

First Presbyterian Church of El Cajon

Third Sunday of Lent

March 3, 2024



"Blessed are you, Peter."

acrylic painting
by
Ann Goodman

— ARTIST’S STATEMENT —

So often we are tempted to lean on our own wisdom or acquired knowledge to find the truth. So often we are left frustrated with more questions than answers. We forget that our God is a supernatural God, and faith is a supernatural thing. With one gentle affirmation of faith, Peter did what the other disciples did not, and truth was revealed. — *Ann Goodman*

— WELCOME —

Welcome | We are so glad you could join us!

If you are a visitor, please stop by the welcome table for information about our church. Listening devices and large print bulletins are available from one of our ushers. Please let us know if there is any way we may support or pray for you.

Nursery/Toddler Room & Sunday School for Children

The nursery/toddler room in the narthex opens at 9:15am for children under the age of 4. Children ages 4 through 5th grade will be dismissed during the Passing of the Peace for Sunday school. Teachers will bring your children to the oak tree at the end of the service.

LENT | This Year’s Lenten Theme

During this season of preparation we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus’ most famous disciples, Peter. Like many of us, Peter has a wandering heart. We will be joining Peter in figuring out faith, open to what we might learn about Jesus (and ourselves) by stepping in Peter’s shoes. For each step in Peter’s journey, a phrase from the hymn, “Come Thou Fount” has been selected. As we follow Peter’s story, we will sing our way through Lent, binding our wandering hearts to God.

Lenten Experiences

- **Stations of the Cross** ~ Interpretations of the Stations of the Cross by our faith family congregants are displayed in the church sanctuary throughout the Lenten season.
- **Prayers of Lament and Salt Bowls** ~ Consider offering prayers of lament as part of today’s liturgy. You may pour salt into the bowls of water before or after service, or during our prayers, as a symbol of our tears, heartache, and expectation of God’s help.
- **Resources in the Narthex** ~ Lent devotionals, Lenten faith maps (*for all ages*), a calendar of events, and a handout explaining the message series logo are available in the narthex.

Journey Through the Stations of the Cross | Sunday, March 17

The artists who have created this year's Stations of the Cross (hanging on the sanctuary walls), invite you to remain with them following the service on Sunday, March 17. There are four new Stations this year and the artist of each will share with you the very personal journey of its creation as we walk around the sanctuary together. Please join us.

Please see additional announcements at the back of your bulletin.

— GATHERING —

PRELUDE: “YOU SAY”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

If you ask the sky who God is,
the sky will tell you of God’s reach.
If you ask the day who God is,
the sun will tell you of God’s warmth.
If you ask the night who God is,
the moon will tell you of God’s comfort.
“The heavens declare the glory of God”
Are you listening?
We are listening!
We will sing of God’s glory.
Let us worship our Holy God.

HYMN: “HOW GREAT THOU ART”

O Lord my God,
when I in awesome wonder
Consider all
the worlds
Thy hands have made
I see the stars,
I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout
the universe displayed

Chorus

Then sings my soul,
my Savior God to thee
How great Thou art,
how great Thou art
Then sings my soul,
my Savior God to thee
How great Thou art,
how great Thou art

And when I think,
that God His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die,
I scarce can take it in
That on the cross,
my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died
to take away my sin

Chorus

When Christ shall come
with shout of acclamation
And take me home,
what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow
in humble adoration
And there proclaim,
my God, how great Thou art

Chorus

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God,

Some days, we are quick to declare your goodness.

Like Peter, we see you in our midst and we are confident in our faith.

Other days, we are distracted and uncertain, desperate for answers.

Forgive us for losing sight of you.

Some days we are quick to trust your blessings—

trusting that we are called, that we can make a difference.

Other days, our praise falls silent and doubt creeps in.

Forgive us for losing sight of ourselves.

We know that fear and doubt are part of the journey of faith.

But for the days when we are far from you and far from ourselves,
we ask for your tender grace.

