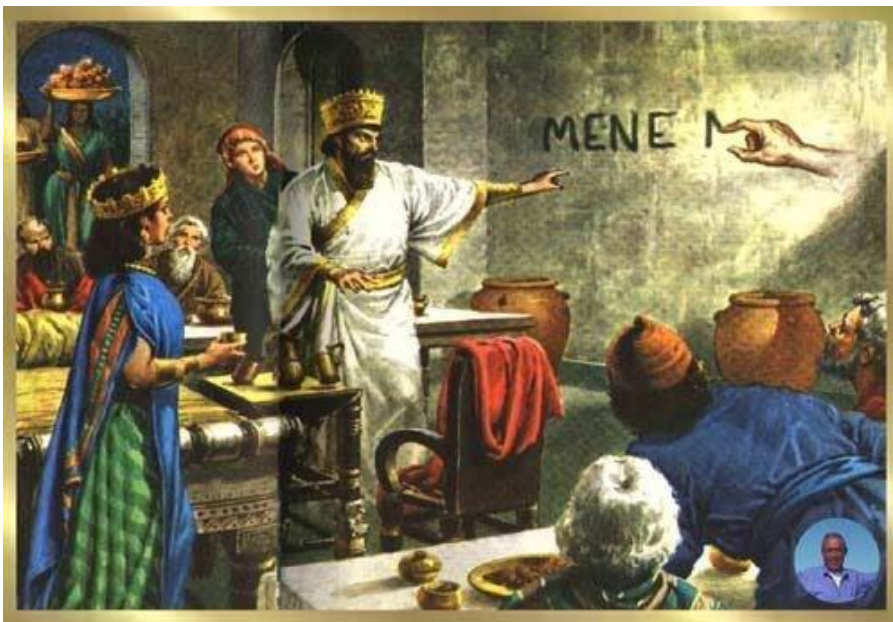




This Sunday at St. Luke's
July 19, 2026

8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)
10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion with Hymns and Organ
Steven Cagle, organist

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity



LIVING OUT OUR FAITH continues to be the focus of the Trinity season. **Feasting with man or feasting with God** is this week's theme.

This Sunday's Old Testament lesson contains the story of Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall as found in Daniel 5.

This chapter details the fall of Babylon on October 12, 539 BC, when Belshazzar, co-regent son of Nabonidus, held a blasphemous feast using gold and silver vessels which had been taken from the Temple in Jerusalem by Belshazzar's father King Nebuchadnezzar. As the feast progressed, the king and his guests drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. Then a mysterious inscription appeared on the wall -- **mene, mene, tekel, and parsin**. Daniel, who had previously been in civil service under King Nebuchadnezzar, was called, and he gave the meaning of these words: the kingdom is being taken from

Belshazzar. That very night Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians. Some of the take-aways from this story are: the peril of pride, God is sovereign over human rulers, and judgment is inevitable for those who disregard Him.

When Belshazzar's feast is held up against the feast detailed in today's Gospel – the feeding of the 4,000 – we see the contrast between judgment and blessing; taking away and multiplication, man's hubris and God's magnanimity, the kingdom of man and the kingdom of God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – Romans 6:19-23 (J.B. Phillips)

Working for a new master

¹⁹ In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice and wickedness—for the purpose of becoming wicked. So, now, give yourselves to the service of righteousness—for the purpose of becoming really good. For when you were employed by sin you owed no duty to righteousness. Yet what sort of harvest did you reap from those things that today you blush to remember? In the long run those things mean one thing only—death.

²² But now that you are employed by God, you owe no duty to sin, and you reap the fruit of being made righteous, while at the end of the road there is life for evermore.

²³ Sin pays its servants: the wage is death. But God gives to those who serve him: his free gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

NOTE: The closing third of Romans 6 contrasts the new life in Christ with the life apart from Him. Those who are Christ's are freed from the bondage of sin in order that they may give their full devotion and loyalty to Christ without any conditions or wages—that is what the word "slaves" implies. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL – St. Mark 8:1-9 (J.B. Phillips)

He again feeds the people miraculously

8 ¹⁻³ About this time it happened again that a large crowd collected and had nothing to eat. Jesus called the disciples over to him and said, “My heart goes out to this crowd; they have been with me three days now and they have no food left. If I send them off home without anything, they will collapse on the way—and some of them have come from a distance.”

⁴ His disciples replied, “Where could anyone find the food to feed them here in this deserted spot?”

⁵ “How many loaves have you got?” Jesus asked them. “Seven,” they replied.

⁶⁻¹⁰ So Jesus told the crowd to settle themselves on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves into his hands, and with a prayer of thanksgiving broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people; and this they did. They had a few small fish as well, and after blessing them, Jesus told the disciples to give these also to the people. They ate and they were satisfied. Moreover, they picked up seven baskets full of pieces left over. The people numbered about four thousand. Jesus sent them home, and then he boarded the boat at once with his disciples and went on to the district of Dalmanutha.

