

First Lutheran Church



127 S. Columbus St. Galion, OH 44833

419-468-3107

flcgalion@gmail.com

Worship 10:00 am

Weekly Newsletter

8.27.26

Pastor's Ponderings



Who Gave Peter the Answer?

(Spoiler alert: the same one who gives it to us...)

"But who do you say that I am?" asks Jesus.

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Guess what? Peter is right! What has he won? Shortly after Peter makes this unbelievable proclamation (if you recall, this is the same Peter who recently sunk like a stone on the Sea of Galilee due to his "little faith" (Matt. 14:31)) Jesus makes an equally unbelievable pronouncement: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18)

Given Peter's track record (only a few verses later, Jesus rebukes him, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me...")

(Matt. 16:23), we learn that Jesus' plan—God's plan—is to hand it over to us? It's no wonder that the "church" universal has so many problems. Jesus entrusted it to a bunch of "little faith" "Satan's" like us that hinder Jesus and his mission more often than we help it.

Which makes me wonder, "How is it that the church has survived for 2,000 years?" (Or a similar question, "How has St. Paul survived for nearly 150 years?")

Immediately after Peter makes this incredible proclamation, Jesus exposes the truth - Peter didn't come up with this answer on his own! "For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven." (Matt. 16:17)

Peter proclaims Jesus as "Messiah, the Son of the living God," not because he is "blessed" with a brilliant mind, but because he is given some well-timed "divine assistance." This is both the answer to my question, "How has the church survived...?", and the good news all rolled into one.

Ours is a living God—made known to us in Jesus of Nazareth—meaning that we have not been left to do our own thing. It is Christ's church, after all. Not Peter's church, not Pastor Shawn's church, and not [insert your name here]'s church. And that's a good thing because we, like Peter, will lose faith and sink like a stone. (Matt. 14:30) We, like Peter, will forget who Jesus is and become a hindrance to him and all that he has come to do. (Matt. 16:22-23) And yes, we, like Peter, will deny Jesus (Matt. 26:16-75) rather than denying ourselves. (Matt. 16:24)

Despite all this—our sinfulness, our failures, our desire to "claim the church as our own"—Jesus' church on this earth is not merely

surviving; it is *thriving*. (There are 35 million Christians in Tanzania alone, eight million of whom are Lutheran.) How can this be? Because God has said, "I have given you Jesus, and Jesus is all that you need."

Sometimes, and only with divine assistance, we hear these words and take them to heart. Like Peter, our eyes are opened, we glimpse the face of Jesus, and utter the words, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." This is our faithful confession, one revealed to us by none other than the living God.

Soon, the people of St. Paul Lutheran in North Robinson will celebrate their church's 150th anniversary (and First Lutheran in Galion isn't that far away from celebrating 200!). As these milestones near, I am reminded of the hymn The Church's One Foundation:

*The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ
her Lord;*

*she is his new creation by water
and the word.*

*From heav'n he came and sought her to be
his holy bride;*

*with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.*

These communities of faith were founded on Jesus Christ her Lord, and for nearly 350 combined years(!!!), we have answered Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?", by proclaiming the good news: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

By God's grace, and with all the divine assistance we will surely need, may Jesus Christ long remain the faithful confession of First Lutheran, St. Paul, and all of Christ's church.

If you have comments or questions, would like to talk, or desire a visit, please call or email either me or the church office.

Peace,

Pastor Shawn Schneider

937-726-3831

pastor@flcgalion.com



This Week at First

Worship: 14th Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: Jeremiah 15:15-21

Second Lesson: Romans 12:1-8

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 16:21-28

In-Person Worship

Sunday – August 30 , 2026

9:00am - Lutheran Partnership Worship

Tuesday, September 1, 2026

3:15pm - Prayer Shawl Outreach

Friday, September 4, 2026

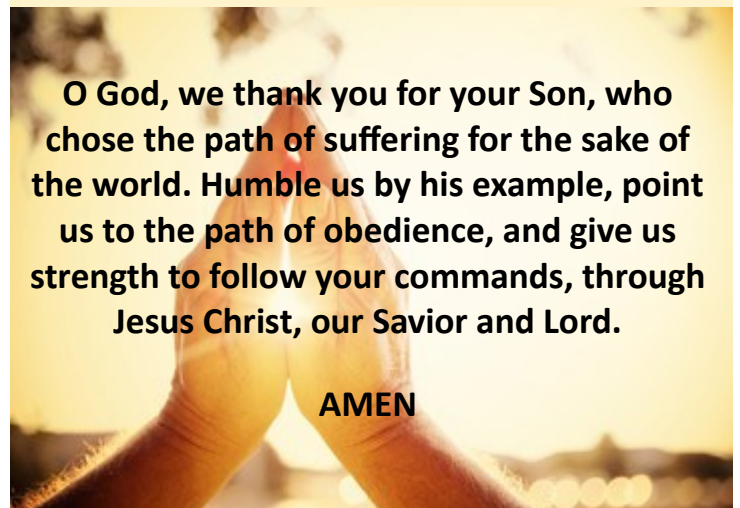
9:00am - "Men's Breakfast at Lulu's in Bucyrus



Prayer of the Day

O God, we thank you for your Son, who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow your commands, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

AMEN



Prayer Chain

We are praying for:

Patty Owens, Chuck Robinson, Karen Furrey, Tyler McMillan, Rhonda Breit, Clint and Barb Howe, Doug May

Long Term Prayer List: Rick Stone, Pastor Tim Keeler, Joe Beaty, Marlene Leme, Chloe, Kaden Allerdig, Haylee Lilly, Scott, Jean Henry, Tina Fuson, Ed Smith, Linda Kahler, and Bobbie Jo Seighman

Homebound, Assisted Living, or Limited

Mobility: Betty Sargel, Jay DeNise, Jack Harpst, Jr., Millie Haas, Brenda Haas, Janet Hammermiller, Phyllis Straka, Fred Watkins, and Joyce Shearer,

To add someone to our prayer list or prayer chain, call the church office or email us at pastor@flcgalion.com



Brian Shifley - September 1



Tim & Patty Rice Groth - September 4

Joe & Danielle Clime - September 5

Randy & Terri Lady - September 5

First Reading Jeremiah 15:15-21

¹⁵ O LORD, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.

In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.

¹⁶ Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;

for I am called by your name,

O LORD, God of hosts.

¹⁷ I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,
nor did I rejoice;

under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.

¹⁸ Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?

Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.

¹⁹ Therefore thus says the LORD:

If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.

If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,

you shall serve as my mouth.

It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.

²⁰ And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;

they will fight against you,

but they shall not prevail over you,

for I am with you

to save you and deliver you,

says the LORD.

²¹ I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,

and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 26:1-8

¹ Vindicate me, O LORD,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the LORD without
wavering.

² **Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and mind.**

³ For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.

⁴ **I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with hypocrites;**

⁵ I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the wicked.

⁶ **I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar, O LORD,**

⁷ singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.

⁸ **O LORD, I love the house in which you
dwell, and the place where your glory
abides.**

The Second Reading

Romans 12:1-8

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think,

but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 16:21-28

²¹ From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." ²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life? ²⁷ "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."