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"Lord Jesus Christ is the only Teacher, Lawgiver, and Judge. If doctrine is taught, it is taught because He has revealed it; if ordinances are administered, they are administered in His name, and because they are His; if government is established and exercised, it is through His appointment and authority; if saving grace is dispensed, it is dispensed through the virtue and power of His Spirit; if a blessing is communicated, it is because He blesses. In the language of the Confession of Faith, 'there is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ.'" ~James Bannerman, The Church of Christ



"I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

- 1) Read Matthew 16:13-28. Is there anything from the sermon or passage that you found confusing, surprising or encouraging?
- 2) What does Jesus want you to confess about Himself? How should you feel about your own confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah and Suffering Servant?
- 3) What is Jesus' mission, according to vs. 18? How are you included? What is Jesus' church? What tools does Jesus give you to storm the gates of hell? Or another way to ask the same question, what are the benefits of belonging to Jesus' church?
- 4) Does the idea of church membership offend you or those you know? What's the complaint? How does Peter's immediate failure and stumbling encourage you? How should Peter's confession of faith and screw-ups shape our expectations of the local church?
- 5) What do we do well as a local church? In what areas do we need to grow in our love for the local church and our neighbors? Please let the elders know if there are any concerns on how we as a church can improve.
- 6) Pray for Hope Church and our faithfulness to Christ's mission.

"O God of all the nations of the earth: Remember the multitudes who have been created in your image but have not known the redeeming work of our Savior Jesus Christ; and grant that, by the prayers and labors of Your holy Church, they may be brought to know and worship you as you have been revealed in your Son; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

~Book of Common Prayer (p.257)