Pull us closer toward you.

Remind us of the mountaintop moments of our faith. Amen.

**Please take a moment for your personal prayers of confession.*

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

KYRIE: “LORD, HAVE MERCY”

**The Kyrie is a short repeated invocation in Greek or in translation used in many Christian liturgies. The congregation repeats each line after the Cantor.*

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

ANTHEM: “MY SPIRIT LONGS FOR THEE” ~ *Simon Lole*

*My Spirit longs for thee
Within my troubled breast
Though I unworthy be
Of so divine a guest.*

*Of so divine a guest
Unworthy though I be
Yet has my heart no rest
Unless it comes from thee.*

*Unless it comes from thee
In vain I look around
In all that I can see
No rest is to be found.*

*No rest is to be found
But in thy blessed love
O let my wish be crowned
And send it from above.*

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

PASSING THE PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you, **and also with you.**

**Children are dismissed to Sunday School.*

HYMN: “HERE AT THE PEAK”

To the tune of “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

Here at the peak I clearly see
All of the pieces you’ve laid out
And in this brief
though timeless peace
Such clarity occludes my doubts
Here I proclaim the truths I know
Beyond the knowledge of this world
Truths planted deep within my bones
Brought to the light as
gold unearthed

Here my Creator stands enfleshed
Infinite glory here contained
Humble and rugged, simply dressed
Savior of all on earth to reign
Here at the peak you clearly name
Who you created me to be
Identified not by my shame
But by the gifts you gave to me

POEM: “YOUR QUESTIONS” ~ *written by Judith Dupree*

There are no answers to your questions —
only another question,
and it comes — over and over it comes —
like the breaking of waves,
taking the sand from beneath you.

“*Who do you say that I am?*” He asks,
and then the silence,
as if that strange demand fit the moment’s need
or filled the gap between your synapses,
or even called for answer.

Again and again it comes to you.
It never stops, *never*. It is yours to reckon with,
yours to keep toying with,
like a small, perfect stone, roughed and smoothed by
the sea’s endless churning,
rolled in on the tide before you.

It will perfectly fit your pocket
Finger the thought,
over and over. You will one day know by touch

that question you have never asked, and
the only answer you have ever needed.

Then . . . then, all the answers.

— PROCLAIMING THE WORD —

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 16:13-20 (NRSVUE)

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: “WANDERING HEART: *Praise the mount*”

— RESPONDING —

SONG: “COME THOU FOUNT”

Come Thou Fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
Streams of mercy, never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise
Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it
Mount of God's unchanging love

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy grace now like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee
Prone to wander Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart
Lord take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

A DOXOLOGY: “THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD”

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end.
They are new every morning, new every morning,
Great is Thy faithfulness, O Lord, Great is Thy faithfulness, O Lord,
Great is Thy faithfulness.

COMMUNION

The Invitation

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to the Lord.
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer

English

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread; and forgive us our
debts, as we forgive our
debtors; and lead us not
into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the
glory, forever. Amen.

Spanish

Padre nuestro que
estás en los cielos
Santificado sea tu
Nombre Venga tu reino
Hágase tu voluntad En la
tierra como en el cielo
Danos hoy el pan
de este día
y perdona nuestras deudas
como nosotros perdonamos
nuestros deudores y no nos
dejes caer en la tentación sino
que líbranos del malo.
Porque tuyo es el reino y el
poder y la gloria por siempre.
Amen.

