

First Presbyterian Church of El Cajon

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 10, 2024



The Penitent Saint Peter | by El Greco

— 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. 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 | Next Sunday

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 next Sunday. 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.

Holy Week Services

3.24 Palm Sunday | 9:30am | Sanctuary

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.

3.28 Maundy Thursday | 6pm | Sanctuary

A traditional service with choir, communion and foot washing.

3.29 Good Friday | 6pm | Sanctuary

Experiential service with readings from the book of John.

3.31 Easter Sunday | 9:30am and Egg Hunt | 11ish

He is Risen! Worship followed by an Easter Egg Hunt for the young and the young at heart & coffee fellowship with St. Alban's.

~ Please see additional announcements at the back of your bulletin ~

— GATHERING —

PRELUDE: “I WON’T LET YOU GO”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

On our worst days,

God is good.

On our best days,

God is good.

When life is consistent,

God is good.

And when life turns on its head,

God is good.

Day and night, Monday through Sunday,

God is good. God is here. God is love.

Hold tight to that good news. Let us worship God!

SONG: “SO GOOD TO ME”

I waited patiently upon the Lord
And he inclined and heard my cry
He pulled me up out of the miry clay
He set my feet upon the Rock

He gave me beauty for
ashes and joy for my mourning

And praise for heaviness

He put a new song in my
mouth and a crown upon my head

He gave me life forevermore

Chorus

He’s been so good,

so good, so good to me

So good, so, so good to me,

So good, so, so good to me

Jesus

(Repeat)

He picked me up
and He turned me around
And he placed my feet
on solid ground

Hallelujah, hallelujah

(Repeat x3)

Chorus

I’ve got love, joy peace and
righteousness in the Holy Spirit
Oh oh oh yeah, oh oh oh yeah

(Repeat)

Chorus (x2)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God,

We often find ourselves moving through a world that does not make sense.

Like Peter, we want to yell out, *“This should not happen!”*

We want to control scenarios beyond our reach.

We want to hold your world in our hands.

Forgive us for the moments when we lead with declarations instead of curiosity.

Forgive us for arguing when we could listen.

Forgive us for fixating on one truth, when we could open ourselves up to many

Soften our hard edges and teach us how to listen.

With hope in our hearts we pray, 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: “BE THOU MY VISION” ~ *Tom Fettke*

*Be Thou my vision,
O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me,
save that Thou art
Thou my best thought
by day or by night,
waking or sleeping,
Thy presence my light.*

*Be Thou my Wisdom,
and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and
Thou with me Lord;
Thou my great Father,
I thy true son, Thou in me dwelling,
and I with Thee one.*

*Riches I need not,
nor man’s empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance,
now and always;
Thou and Thou only,
first in my heart,
High King of Heaven,
my Treasure Thou art.
High King of Heaven,
my victory won,
may I reach heaven’s joys,
Bright Heaven’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart,
whatever befall,
still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.*

*Be Thou my Vision,
O Lord of my heart.*

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.*

SUNG PSALM: PSALM 107:1-3, 17-22 (*The Message*)

Congregational Refrain:

**Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.**

¹⁻³ Oh, thank GOD—he's so good!

His love never runs out.

All of you set free by GOD, tell the world!

Tell how he freed you from oppression,

Then rounded you up from all over the place,
from the four winds, from the seven seas.

¹⁷⁻²² Some of you were sick because you'd lived a bad life,
your bodies feeling the effects of your sin;

You couldn't stand the sight of food,

so miserable you thought you'd be better off dead.

Then you called out to GOD in your desperate condition;

he got you out in the nick of time.

He spoke the word that healed you,

that pulled you back from the brink of death.

So thank GOD for his marvelous love,

for his miracle mercy to the children he loves;

Offer thanksgiving sacrifices,

tell the world what he's done—sing it out!

Congregational Refrain:

**Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.**

POEM: "OPEN HANDS" ~ *written by Rev. Sarah Speed*

We are born with the ability

to wrap our fingers around another,

to hold tight to what we know.

Maybe that's where the instinct comes from—
this clinging,

this sinking,
this holding on.
Maybe that's why Peter cries, "Never!"
when Jesus must leave.
From the very beginning
we've known how to hold tight.
So I pray:
open up my hands.
Uncurl my fingers
one by one.
Loosen the grip
that I hold unyielding.
Remind me that birds must fly
and children must grow
and leaves must fall.
And even though
we are born with the ability
to hold tight,
we can learn how to love
with open hands.

