

Love of Christ Lutheran Church

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Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

E-News for the 13th Sunday after Pentecost, August 23rd, 2026

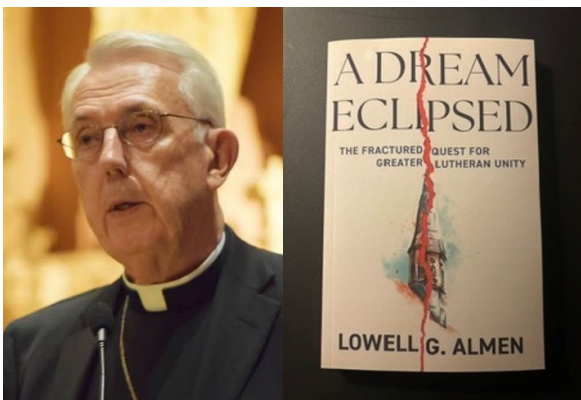


"Crucial Question"

The power of identity. Jesus is stopping in the district of Caesarea Philippi a place that is highly praised and beautiful with temples abound that represent many Greek and Roman gods. While we don't know why Jesus picked that spot to reveal to his disciples who he is, we might guess that Jesus wanted to show the contrast between a living God and the gods of the ancient world.

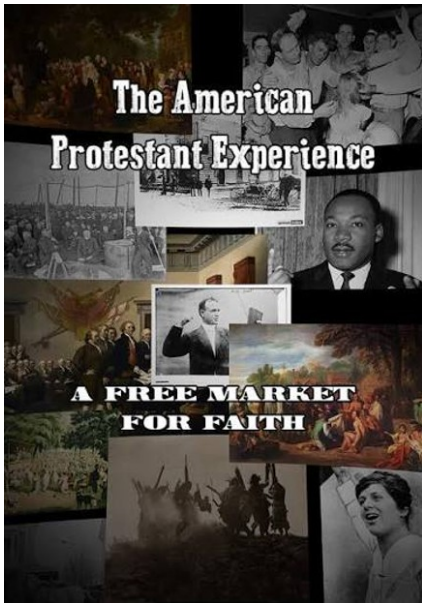
A living God is a dynamic God and not a static god whose clearest communication happened in the past. Jesus is the Messiah of the living God. Jesus, as Son of Man, means that God continues to speak and to act. God does not have to resurrect John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or any other prophet to speak. God never ceases to exist, to create, and to anoint. God can resurrect the dead, but resurrection is never God's only option.

Guest Preacher this Sunday the Rev. Dr. Lowell Almen



For several years Lowell and Sally have been members of Love of Christ and he graciously offered to preach this coming Sunday, not knowing when Pastor Nanette would be returning from sick leave.

Lowell has served as a parish pastor, Editor of the Lutheran Standard, was the first Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1988-2007, served for one year as Bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod (following Pastor Steve's move from that office to serve as one of the pastors at LoC), he has a long-history in leading U.S. Roman Catholic and Lutheran Dialogs, and has authored several books. The most recent being "A Dream Eclipsed."



New Adult Study Starting Wednesday, September 9 at 6:00PM in the Fellowship Hall

It's no accident that America is home to a wide range of religious expressions. Immigrants brought their faith with them from around the globe and established churches and denominations. But the most unique quality of American religious life is the innovation and experimentation that takes place here. This makes this country a free marketplace for faith.

This series documents the eternal argument about the relationship between the church and civil authority. The country's founders, seeing the intolerance of the early immigrants, wisely sought to create a republic where faith could be practiced freely but where a theocracy would be avoided.



Church Potluck—sponsored by Hospitality Team

September 25th

5pm to 7pm

Rooms 48 thru 50 in Center of Compassion

The Hospitality Team is bringing back an LOC favorite social event - the church potluck. Please join us in the COC rooms 48-49-50 for fellowship and good food on Friday, September 25, from 5 p.m - 7 p.m.