Arabic

أَبَانَا الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
لِيُقَدِّسَ اسْمُكَ
لِيَأْتِ مَلْكُوتُكَ
لِتَكُنْ مَشِيئَتُكَ
كَمَا فِي السَّمَاءِ كَذَلِكَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ
اعطنا خبزنا كفافنا اليوم
واغفر لنا خطايانا
كما نحن ايضا نغفر لمن اخطا الينا
وَلَا تُدْخِلْنَا فِي التَّجْرِبَةِ
لَكِنْ نَجِّنَا مِنَ الشَّرِّ
لَأَنَّ لَكَ الْمُلْكَ وَالْقُوَّةَ وَالْمَجْدَ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ
أَمِينَ

The Words of Institution

COMMUNION MUSIC: “PANIS ANGELICUS” ~ *C. Franck*

Translation:

*Thus Angels' Bread is made the Bread of man today:
the Living Bread from heaven with figures dost away:
O wondrous gift indeed! the poor and lowly may
upon their Lord and Master feed.*

— SENDING —

SONG: “GOODNESS OF GOD”

I love you Lord,
oh your mercy never fails me
All my days,
I've been held in your hands
From the moment that I wake up
Until I lay my head
I will sing of the goodness of God

Chorus

All my life
you have been faithful
All my life
you have been so, so good
With every breath
that I am able
I will sing
of the goodness of God

I love your voice,
You have led me through the fire
In the darkest night,
You are close like no other
I've known you as a Father,
I've known you as a friend
And I have lived
in the goodness of God

Chorus

Your goodness is running after,
its running after me
Your goodness is running after,
its running after me
With my life laid down,
I'm surrendered now
I give you everything
Your goodness is running after,
its running after me

Chorus

I will sing of the goodness of God

BENEDICTION

— THANK YOU —

USHERS | Anthony Goodman and Ginny Wisley

READER AND LITURGIST | Lee Kaercher and Ida Ramsey

SLIDES | Gus Malak

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART | Marsha Boring

COMMUNION SERVERS | Peggy Dow, Judy Farrar, Janis Hopwood, Arlene Wise

FLOWERS | The Cleeton family, with love, offer flowers in celebration of Elsimae's 88th birthday on the 5th.

LITURGY AND PRAYERS | Liturgy adapted by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP | Please join us after worship under the oak tree; hosted by the Deacons Committee.

— ANNOUNCEMENTS —

Next Sunday

- **A Special Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation** will happen after service in the sanctuary for voting with regards to the pastor's terms of call and affordable housing.
- **Live Well** visits again next Sunday in Richardson Hall starting at 10am.
- **Time Change Sunday** — don't forget to "Spring Forward" an hour!

Memorial Service for Dick Dupree

A memorial service for Dick Dupree will be held in the sanctuary tomorrow, Monday, March 4 at 10am. Dick was a member of the church for almost 30 years and served faithfully on the Missions Committee. The service will be hosted by Judith and their family with a reception in Bailey Hall.

Girlfriends' Spring Retreat

Ladies: The Girlfriends' *Finding Your Path Women's Retreat* is coming up on Saturday, March 16, at St. Madeleine Sophie's Center here in El Cajon. We have a special day planned for you with our speaker, Kristi Kincheloe. The cost is \$75 which includes a continental breakfast, a catered lunch (*please let us know if you'll need a gluten-free or vegetarian option*). **Reservations have started! The last day to save your spot and pay will be Sunday, March 10!** We hope to see you there, Girlfriends (& feel free to invite your Girlfriends!

Wear Your Favorite Sweater | March 17

Mr. Rogers was an ordained minister of word and sacrament for the PC(USA), and a pioneer in the world of Christian Education and the formation of young children. Join us in celebrating his birthday (March 20th) on Sunday, March 17 by wearing your favorite sweater!

Church Work Party

We need to finish painting the trim and the doors on the outside of the Sanctuary and Westminster Hall. We are recruiting volunteers and will be painting on Saturday, March 23 from 9am-noon. Let Richard Blackman know if you can help.

Donations Needed for Easter Egg Hunt

The Christian Education Committee will be accepting individually wrapped candy and plastic eggs through March 24 for this year's Easter Egg Hunt. Items may be dropped off at the office during the week or in the narthex on Sundays.