— PROCLAIMING THE WORD —

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 16:21-23 (NIV)

²¹ From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

²² Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "WANDERING HEART: *I'm fixed upon it*"

— RESPONDING —

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in a God of second chances,
**a God who sees through my stubbornness
and holds my fear with tenderness.**

I believe that this God of second chances
uses ordinary people like Peter to do good in the world.
Therefore, I believe and hope that God can use me too.

I believe that from time to time, God invites us to imagine the impossible.
I believe that from time to time, God invites us to change our minds.
This change is holy and important work, although challenging.
**When fear and scarcity plague me,
or when the impossible feels out of reach,
I believe that God meets me with grace and invites me to follow.**
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.

SONG: “YOU HAVE ME”

Out of the farthest edge
There in the silence you were there
My faith was torn to shreds
My heart in the balance
And you were there
Always faithful,
always good
You still have me,
you still have my heart
I thought I had seen the end
Everything broken,
but you were there
I’ve wandered at heaven’s gates
I’ve made my bed in hell
But you were there still

Always faithful,
always good
You still have me,
you still have my heart
You have me, you have me,
You have my heart completely
You have me, you have me,
you have my heart completely
You have me, you have me,
you have my heart completely
You have me, you have me,
you have my heart completely

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and the Lord’s Prayer

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
لِيَتَقَدَّسَ اسْمُكَ
لِيَأْتِ مَلَكُوتُكَ
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 الشَّرِّيرِ
لَأَنَّ لَكَ الْمُلْكَ وَالْقُوَّةَ وَالْمَجْدَ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ
أَمِينَ

— SENDING —

SONG: “WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS”

What wondrous love is this O my soul, o my soul
What wondrous love is this That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul
When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down
When I was sinking down, O my soul
When I was sinking down O how your grace abounds
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul, for my soul
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul

To God and to the lamb I will sing, I will sing
To God and to the lamb I will sing
To God and to the lamb who is the great I AM
While millions join the theme I will sing, I will sing
While millions join the theme I will sing
And when from death I'm free I'll sing on, I'll sing on
And when from death I'm free I'll sing on
And when from death I'm free I'll sing His love for me
And through eternity I'll sing on I'll sing on
And through eternity I'll sing on I'll sing on

BENEDICTION

— THANK YOU —

USHERS | Doug Flick and Anthony Goodman

LITURGIST | Richard Blackman

SLIDES | Jocelyn Fischer

TIME FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART | Mari Miyares-Piper

FLOWERS | Ida Ramsey offers flowers in celebration of her granddaughter Maddox's 19th birthday on the 14th.

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 —

Today

- **A Special Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation** will happen after service to approve the revised Pastor's Terms of Call and to receive an update regarding affordable housing on our property.
- **Live Well** visits today in Richardson Hall starting at 10am.

Girlfriends' Spring Retreat: Don't Forget to Make Your Reservation!

Ladies: Reservations are coming to a close today for The Girlfriend's *Finding Your Path* Women's Retreat 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). Stop by the table after church if you haven't done so yet. We must let the venue, the speaker and the caterer all know numbers on Monday so please stop by the table on Sunday or contact one of the Girlfriends board members, or the office, as soon as possible — thank you!

Wear Your Favorite Sweater | Next Sunday

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.

Small Candies & Toys Needed for Easter Egg Hunt

The Christian Education Committee is accepting individually wrapped candy and small toys that fit inside plastic eggs through March 24 for this year's Easter Egg Hunt. There is a box in the narthex to collect them. Please note that we don't need anymore plastic eggs — thanks!

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. More info: contact Lee Kaercher, lee.kaercher@gmail.com.

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 contact 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 11

1:00pm - Knit for Kids (*Thomson Hall*)

5:30pm - Dining Divas and Dining Dudes (*Off Campus*)

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

Tuesday, March 12

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

Wednesday, March 13

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 14

4:00pm - Kidz Klub

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

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

Saturday, March 16

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

Girlfriends Retreat (*St. Madeleine Sophie's Center*)

Sunday, March 17 *Mr. Rogers Sunday*

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

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

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

11:00am - Journey Through the Stations of the Cross

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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