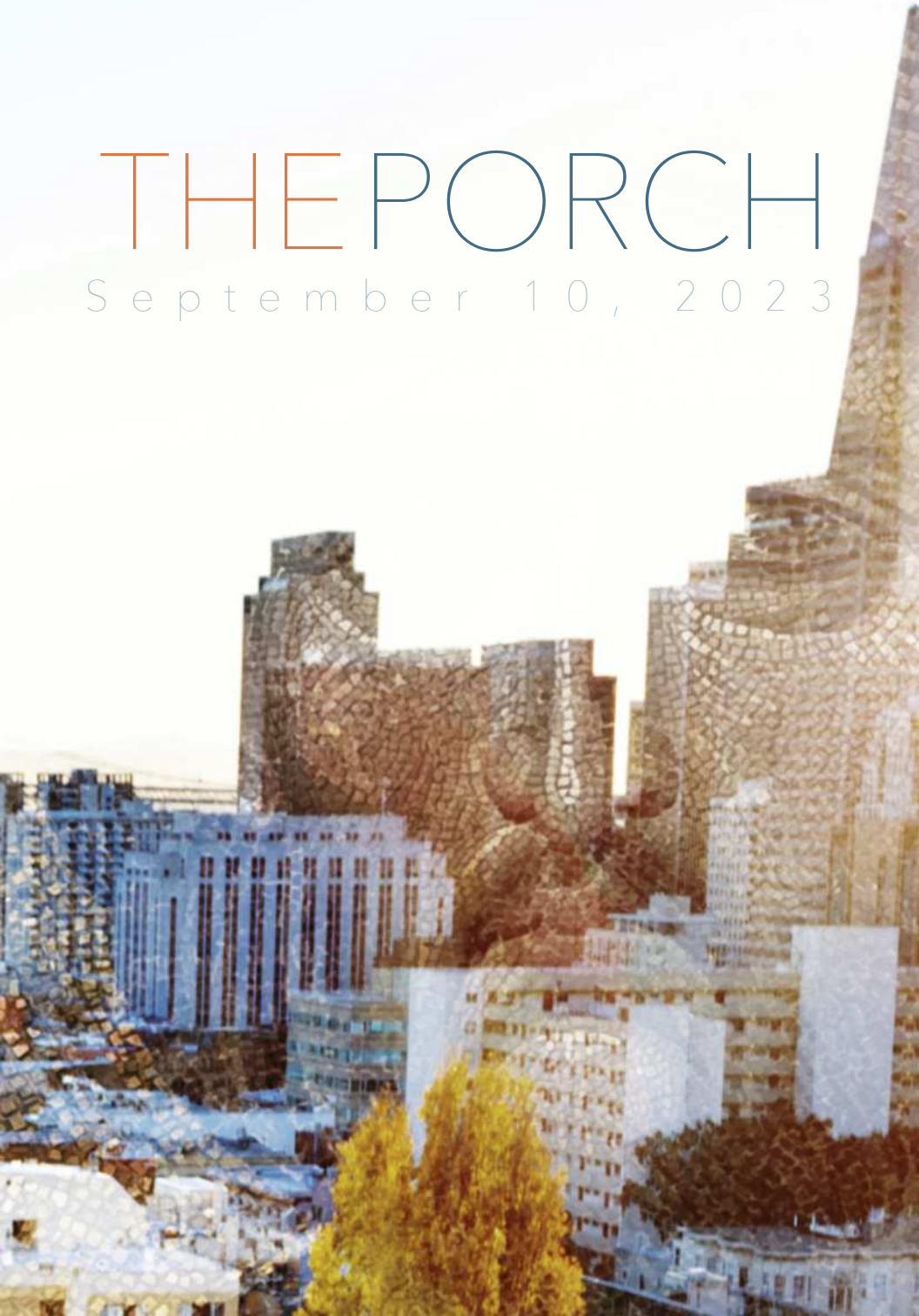


# THE PORCH

September 10, 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.





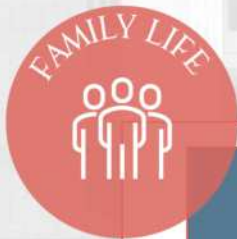
## Call To Worship

### 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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\* 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.



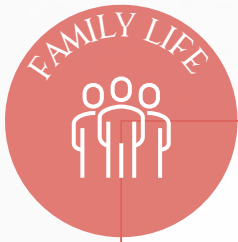
# Ezekiel JOURNALS

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

A colorful cartoon illustration of a neighborhood scene. In the foreground, several children are engaged in various activities: one girl plays a guitar, a boy on a skateboard, a girl on a tricycle, a boy with a soccer ball, and a boy on a bicycle. In the background, there are houses, a large green tree, and a street with cars. The text "OCTOBER 15" and "EXCELSIOR DISTRICT" is written in large, stylized letters across the top of the scene.

