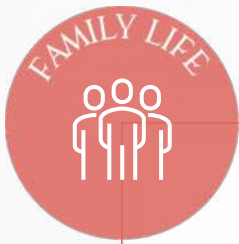


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* One of the beautiful facets of the gospel is how it brings all kinds of people together (Galatians 3:28). We are God's people. We are called to live our lives together and to love one another. In this part of our gathering, we celebrate this truth.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

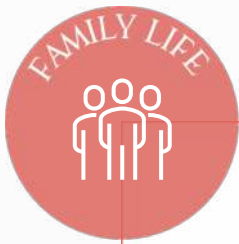




Missional Family Dinner Schedule

Wednesday Nights | 6:00-8:15 PM

- ③ **April 17** | Brackett Home | Chef Melissa
Homework: HTSTGB C1
- ① **April 24** | Downstairs SFEFC | BYOE Dinner
Homework: HTSTGB C2
- ① **May 1** | Brackett Home | Friends Night
- ② **May 8** | *No Wednesday Dinner*
- ③ **May 15** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef
Homework: HTSTGB C3
- ④ **May 22** | Brackett Home | Chef Melissa
Homework: HTSTGB C4
- ① **May 29** | Downstairs SFEFC | BYOE Dinner
Homework: HTSTGB C5
- ① **June 5** | Brackett Home | Friends Night
- ② **June 12** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef
Homework: HTSTGB C6



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.

Stretch

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 water and a snack and say hello to someone you haven't met yet.





New City Catechism

Question 13: Can anyone keep the law of God perfectly?

Answer: Since the fall, no mere human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly, but consistently breaks it in thought, word, and deed.

Question 14: Did God create us unable to keep his law?

Answer: No, but because of the disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, all of creation is fallen; we are all born in sin and guilt, corrupt in our nature and unable to keep God's law.

Scripture Reading *Luke 24:36b-45 (ESV)*

...Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" **But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.** And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see.** For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. **And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling,** he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**" Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

* 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.



Let's All Be Monks

Week 1: Setting The Stage

Three reasons why our faith never moves from dreams of the ideal to reality:

Reason #1 Idealized perception of the faith of others

Reason #2 Unrealistic goal lines

John Piper, "What is the chief end of man? The chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying him forever."

Reason #3 Ignorance of the process of sanctification

Gregg Allison, "Sanctification—specifically progressive sanctification—is the cooperative work of God and Christians by which ongoing transformation into greater Christlikeness occurs."

New City Catechism (from Q32), "Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness, made possible by the Spirit's work in us."

God's Role in Sanctification

1 Thessalonians 5:23 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.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

Our Role in Sanctification

Philippians 2:12–13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.



What keeps us from sanctification?

1. Shame/guilt over sin – we don't understand the depth of the gospel
2. Distraction
3. Believing it's all God
4. Believing it's all me

John Piper, Another way to say it is like this: The power by which you daily strive to overcome the imperfections in your life is the confidence that you're already perfect. If you get these switched around, if you think, "Okay, God demands perfection; I've got to become in my behavior perfect, and then God will look at me and say, 'He's doing pretty good; we'll let him be perfect or count him to be perfect.'" It's just the opposite.

Because of Christ, we believe in him and what he did on the cross and his perfect life. We believe in him, and by that faith, God unites us to Christ. His perfection is counted as ours. And the evidence that we stand perfected in Christ is that we hate our sin, and we daily, by faith in his promises, strive to overcome the imperfections that exist.

So my exhortation would simply be, please don't get these backward. The whole world gets it all backward. Other religions get it all backward, where our works and our efforts to overcome imperfections might make us pleasing to God. You never can get there that way. God reckons us as acceptable, makes us his children, counts us as righteous; and because of that righteousness we then spend a lifetime becoming what we already are.





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

⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ 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.



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