Wondering what to bring to share? We are using the traditional “alphabet-what to bring” code:

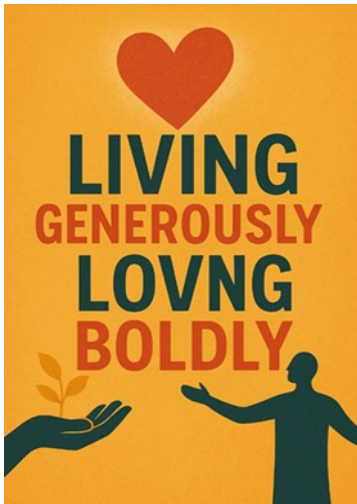
A-H: appetizer

I-P: main dish

Q-Z: dessert.

Hospitality will have our coffee bar.

Ask us questions at pattidelaney03@gmail.com, or at Hospitality Hour on Sundays in the Outreach Room. We look forward to sharing time together and hope to see you there!



The Community Fridge

In a small town, a woman named Elena felt prompted to place a mini-refrigerator on her front porch, stock it with food, and paint a simple sign: "Take what you need. Leave what you can."

She worried it wouldn't last a week. People would take advantage. The fridge would sit empty. She'd be out the grocery money and left with an eyesore.

Instead, something unexpected happened. A single mother took milk and eggs one morning — and left a bag of oranges from her own tree that afternoon. A retired baker started leaving fresh bread twice a week, just because he had ovens sitting idle and time on his hands. A teenager who'd been quietly grabbing lunch before school started showing up on Saturdays to restock shelves for other families he didn't even know.

Within a year, there were fourteen fridges across town — none of them run by an organization, none of them budgeted, none of them "sustainable" by any spreadsheet's logic. They just kept getting full.

This mirrors a pattern found throughout Scripture: God's abundance rarely arrives as a stockpile handed to one person. It tends to flow through people to each other — manna gathered daily and shared (Exodus 16), five loaves and two fish multiplying as they were distributed rather than hoarded (Matthew 14:13-21), the early church in Acts 2 where "no one claimed private ownership" and yet "there was not a needy person among them."

The lesson isn't that scarcity disappears. Elena's porch fridge still runs low some weeks. The point is that provision often looks less like a reservoir and more like a river — sustained not by one source stockpiling enough for everyone, but by many hands keeping the current moving.



Continuing the Love of Christ Endowment News

Honor your father and your mother. That's # 5 of the Ten Commandments. A gift to the Love of Christ Endowment Fund can be a permanent living legacy to the glory of God and the honor of a dear parent. List the gift as from you as donor, in honor of your parents and know that the gift will honor mom or dad by doing God's work forever.

LOC guidelines for endowment specify that gifts are distributed as follows:

- 20% Outreach into the community and synod
- 20% Missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 20% Capital Improvements, debt reduction, or building programs of LoC Lutheran Church
- Remaining 40% to be distributed by the endowment committee to the above- mentioned categories. The maximum distribution to any mission category is 40%

As of July 31, 2026, our LoC Endowment Fund balance is \$145,199.73. To learn more about this Fund go to <https://loveofchristchurch.net/endowment>

Now the Feast and Celebration

Marty Haugen

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Our Traditional 7:50 and 10:30 Liturgy in the Sanctuary will move on Sunday, August 23 to Marty Haugen's "Now the Feast and Celebration" for the last half of the Pentecost Season.

Music Notes....



Please contact Jung Lee at jungmusic@loclc.org for how you can be involved with the music program.

Choir practice begins September 10, 6PM to 8PM in Sanctuary.

With gratitude and excitement,
Jung Lee



Calling All Bakers

Cookie Ministry is looking for people who like to bake. The Cookie Ministry is part of the Faith in Action programs at Love of Christ. This ministry makes cookies for our various events that are held here on our campus and beyond our campus. If you are interested in baking cookies for this ministry, please contact Eunice Ketterling at ketts4az@gmail.com



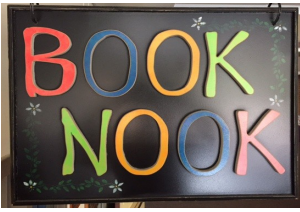
Community Garden News

Think about trying out a garden in the fall. We are all learning new things and getting to know new people in the fresh air. Contact Nancy. Dntoll74@gmail.com



Naomi Circle will meet on September 14th, at 1PM in the Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome—invite your friends!

