

# CONGREGATIONAL CLARION

First Congregational Church ~ Salt Lake City, Utah

March 2024

## March Worship

Unless otherwise noted,  
all services at 10:30am.

### March 3

#### Lent 3

#### Grace and Justice:

“What Does Jesus Say?”

Taizé @ 7pm

### March 10

#### Lent 4 (Daylight Savings)

#### Grace and Justice:

Why Should We Do Justice?

### March 17

#### Lent 5

#### Grace and Justice:

How Should We Do Justice?

Taizé @ 7pm

### March 24

#### Lent 6: Palm Sunday

“Doing Justice in the  
Public Square”

### March 28

#### Maundy Thursday

Agape Feast @ 6pm

### March 29

#### Good Friday w/ASEC

@ 7pm upstairs in  
main Sanctuary

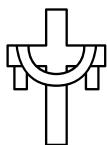
### March 31

#### Easter Sunday

The New Life of Grace  
and Justice

### April 7

#### Holy Hilarity Sunday



## Temptation: What to Do When We Stumble

*“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!”*

—Paul, *The Bible*, 1 Corinthians 10:12

~Rev. Doug Gray

Have any of you given up something for Lent this year? Maybe you’ve “taken up” something? So we are two weeks in and I just want to check in with you. How are you doing? About 10–14 days in is where it often gets harder when we are changing something. The first few days we usually do fine—perhaps we remind ourselves that we have given this up and we go along pretty easily. The next few days are harder, but usually doable—we are still able to exert some control. But by the tenth day... Ah! that’s where the temptations really begin!

How do we make it through temptations? And what happens if we stumble?

Think of tempting as testing. In fact, the greek word for temptation in the New Testament is also the word for test, because we are going to find out who we really are. Temptation tests our character, and perhaps are competitive and we love to win when we are tested. The challenge is that when we think like that, we are fasting as an act of will, of ego. A few people may succeed at this, but we are missing the point: the point of “giving up” something is to get closer to God, to learn how to trust God’s Presence, guidance, and Providence—to let God become more important to us than what we have given up. If we fast to show how holy we are, or to show how much in control we are, we will fail to find God. For example, if we have given up chocolate for Lent, we hope to learn that God has more sweetness and joy for us than any brownie or Hershey’s kiss ever could. When we are put to the test, then, we can remind ourselves that we love God (and God loves us!) more than that thing or that habit. This turns our hearts towards God—and so we pray with thanks for God! And God will provide a way out of that temptation. Paul writes, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to humanity. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13, NIV)

But perhaps (like me) you have slipped up and broken your fast already. That’s where grace comes in! Just be completely honest, and completely open. Confess your failure and own it as yours, and then ask Jesus to forgive you, and believe it is so. God loves you way more than a mistake. What matters to God is you! God’s great hope is to have a relationship with you that is deeper than any challenge, because together you can face any challenge and overcome. So God can even use our failures to help us become a more loving, compassionate and forgiving person of God. Let God truly wash away your guilt, so that you can begin again. God does not seem to care how many times we fall, as long as we get up with Him!

May God guide you in this growing season of Lent!

*“No temptation has seized you except what is common to humanity. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”* —Paul, *The Bible*, 1 Corinthians 10:13

# March Worship and Bible Study Series

## Grace and Justice



“What does the Lord require of you, but to love kindness, to do justice, and to walk humbly with your Lord.”