**OCTOBER 15 EXCELSIOR DISTRICT**

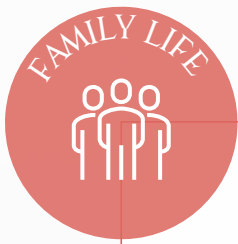
**SUNDAY STREETS** **LIVABLE CITY** **11AM-4PM FREE • GRATIS • LIBRE • 免費**



## Missional Family Dinner Schedule

Wednesday Nights | 6:00-8:00 PM

- ② **September 13** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef  
Homework: Bring your binder
  
- ③ **September 20** | Brackett Home | Chef Melissa  
Homework: HTSTGB A1
  
- Ⓛ **September 27** | *No Wednesday Night Dinner*
  
- ① **October 4** | Brackett Home | Friends Night
  
- ② **October 11** | Brackett Home | Guest Chef Dennis  
Homework: HTSTGB A2
  
- ③ **October 18** | Brackett Home | Chef Melissa  
Homework: HTSTGB A3
  
- Ⓛ **October 25** | Downstairs SFEFC | BYOE Dinner  
Homework: HTSTGB B1



## 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 38:** What is prayer?

**Answer:** Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in praise, petition, confession of sin, and thanksgiving.

**Question 39:** With what attitude should we pray?

**Answer:** With love, perseverance, and gratefulness; in humble submission to God's will, knowing that, for the sake of Christ, he always hears our prayers.

### **Scripture Reading** *Exodus 14:21-22 (CSB)*

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back with a powerful east wind all that night **and turned the sea into dry land**. So the waters were divided, **and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground**, with the waters like a wall to them on their right and their left.

\* 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.





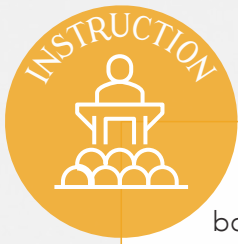
## Ezekiel 37 | Better Way to Life

### Vision of Dry Bones

**Ezekiel 37:1** The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by his Spirit and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me all around them. There were a great many of them on the surface of the valley, and they were very dry. 3 Then he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I replied, "Lord God, only you know."

4 He said to me, "Prophecy concerning these bones and say to them: Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! 5 This is what the Lord God says to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live. 6 I will put tendons on you, make flesh grow on you, and cover you with skin. I will put breath in you so that you come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded. While I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 As I looked, tendons appeared on them, flesh grew, and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, son of man. Say to it: This is what the Lord God says: Breath, come from the four winds and breathe into these slain so that they may live!" 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me; the breath entered them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, a vast army.



### Explanation of Dry Bones

11 Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Look how they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished; we are cut off.' 12 Therefore, prophesy and say to them, 'This is what the Lord God says: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them, my people, and lead you into the land of Israel. 13 You will know that I am the Lord, my people, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. 14 I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I am the Lord. I have spoken, and I will do it. This is the declaration of the Lord.' "

### Reunited

15 The word of the Lord came to me: 16 "Son of man, take a single stick and write on it: Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him. Then take another stick and write on it: Belonging to Joseph—the stick of Ephraim—and all the house of Israel associated with him. 17 Then join them together into a single stick so that they become one in your hand. 18 When your people ask you, 'Won't you explain to us what you mean by these things?'—19 tell them, 'This is what the Lord God says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel associated with him, and put them together with the stick of Judah. I will make them into a single stick so that they become one in my hand.'

20 "When the sticks you have written on are in your hand and in full view of the people, 21 tell them, 'This is what the Lord God says: I am going to take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone.



I will gather them from all around and bring them into their own land. 22 I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over all of them. They will no longer be two nations and will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. 23 They will not defile themselves anymore with their idols, their abhorrent things, and all their transgressions. I will save them from all their apostasies by which they sinned, and I will cleanse them. Then they will be my people, and I will be their God.

### **New and Better David**

24 "My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. 25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever. 26 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. 27 My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28 Then the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.

**John 11:25–27** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. 26 Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world."

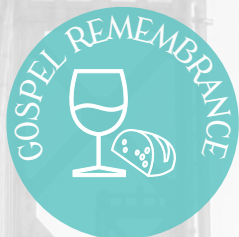


## Singing

\* 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

### Psalm 29:10-11

<sup>10b</sup> The Lord sits enthroned as king forever.  
<sup>11</sup> May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!



\*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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