

First Lutheran Church



127 S. Columbus St. Galion, OH 44833

419-468-3107

flcgalion@gmail.com

Worship 10:00 am

Weekly Newsletter

8.14.25

Pastor's Ponderings

Read Quickly or You Might Get Burned!

Says the grumpy Old Testament God, "Is not my word like fire, like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29)

Good thing Jesus came along to de-throne that old, grumpy Old Testament God. I mean, our happy-go-lucky, loving New Testament God certainly would never threaten us with fire. Right? Says Jesus, "I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!" (Luke 12:49)

Just one more reason why the "Old Testament God = mean and angry" and "New Testament God = loving and kind" is one of the oldest heresies in the book. (This is Marcionism, to be exact, which acts as if God can be cut in two pieces: a lesser, angry, Old Testament God on the one hand and a higher, totally good and devoid of wrath New Testament God on the other.)

And yet, this remains (in my non-statistical, going by pastor vibes opinion only) the most common Christian heresy. I think most of us slip into it from time-to-time—and I know this because when we hear the words, "I came to bring fire to the earth," we are taken aback. This can't be the John 3:16 "For God so loved the world..." Jesus, can it? Jesus shouldn't be saying these things! Jesus can't

go around telling people that, because of him, "father will be divided against son," and "mother against daughter." (Luke 13:53) We were promised a "Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6) What's up with this fire and division? From the Old Testament God, sure. But New Testament Jesus? No way!

We recoil against texts like these because we are afraid Jesus is saying, "I've come to burn you," or "I've come to toss you into the fiery pit from whence there is no return." And that's unfortunate because rather than sitting with this text, we rush right through it—we don't want to get burned, do we? And this is a text that we must sit with and ask questions of. Questions like, "Why might Jesus be saying this?" or "Why is Jesus' message so divisive anyway?" Questions like, "What might Jesus be trying to burn away?"

These questions point us to other places in Scripture (the Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55, comes to mind). Which might lead to more questions and more searching. And while firm and absolute answers will likely remain elusive—it's hard to pin down God!—it is in the sitting and the searching, in the contemplation and the prayer, where God often shows up. And who knows? Our hearts might just be moved and changed, even purified, as with a refiner's fire. And perhaps that's the point.



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: 10th Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: Jeremiah 23:23-29

Second Lesson: Hebrews 11:29—12:2

Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:49-56



In-Person Worship

Sunday – August 17, 2025

9:00am - Worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church in North Robinson

10:00am - Worship at First Lutheran Church in Galion

Saturday - August 23, 2025

9:00am - Community Breakfast at FLC



We are praying for:

Andy, Millie Haas, Jack Harpst, Jr., Dave Kahler

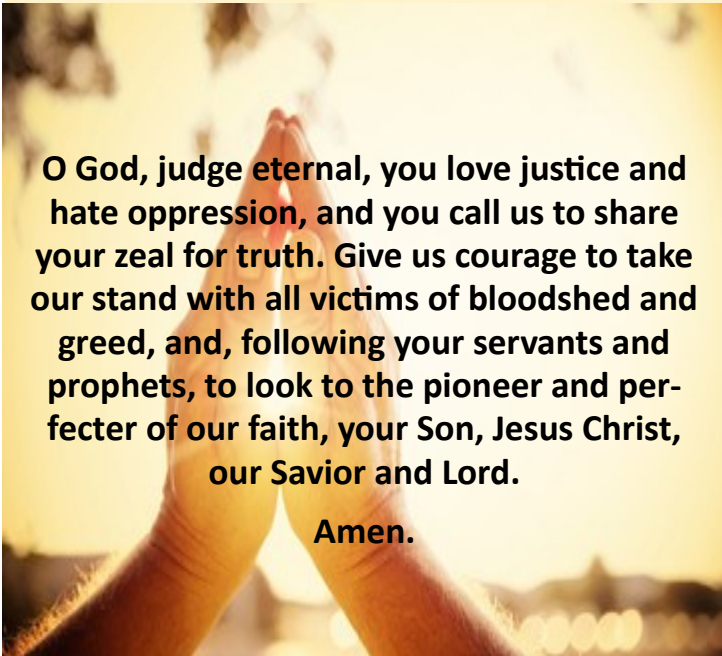
Long Term Prayer List: Teresa Boggs, Joyce Corwin, Judy Rock, Dave Gerfen, AJ Rinaldi, Kaden Allarding, Linda Kahler, Haylee Lilly, Scott, Sandy Alley, Jean Henry, Tina Fuson, Ed Smith, Bobbie Jo Seighman

Homebound, Assisted Living, or Limited

Mobility: Chuck Robinson, Jean Hayes, Jim Harpst, Doll Cass, Phyllis Straka, Jay DeNise, Brenda Haas, Mary Lou Griebing, Janet Hammermiller, and Fred Watkins.

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

Prayer of the Day



O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.



Cindy Long - August 18

Jayne Barker - August 22