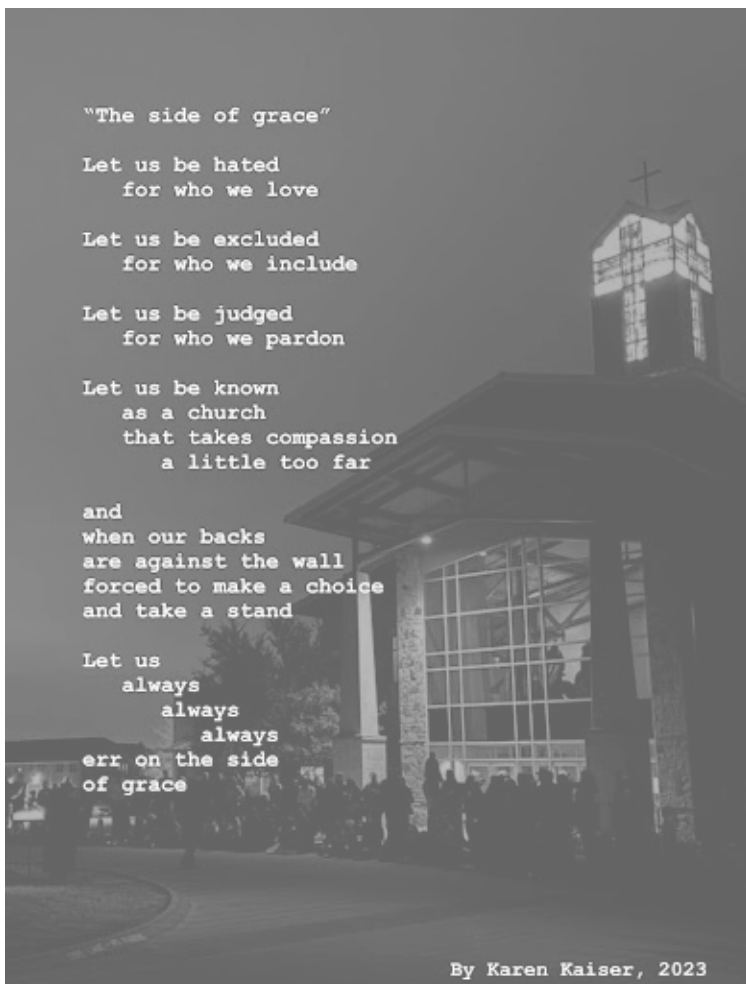
—The Bible, Micah 6:8

Starting Sunday, February 18, we will begin thinking more deeply about justice and grace, from the Bible and Jesus’ perspective. As a congregation, we are wanting to make a bigger difference in our community, but what should we do? How should we do it? And why? This series will help us open our hearts and minds to God’s creative leading!

If you want to read the book Rev. Joanna Hart and I are reading for this, you can pick up Timothy Keller’s *Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes Us Just*. You should note that this is **not** the politicized version of justice, but rather, sticking to what the Bible and Jesus taught. We will each have to figure out how that will work itself out in our lives and society. 😊

~ Rev. Doug Gray

Date	Title/Topic	Scriptures
3/3	Lent 3 ~ Grace and Justice: What Does Jesus Say?	Luke 14:1–13 Luke 10:25–37
3/10	Lent 4 (Daylight Savings) ~ Grace and Justice: Why Should We Do Justice?	Psalms 139 (selection) James 2:14–19
3/17	Lent 5 ~ Grace and Justice: How Should We Do Justice?	Job 29:7–17 Luke 19:1–10
3/24	Lent 6: <b>Palm Sunday</b> “Doing Justice in the Public Square”	Isaiah 1:11–20 Peter 3:8–17 Romans 12:1–2, 9–21
3/28	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> Agape Feast @ 6pm	Mark 12:1–12
3/29	<b>Good Friday</b> w/ ASEC @ 7pm in upstairs Sanctuary	
3/31	<b>Easter Sunday</b> The New Life of Grace and Justice	Job 19:21–27 Matthew 25:31–46
4/7	Holy Hilarity Sunday	Nehemiah 8:1–12 Corinthians 1:18–2:5



## Taizé Worship with All Saints

### March 3 and 17 @ 7pm

Worship is meant to be experienced with all our senses, to involve our whole body in praising and honoring God. The Taizé worship experience is designed to do just that. Twice a month, All Saints Episcopal hosts Taizé worship—meditative music, prayerful chanting, thoughtful message, and Biblical worship all rolled into one! Why not give it a try!