Easter Lilies

It seems so soon to be asking however, 'tis the season for Easter Lilies. Please sign up on the chart on the patio, or contact Ginny Wisley: ginny-beth@att.net or 1.619.337.6444. Cost per 6" potted plant will be \$25.00, and orders will be taken from March 3 until March 24 only.

Making Art/Making Conversation

Ladies, if you enjoy having artful fun and would enjoy helping immigrants with their English as we play together, please join us Tuesday mornings in Westminster from 10am-12pm. Our long-time group of English learners is moving over from St. Alban's and remaking itself into practicing English as we make art together. We are expanding our outreach with invitations to the women of the neighborhood, Solstice, and Kidz Klub and Head Start moms. This is for women and for free, with the intent of making a safe, welcoming, communal place. For more information contact Lee Kaercher, lee.kaercher@gmail.com.

Opportunity to Help with Faith Family Needs

Heather, Zayden, and Journee are getting settled into the gift of a new apartment. Do you have any of these items that would bless them? *Before purchasing or donating, call/text Theresa Fox 619.792.6396 to make sure items aren't duplicated:* Dressers and nightstands for bedrooms, toy chest for the kids' room, and hangars.

Protein Pack Items Needed

We are welcoming more protein bars/drinks, packaged meats, packaged fruit/fruit snacks and nuts so more protein packs can be made for our unsheltered neighbors. Items may be dropped off on Sundays in the shopping cart in the narthex.

Prayer Chain

Have a prayer request? Place it in the prayer box in the narthex and it will be forwarded to our prayer chain. Have something to celebrate? Fill out a gratitude card — we want to rejoice with you!

2024 Sign Up Flower Calendar Is Here!

Check your calendars to get your name on the Flower Chart to reserve your memories for 2024! Sign up on the patio, or by contacting Ginny Wisley 619.337.6444 or ginny-beth@att.net.

Stay Connected During the Week

Our weekly eblast contains sermon reflection questions and additional ways of connecting, sign up at the bottom of our website or send an email to office@firstpres-elcajon.org.

— WEEK AT-A-GLANCE —

Monday, March 4

8:00am - Head Start Training (*Richardson Hall*)

10:00am - Memorial Service and Reception for Richard Dupree (*Sanctuary/Bailey Hall*)

Tuesday, March 5

8:30am - Breakfast Beauties (*Off Campus*)

8:30am - Men's Fellowship Breakfast (*Off Campus*)

10:00am - Making Art/Making Conversation (*Thomson Hall*)

6:00pm - Deacons Meeting (*Thomson Hall*)

Wednesday, March 6

12:00pm - Skeptics & Seekers Class (*Thomson Hall*)

3:00pm - Prayer on the Circle (*Zoom*)

6:00pm - Jubilation Bells Rehearsal (*Bailey Hall*)

7:00pm - Celebration Bells Rehearsal (*Bailey Hall*)

Thursday, March 7

10:00am - Girlfriends' Ministry Board Meeting (*Thomson Hall*)

4:00pm - Kidz Klub

6:00pm - Worship Team Rehearsal (*Sanctuary*)

7:00pm - Choir Rehearsal (*Sanctuary*)

Friday, March 8

6:00pm - Shabbat Dinner (*Richardson Hall*)

Saturday, March 9

7:00am - Head Start Parent Summit (*Richardson Hall*)

9:00am - Centering Prayer (*Bailey Hall*)

**Remember to turn your clocks forward before you go to bed this evening!*

Sunday, March 10

8:15am - Choir Rehearsal (*Sanctuary*)

8:30am - Worship Team Rehearsal (*Sanctuary*)

9:30am - Worship Service (*Sanctuary*)

10:00am - Live Well (*Richardson Hall*)

11:00am - Special Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation (*Sanctuary*)

Our Mission

Connecting people to Jesus and each other.

Our Vision

To be a spiritually healthy church that reaches out to its congregation, community, and beyond through music, fellowship, and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Our Values

Spiritual Growth ~ Service ~ Compassion ~ Community

Staff & Contact Information

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