NOTE: With regard to the great feeding, early Christians were not interested in “How did Jesus do it?” Rather, their emphasis was on the fact that Jesus had compassion on the multitude (8:2) and fed them. All the accounts helped the early Christians to understand the significance of the Lord’s Supper. In the life of the Church the Lord in His compassion gives His strengthening gifts to those who come to Him. (William Sydnor)

LECTIONARY READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Daniel 5:1-31 (RSV)

The peril of pride

King Belshaz’zar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in front of the thousand.

² Belshaz’zar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³ Then they brought in the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴ They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

The writing on the wall

⁵ Immediately the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the hand as it wrote. ⁶ Then the king's color changed, and his thoughts alarmed him; his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. ⁷ The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chalde'ans, and the astrologers. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." ⁸ Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known to the king the interpretation. ⁹ Then King Belshaz'zar was greatly alarmed, and his color changed; and his lords were perplexed.

¹⁰ The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall; and the queen said, "O king, live for ever! Let not your thoughts alarm you or your color change. ¹¹ There is in your kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chalde'ans, and astrologers, ¹² because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshaz'zar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation."

The writing on the wall interpreted

¹³ Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "You are that Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom the king my father brought from Judah. ¹⁴ I have heard of you that the spirit of the holy gods^[d] is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵ Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation; but they could not show the interpretation of the matter. ¹⁶ But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation. ¹⁸ O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty; ¹⁹ and because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. ²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was taken from him; ²¹ he was driven from among men,

and his mind was made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of men, and sets over it whom he will. ²² And you his son, Belshaz'zar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, ²³ but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven; and the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored.

²⁴ “Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. ²⁵ And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. ²⁶ This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; ²⁷ TEKEL, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; ²⁸ PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

²⁹ Then Belshaz'zar commanded, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put about his neck, and proclamation was made concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰ That very night Belshaz'zar the Chalde'an king was slain. ³¹ And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

NOTE In this story we see the deep conviction that men cannot take God's righteousness lightly. The feast told about ignored the living God and the righteousness He requires and brought disaster.

TRINITY 7

THIS SUNDAY

Preacher: The Rector (Ron Wikander at the 8:15 a.m.)

Lectors – Judy Brooten / Alvin Cash

Acolyte – Jim Noblett

Verger – Alvin Cash

Ushers – Bob and Anna Bradley

OLD FASHIONED SUNDAY SCHOOL ANGLICANISM 101

Grab a cup of coffee and join us!

The Anglican expression of the Christian faith is discussed. Classes begin at 9:15 a.m. and are held in the Yellow Room. **This week's topic will be "Why Evangelicals are becoming Anglicans".**

CURRENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

July and August

- Eastern Orthodox Vespers – Sunday, July 26, at 2 p.m.
- Pat Webb Memorial Service – Saturday, July 25, at 2 p.m.
- Vestry Meeting – Sunday, July 26, following the 10:30 a.m. service.
- Christmas Bazaar Planning Session, Tuesday, July 28, at 10 a.m.
- AARP Good Driver Class – Saturday, Aug. 1, at 10 a.m.
- SLMG Monthly Meeting – Tuesday, Aug. 4, at 11 a.m.
- The Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ – Thursday, Aug. 6, HC Jennus chapel at noon.
- Eastern Orthodox Vespers – Sunday Aug. 9 and 23, at 2 p.m.
- St. Bartholomew the Apostle – Monday, Aug. 24, HC Jennus chapel at noon.
- Charles Lutz Concert – Thursday, Aug. 27, 6 p.m.
- Fellowship Luncheon – Sunday, Aug. 30, following the 10:30 a.m. service.

Options

In-church.

Online. Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on YouTube. To access both put "Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga." In the search bar.



Tip of the Canterbury Cap to Charles Lutz for assisting Jim Noblett with overseeing the videoing of services.



JOIN THE CHOIR!

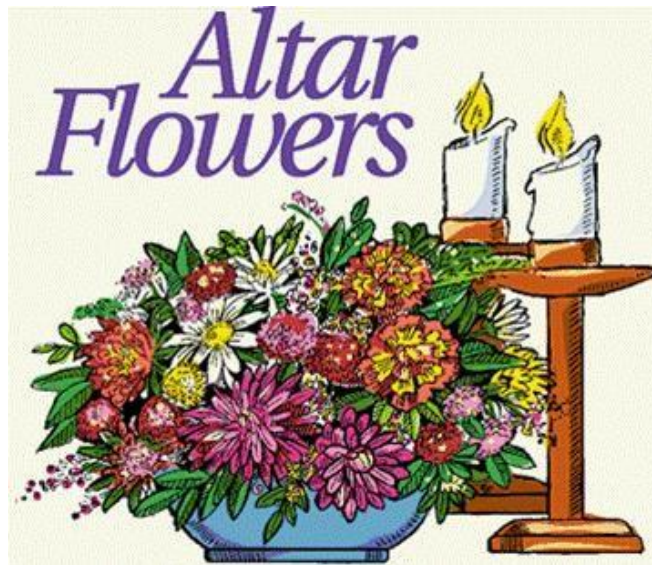


For information, contact, Diana Burden Mark at 678-852-6907 or email dburden6907@gmail.com.



OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2025.

Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

Flowers are needed throughout the end of the year. Please email or call Kathryn Noblett at the church office to sign up.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2026

*As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to
the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2025*

Name

Address

Amount

_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



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