**Adult Formation on Sundays @ 9:15am ~**

Join us for Lent as we study Jesus’ “I AM” saying in the Gospel John. We meet Sundays at 9:15am for Adult Formation. We will meet in a classroom in the Christian Ed. Wing of All Saints (across the hall from FCC Offices)

Date	Jesus Says...	Reading
3/3	“I AM” the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness...	John 8–9
3/10	“I AM” the gate for the sheep. “I AM” the good shepherd.	John 10
3/17	“I AM” the resurrection and the life.	John 11
3/24	“I AM” the vine and you are the branches.	John 15



**Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, March 10, 2024**

Following worship. We will elect a a second asst. Moderator and a Nominating Committee, and receive a preliminary budget. The congregation will consider expenditures for the Trust (technology for worship and helping with the All Saints parking lot and roof) and receive updates from Outreach and Next Steps committee. Other items presented by Council. Please mark your calendars and watch for further updates in our upcoming Sunday bulletins.

**Coffee Hour Hosts Needed**

Celebrating a special occasion? Enjoying the fellowship after an uplifting worship service? Consider helping with Coffee Hour. There is a sign-up sheet by the goodies, and we will try and provide help with set up and clean up. If you have any questions, please contact Cissy Wolff at [cissywolff@gmail.com](mailto:cissywolff@gmail.com), or call/text at 801-243-5457

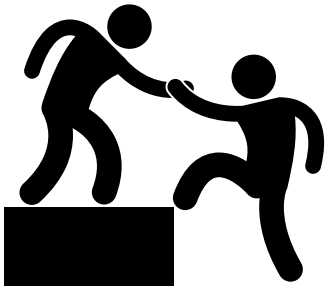


**From Your Board of Trustees ~ Phil LeHoux**

The main action out of the February meeting of the trustees was establishing the parameters for the loan agreement being arranged with All Saints Episcopal Church (ASEC). As has been previously explained, ASEC approached FCC to help secure financing for their planned solar power system to be installed along with a needed roof replacement, which will occur this year. The solar arrays and power storage system will go in later, largely due to the long delivery time associated with some of the power storage and system control equipment. However, ASEC must meet what has become a very tight deadline to apply for a grant from Rocky Mountain Power, which is expected to cover a large part of the solar system costs. That we have the financial flexibility and can assist them in a need when they have been so welcoming and supportive to us is indeed a blessing.

FCC has stepped up to provide a loan of up to \$250,000 to cover some of the initial costs and, just as importantly, ensure the financing required to qualify for the Rocky Mountain Power grant. The loan will be effectively neutral to our overall financing, as it will be at the interest rate the money would otherwise accrue in our current bond fund, from which the funds will be drawn as needed by ASEC to cover their installation costs. It should also be noted that the ASEC fundraising program in progress is doing very well, and it is expected that, between the grants and pledges from members and friends, the loan will likely be fully paid off at the end of the project. Our and ASEC’s attorney are currently working out the details of the contract, which is expected to be signed and in place by the end of February, thus meeting ASEC’s timetable to proceed.

The Board has also continued to support the program to upgrade the online worship for those remotely attending, as well as enhance the in-person aspects with improved use of audio-visual equipment. When all components are in place, we can expect improvements to the sound system as well as to the visual quality of the online video feed, as well as a simplified streaming management system.





## March Outreach ~ Becky Bishop

The Outreach Focus for March is Switchpoint. Switchpoint was established in Saint George, Utah in 2014. The two local housing locations are “The Point” Airport Location and Fairpark Location. Switchpoint also operates the 170 beds at West Valley City Overflow site. They also are operating the temporary Tiny Home Project in downtown Salt Lake City, Utah. For more information you can visit:

<https://switchpointcrc.org/>

### The Mission

To empower those in need by addressing the underlying cause of poverty, providing a comprehensive plan, and supporting their journey to self-sufficiency.

### The Vision

Every individual embodies their worth and value with self-esteem, hope and abilities restored, thriving in affordable housing.

### What sets them apart from other homeless shelters?

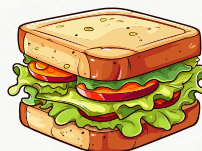
- Open 24/7
- Individualized approach by assigning every client a case manager.
- Partner with over 20 nonprofits and government agencies.

Switchpoint has expanded their efforts from Saint George, UT to the Salt Lake Valley with The Point (Airport Location) <https://pointbyswitchpoint.org/airport-slc-location/> and their recently opened Fairpark location providing studio apartments for veterans and seniors 55 or older The annual Income limit \$25,840.