Book Nook News



The **Book Nook** is looking for donations of new or used books that you no longer need or want to save. Our book supply has not been replenished for a while, and we are looking for books that would be of interest to people shopping in the Book Nook on Sunday mornings. We are especially looking for novels, nonfiction books, and books of a religious/spiritual nature published within the last 10 years which would be from 2016-2026. If you have any to donate, please drop them off at the Book Nook on Sunday morning or they can be dropped off in the church office during weekdays. Barb and I thank you in advance.

Penny Day



The LOC Book Club will meet on Sunday, September 13th at 10:15 am in the Leadership Room (next to the church offices) to discuss **My Friends** by Fredrik Backman.

He has written a number of books that may be familiar to you; **A Man Called Ove**, **Beartown**, and **My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry** to name a few.

Here is a synopsis of **My Friends**:

Louisa, soon to be eighteen years old and an aspiring artist herself, notices three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier in the corner of one of the most famous paintings in the world. She is determined to find out the story behind these three enigmatic figures and embarks on a surprise filled cross country journey to discover how the painting came to be.

More than two decades before, in a distant seaside town, a group of teenagers find refuge from their bruising home lives by spending long summer days on an abandoned pier telling silly jokes, sharing secrets and committing small acts of rebellion. They find in each other a reason to get up every morning.

The friendship of these individuals shapes not only their futures but Louisa's as well.

"The world is full of miracles but none greater than how far a young person can be carried by someone else's belief in them".

Please come join us as we explore **My Friends** on September 13th and be sure to stop on the way at the Hospitality Room for coffee and a treat.

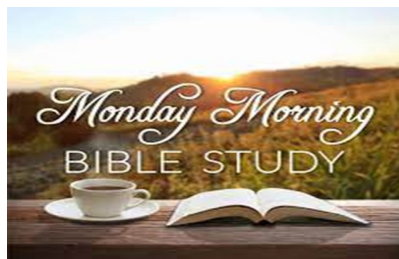
We look forward to seeing you!



**Monday Men's Bible Study on 2nd Corinthians at 6:30-7:30AM in the Leadership Room.
Men of all ages are welcome to participate.**



Online Video introductions provided by our pastors of Sunday Lectionary readings are offered each week. They may be found on Facebook, YouTube or loveofchristchurch.net



**Monday Morning Bible Study in the Leadership Room
Coffee Fellowship at 10:30AM, Bible Study at 11AM**



Prayer Share Care Women's Bible Study

All women are invited to a weekly Bible study group called Prayer Share Care. ***This group meets on Thursday afternoons at 1:00 PM in the Leadership Room.*** Please contact Ruth Leonard or Margrit Aeschbach at the following emails for more information. (Margrit: mswiss43@gmail.com and Ruth: ruthleonard@icloud.com)



Youth will be meeting on Sunday's for Sunday Morning Hangout from 10:00am to 12:00pm.

Contact Mason Weatherly at masonw@loclc.org



Confirmation

Confirmation Parent and Student Meeting Wed. August 19 at 6:00 pm

Confirmation will begin on Wed. August 26, from 6:00-7:00 pm

Faith Food and Fun



Grades 4,5, and 6 will meet on Sunday, September 20, 3:30-5:00 pm. Please contact Laura Ontiveros (laurakuegemann@gmail.com) for more information.

