

First Lutheran Church



127 S. Columbus St. Galion, OH 44833

419-468-3107

flcgalion@gmail.com

Worship 10:00 am

Weekly Newsletter

2.13.25

Pastor's Ponderings

A New, Old Way of Reading

Let's ponder law and gospel. Simple, right? This definitely won't be a multiweek pondering, then, will it? The "law," that's all the books of the Old Testament (you know, where all the laws come from), and the "gospel"—these are the books that narrate the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. (Actually, those are the Gospels, notice the capital "G".) When we speak of gospel, the good news, we don't capitalize it. And what about law? Just those Old Testament books, right? Because the Old Testament is where we meet and angry, wrathful God prepared to turn us to salt if we look in the wrong direction (see Lot's wife in Genesis 19:26), and the New Testament is where we hear the gospel, the good news that God decided to save us (from the angry, Old Testament God)—but only if we follow all the laws that all the people from the beginning of time until now could not follow, right? Right?!

This line of thinking is, hate to say it, heretical—an ancient heresy known as Marcionism. Carly VanDewark explains, "Marcion taught that there are two gods, a lower and a higher one. The lower god is the "creator" and is revealed in Hebrew Scriptures to be wrathful and focused on the law and judgment. Because flesh was

created by this god, Marcion argues that flesh is evil. The higher god was unknown to humankind until he sent his son Jesus to Earth. This god is totally good and devoid of wrath, with a focus on love and peace." So yeah, cutting God in two, that's kind of heretical—a lesser, angry, Old Testament God on the one hand and a higher, happy-go-lucky, totally good and devoid of wrath New Testament God on the other.

Let's be honest. We've all—at one point or another—fallen into this heresy, no? It certainly makes it easier for us to read the story about Lot's wife becoming the salt of the earth or, frankly, most of the book of Joshua where God appears to sanction the destruction of entire peoples. God is not simple or easily understood—and neither is Scripture—which is why we need a method of scriptural interpretation. A lens, if you will, through which we read and interpret Scripture. Law and gospel is the primary method through which I interpret Scripture. I'm not unique in this; I didn't invent it. (If I did, there'd maybe be people calling themselves Schneiderans—a terrifying thought, indeed, and, if we're honest, not a catchy name.) It was Martin Luther who first—or at least illuminated—this method of interpreting Scripture.

This will have to suffice as the first of a "Law and Gospel" series—unless you want to read 6,000 words in a single pondering (as if you would read them all anyway...) But I have to ask, has this changed your approach to reading Scripture yet? Probably not. But it's a start. I've told us what law is not and what gospel is not. Perhaps scared us away from an ancient but very much alive heresy. I hope I

have prepared us to understand how we might read the Bible in a new (but 500-year-old) way—and a life-changing way. That’s right, I said it. Life-changing.

I really do think this has the power to be life changing. When we read Scripture through the lens of law and gospel, when Scripture convicts us, when the weight of law falls on us, when we recognize just how condemned we would be, should be if not for the gospel, if not for the good news of Jesus Christ, well, it is then that we feel an enormous weight, the full weight of sin and death being lifted from us. It is then that we know and experience God’s freely given mercy and love wash over us. Not for what we’ve done or didn’t do or wouldn’t do or couldn’t do. But because of what was done for us. This, my dear siblings in Christ, is the gospel. It is the good news of Jesus Christ. And it is life changing.

Carly VanDewark, <https://dukecrux.org/2022/07/15/the-ancient-heresy-of-marcionism-and-its-modern-influence/>



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

Peace,
Pastor Shawn Schneider
937-726-3831 or
pastor@flcgalion.com

This Week at First

Worship: Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

First Lesson: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Gospel Lesson: Luke 6:17-26



In-Person Worship

Sunday – February 16, 2025

8:30am Worship at St. Paul in NR

10:00am Worship at First Lutheran

11:30am Worship & Music Meeting

Tuesday—February 18, 2025

3:15pm - Prayer Shawl Outreach

Wednesday - February 19, 2025

2:00pm - Bible Study at St. Paul

7:00pm - Lutheran Partnership Meeting at FLC

Friday - February 21, 2025

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

Saturday - February 22, 2025

9:00am - Community Breakfast at FLC Social Hall

Prayer of the Day

A photograph showing two hands clasped together in a prayer gesture. The background is a warm, golden light, possibly from a sunset or sunrise, creating a soft, glowing effect.

Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Prayer Chain

David Hayes, Jennifer Young, Barb Keyes, Beth Sinden, Nancy Franco, Christa Collins, Diane Garrison, Dave Gerfen, AJ Rinaldi, Fred Watkins, Kaden Allerding, Linda Kahler, Jo Swain, Haylee Lilly, Paige, Sandy Alley, Scott, Jean Henry, Tina Fuson, Duane Long, Ken Bodkins, Robert Grubaugh, Ed Smith, Bobbie Jo Seighman, Nancy Bailey, Jim Harpst, Jean Hayes, Doll Cass, Phyllis Straka, Jay DeNise, Millie and Brenda Haas, Fred & Betty Sargel, Mary Lou Griebing, Janet Hammermiller and FLC Outreach Ministry. To add someone to our prayer list or prayer chain, call the church office or email us at pastor@flcgalion.com



Andrea Schneider - February 17

Geneva Buchanan - February 22

Community Breakfast

* Free Breakfast

Every 4th Saturday of the month

9am to 10:30am

All Are Welcome!!!!

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127 S. Columbus St.

Galion, Ohio

GRIEF SHARE®

Grief Share is a 13 week, Christ-centered, biblically-based program that focuses on grief topics associated with the death of a loved one.

The Spring group will start on Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:30pm - 8:30pm.

The group will gather at St. Paul United Methodist Church, 746 Cherry Street, Galion.

For more information and/or registration, please call Mary at 740-396-2522, Cathy at 419-571-5948 or St. Paul UMC office at 419-468-4557.



We will be hosting a “**Shrove Sunday**” pancake brunch on Sunday, **March 2nd** after worship. We will provide all the food, including pancakes with a toppings bar, ham, and eggs. We look forward in sharing food and fellowship with you.

Puzzle Of The Week

X C D X C H A F F M G Y N U O B A
 A K Z Z L J F V M E D I T A T E C
 D P T I W I N D C B L E S S E D P
 E X Z C R S S Q D Q T R E E Z U E
 L N S F Q F L O R D T S Y P X N R
 I R S N F G S I T J H R X X I G I
 G S G C O N G R E G A T I O N O S
 H C V A L P B P R O S P E R V D H
 T R I G H T E O U S C V F R H L U
 D T T V M R Q G S Q Z E A B S Y M
 U L N G L R J A Y F P Z G C L A W
 F T G K T F R U I T B L E W J M J
 H R J M C O U N S E L U S I W K P
 W E I S E A S O N B J U G Z I V F
 L S I N N E R S G F V F G R Q I J
 R I V E R E N B F I Q Y N C I W Z
 L G Z D U M B D N X L E K O C P F

congregation	righteous	meditate	prosper
delight	counsel	ungodly	sinners
blessed	perish	season	chaff
fruit	river	wind	tree
Lord	law	sit	

M N U N X T I C R D D A W W E K A O M K N B Z I
 A J Z S A N W C K T C D D H R J R D C J W H W J
 U L D B E O N B C U H V H K I Z A S O N H Z P P
 C L R X W H H E I Z D D Q C Q V G I N U L D E R
 Q V H D D A U X F G P C M A P G M R F M F T V E
 B T Y L V M P R Z N V I E H H U Q V I D E P Q Y
 X L Z H K A T A H T I B A T U U N X D R Z L J A
 L D Z B E Z E J X I T K E D E V A S E E S A J R
 P B L K I I U L K L H R Q S U S E J N V Z N L P
 W P E Y K N U Y B I U G V F T P H R C G B K V Q
 Z A L Z A G V N Z I L G Q G V G R B E E R F P U
 T B P F O R G I V E B K O M Z B B I L J B C Y L
 M V M O X F X C N N V H D J Q Y F I H P J G Q S
 E S I C O N V E R S A T I O N B E Q G H N G Q N
 W Z S P B U E X M R T W Z L W V M N O C Y Y R T
 L Z V L C K J P U R N E D L E H T Q I K Y G I J
 J A F K O R U C P L D F C L Q A G I D J C M S U
 N Y G O V R E I R D N F M N C N F U E P B H Z T
 C D H L K V D A R U R E Z J B K Z H A I Y V A C
 W G E W Y P E T T L H C Q B S M O U D W B L A Y
 S Y A Z S T Q J Z O F T Y Z H S K J F Y K N Q W
 R T L W L O B U U U R I I W F V I N L I E O S H
 L B B A S A U Y A O H V R B A I U Y N S B P T Z
 N U P O W E R F U L G E K S S K E G M B I P L G

conversation	confidence	effective	powerful	believe
amazing	talking	Creator	forgive	Tabitha
simple	prayer	Bible	saved	Jesus
Peter	plan	Lord	dead	heal
use				