## Sandwich Making for March ~ Mark Your Calendars

Sandwich-making session is March 17. Please make a note of these dates if you're planning to participate. If you have any specific questions or need further information, feel free to ask.



## Breakfast Feeds the Soul



### Men's Breakfast

March 6 at 8am at Sharon's Café – Conversations are always good and the food is always tasty. Not all are members of the church, but all of us are trying to live lives marked by grace.

### Women's Breakfast

Ladies, mark your calendars! We are thrilled to invite you to a Women's Breakfast on March 8 at 9am, we are meeting at Delice on State Street. It is a fantastic opportunity for us to come together, enjoy a delicious meal, and connect with one another. We will be making this a regular monthly event, held on the second Friday of every month, so if you can't make this month, we hope to catch you next month.



## Lenten Soup Suppers

Wednesdays shared with ASEC Lenten Soup Suppers will take place on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 pm, featuring discussions on “Being Disciples” by former Arch-Bishop Rowan Williams. This is a wonderful initiative, combining fellowship over soup with an opportunity for spiritual growth and discussion on a meaningful topic during the Lenten season. It's sure to be a rewarding and enriching experience for all participants. We will meet February 21, 28, March 6, 13, and 20. Please sign up to bring soup, bread, or salad. Sign-Up is located in the fellowship hall upstairs



## Easter Lilies

For Easter Sunday this year we are asking that each person or couple who is planning to purchase an Easter Lily on their, bring it to church with them on Easter Sunday to help us decorate our worship space. Please put your name on the bottom, so that after the service you can take your lily back home with you. You can dedicate your lily to a loved one if you choose. These dedications will be listed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. Please send in your dedication to the church office via email or fill out a dedication form by March 25th. Forms available at the church.

# MARCH 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Bible Study @ Noon	2
3 Adult Formation @ 9:15am  Choir @ 9:30am  Worship @ 10:30am  Taizé @ 7pm	4	5 Outreach Meeting @ 11am	6 Men's Breakfast @ 8am  Lenten Soup Supper with ASEC @ 6pm	7 Trustees Meeting @ 1:30pm  Choir Rehearsal @ 7pm	8 Women's Breakfast @ 9am  Bible Study @ Noon	9
10 Adult Formation @ 9:15am  Choir @ 9:30am  Worship @ 10:30am <b>Congregational Meeting following</b>	11	12 Deacons Meeting @ 3pm	13  Lenten Soup Supper with ASEC @ 6pm	14 Choir Rehearsal @ 7pm	15 Bible Study @ Noon	16
17 Adult Formation @ 9:15am  Choir @ 9:30am  Worship @ 10:30am  Sandwich Making with ASEC following worship  Taizé @ 7pm	18	19 Council Meeting @ 2:30pm	20 Clarion Deadline  Lenten Soup Supper with ASEC @ 6pm	21 Choir Rehearsal @ 7pm	22 Bible Study @ Noon	23
24 ~ <b>Palm Sunday</b>  Adult Formation @ 9:15am  Choir @ 9:30am  Worship @ 10:30am	25 Easter Lily Dedication's Due	26 Office printing bulletins for Easter Sunday and April 7	27	28 ~ <b>Maundy Thursday</b> Agape Feast @ 6pm Choir Rehearsal following  Kristi out of the office through April 5 on family vacation	29 <b>Good Friday</b> Service Shared with ASEC @ 7pm	30
31 ~ <b>Easter Sunday</b>  Adult Formation @ 9:15am  Choir @ 9:30am  Worship Service @ 10:30am						

## Building Requests and Calendar Updates

Please direct all building use requests through the church office by email at [firstcongregationalslc@gmail.com](mailto:firstcongregationalslc@gmail.com) or by leaving a written note. This will help eliminate any building conflicts. If you have any items that need to be added to the church calendar, please also let the office know by email.

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1710 South Foothill Drive • Salt Lake City, Utah

801-487-1357 • [www.firstcongregationalslc.org](http://www.firstcongregationalslc.org)

[firstcongregationalslc@gmail.com](mailto:firstcongregationalslc@gmail.com)

Find us on:



Donations accepted by Check, Cash, or Paypal - Scan QR Code Below for Paypal donations