Refugee Family Co-Sponsorship with Lutheran Social Services Update

Love of Christ's (LoC) Co-Sponsorship Team has supported the Ali family for more than a year. We met them in March 2025 through Lutheran Social Services' Co-Sponsor program and have worked with them regularly since. The Alis are a Kurdish refugee family of six, originally from Syria, who also lived in Iraq. Their four children include three boys and one girl. The father, is a chef at East Bite Mediterranean Cuisine in downtown Phoenix, while the mother, stays home to care for the children. One son has severe autism, which creates additional challenges for the family. Both older boys and their sister attend school in Tempe, and the youngest boy will start school next year. The children speak English well, but their parents do not.



When we first met the Ali family and asked what kind of help they needed most, both parents said they wanted to learn English. They said they could manage their other needs, but understood that learning English was essential to building a successful life in this country. Our Co-Sponsorship Team then developed a plan to support their English learning through several goals: meeting regularly to teach basic conversational English, providing self-study tools, enrolling them in online English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, assisting with other needs as they arose, and planning occasional social activities together.

To date, we have made progress on all of these goals and continue to support the family. Two team members meet with them weekly on a rotating basis to practice English vocabulary and sentence formation. LoC donated a laptop and an online English software license to support their self-study, and we helped enroll them in a live online ESL class that meets three times a week. Beyond English instruction, we have helped with other needs with support from various LoC groups and members, including food gift cards, back-to-school backpacks and supplies, back to school clothing for the children, and Christmas gifts. We also hosted two social gatherings with the Ali family and Co-Sponsor Team at a nearby park—one birthday themed picnic and one holiday-themed picnic—which provided a relaxed setting to spend time getting to know everyone personally.

We have a dedicated team and strong support from LoC. We continue to meet weekly with the family at their home apartment, giving them a low-pressure setting to practice English. Now that they are enrolled in an online ESL class, our role is focused on conversation practice and helping them apply what they are learning. We also help where we can with other needs, including support for their autistic son's education, administrative paperwork, and general guidance. Overall, this has been a rewarding experience for all of us and a meaningful reminder of the blessings and opportunities we often take for granted as citizens of this country. If you would like to learn more or join us, please contact Chris Norden at norden6162@gmail.com.



Sunday School will begin on August 30th! Sunday School is offered for ages pre-K-6th grade. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Playroom. Children come to church with their parents and are dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Message. They return to worship during Communion. For families that attend 10:30 church Sunday School is offered at 10:00 -10:25. Sunday School takes place in the Godly Playroom. For any questions, please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@locic.org

Service Opportunities Save the Date! (More to come in Sept.)

August/September Serving meals at Christ's Church Respite Center on Fridays.

October: Fall Festival October 23 5:00-7:00 pm

November: Feed My Starving Children: Nov. 5, 6, and 7 Gift cards for food banks

December: Gifts for kids, Reverse Advent Boxes, and Family Promise

Ongoing Donations:

August/September: Donations for sack lunches at Christ's Church

Shelf stable food for Victory Food Bank and First Evangelical Food Bank

Children and Youth Ministry Summer/Fall Overview for 2026 Save the Dates

Children's Musical Rehearsal Wed. Aug. 19 at 6:00 pm

Grades 4,5,6 meet Sunday, September 20, 3:30-5:00 pm in the CoC

Sunday School Begins August 30

Youth Sunday Hangout: 10:00am in the Youth Room

Confirmation Parent and Student Meeting Wed. August 19 at 6:00 pm

Confirmation will begin on Wed. August 26, from 6:00-7:00 pm



Water Donations: Last year we donated water to the City of Mesa and to Grace in the City Lutheran Church. This year we will be taking money donations to purchase water for these two organizations. If you would like to donate water please place money in the offering plate labeled "Water Donation" or go online and specify water donation or bring a gift card.

Donation Opportunities

Donations needed for sack lunches to be given to Christ's Church respite center and for our own cooling center. Items needed: Tuna or Chicken packs, Vienna Sausage small cans, soft chewy granola bars, boxes of a variety of chips or crackers, boxes of Capri-Sun. These items for sack lunches will be collected throughout the summer. (August-September)

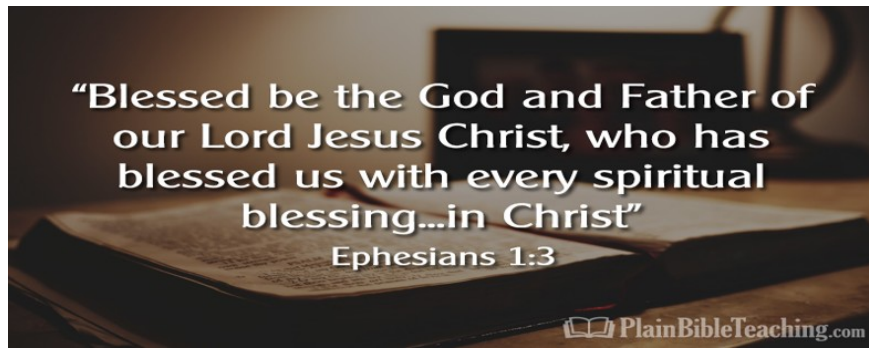
Meals at Christ's Church Respite Center

Love of Christ is partnering with Christ Church Respite Center, 655 E. University Drive, which serves members of the Mesa community who need a safe place of rest and support. In addition to our Cooling Center ministry, we will be helping provide meals on Fridays at the Respite Center. If you are interested in volunteering with this ministry, please contact Cindy Wallin (cgeorgen3199@gmail.com) or Melissa Weiss-Riner (melissa@azfls.com) for more information.

As we did last year we will also be providing sack lunches to Christ's Church Respite Center and for our Cooling Center as well. If you have any questions about this please contact Patti Delaney at pattidelaney03@gmail.com. Items needed for donation are listed above.

These ministries reflect our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul reminds us, "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Through simple acts of compassion, hospitality, and service, we have the opportunity to care for our neighbors and share the love of Christ in tangible ways.

Please continue to keep these ministries, our volunteers, and all who seek refuge from the heat, hunger, or hardship in your prayers. May God use these efforts to provide comfort, safety, and a reminder that every person is valued, welcomed, and loved. *We are Called, Gathered, and Sent to share the Love of Christ.*



Women's Monthly Bible Study resumes for 2026-2027 on Wednesday, September 2nd from 4:30-5:30 pm in Fellowship hall. The study will be on Ephesians.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month, except in October. We will not meet in March due to Lent.

Dates are as follows: Sept. 2, Oct. 14 (second Wednesday), Nov. 4, Dec.2, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, NO March session, and April 7.

No homework. One hour. Enjoy great discussions. All are welcome. Please join us.

Barb Talmage

Pastor Nanette



Young Adults will meet again on September 20th at 12:00 in the CoC. Come ready to share ideas! If you have questions please contact Pastor Nanette at nanette@locic.org .

BLANKETS FOR KIDS!!!



Questions? Contact Jan Barnett at: barnett105@gmail.com

- 2 Methods of finishing the edges of the blankets
- Sewing around the edges
- Crocheting around the edges
- Both methods start the same

Lay Fabric on a table, trim off the Salvage edges of the fleece;

- Sewing around the edges

Fold $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch around the edge ;

Pin the folded edges all around the edge;

Choose a decorative stitch on sewing machine and start sewing

If your machine only does Zig Zag, that is great also.

- Optional--Baste $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fold around the edge of the fleece with a needle and thread (Optional)

OR

- Just fold the fabric over about $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch and cut very small slits in the fold;
- Slits should be no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch in length and around $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch from the each other
- If you basted around the edges

Remove the basting from the fleece

- If you have a rotary cutter, you can purchase wheels that will cut the slits in the fleece material the same distance and the slit created is large enough to slip the crochet hook through. Then follow the remaining directions.
- If you just folded and cut the slits;

Start crocheting around the edge. (I start 6 or 7 inches from the corner of the fleece to make turning the first corner easier.)

1. Start by creating a slipknot.
2. Insert the crochet hook through a slit in the fleece and pull the loop of the slip knot through;
3. Chain 3 times (create a chain by yarning over the hook and pulling it back through the initial loop.); chain only 2 times if you have used the rotary cutter;
4. Push the crochet hook through the slit next to the one just used (back to front) and pull a loop back through the slit. (You will have 2 loops on the crochet hook.)
5. With the 2 loops still on the hook, yarn over the hook and pull through both loops. Now chain 2 more times.
6. Proceed around the fleece using steps 4 and 5.
7. To turn a corner, follow steps 4 and 5, but insert the hook again in the same slit and do 1 chain and then insert the hook again and perform steps 4 and 5, Then you should be on a new side of the blanket and proceed following steps 4 and 5

There is an additional set of slides which have instructions on how to start crocheting. If you do not need those instructions, ignore.

Scripture Lesson

A Brief Look at Isaiah 51:1-6

with Pastor Steve Talmage
(13 min)



YouTube: <https://youtu.be/94xnLrZVdSU>

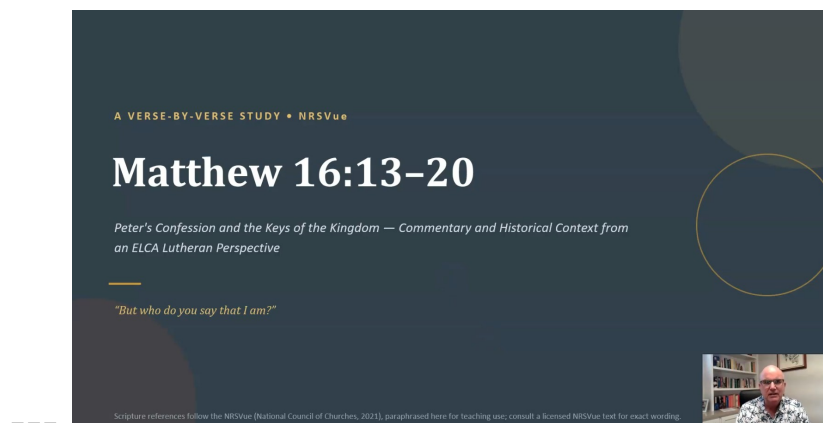
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1033242236165846/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Scripture Lesson

A Brief Look at Matthew 16:13-20

with Pastor Steve Talmage
(12 min)



YouTube: <https://youtu.be/8J7aVq-T7VU>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/reel/1142001285201550/>

Website: <https://www.loveofchristchurch.net/media/series/7vjwfnk/bible-lessons>

Sunday, August 23rd, 2026, 7:50 am, 9 and 10:30,

some on  & 

The Rev. Dr. Lowell Almen “Crucial Question”

Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the LORD.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn
and to the quarry from which you were dug.
Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah, who bore you,
for he was but one when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.
For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places
and will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation,
for a teaching will go out from me
and my justice for a light to the peoples.
I will bring near my deliverance swiftly;
my salvation has gone out,
and my arms will rule the peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
Lift up your eyes to the heavens
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and those who live on it will die like gnats,^[a]
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never be ended.

Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters,
on the basis of God’s mercy, to present your
bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable
to God, which is your reasonable act of wor-
ship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be
transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that
you may discern what is the will of God—what is
good and acceptable and perfect.

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. For as in one body we
have many members and not all the members
have the same function, so we, who are many,
are one body in Christ, and individually we are
members one of another. We have gifts that dif-
fer according to the grace given to us: prophecy,
in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering;
the teacher, in teaching; the encourager, in encour-
agement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in dili-
gence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caes-
area Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do
people say that the Son of Man is?” And they
said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Eli-
jah and still others Jeremiah or one of the proph-
ets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I
am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Mes-
siah, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus an-
swered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jo-
nah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to
you but my Father in heaven.

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I
will build my church, and the gates of Hades will
not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of
the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind
on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever
you loose on earth will be loosed in heav-
en.” Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to
tell anyone that he was the Messiah