





## THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF VESTAVIA HILLS

201 So. Montgomery Highway Birmingham, Alabama 35216

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Web Site: [www.vestavialutheran.org](http://www.vestavialutheran.org) or [lcvh.org](http://lcvh.org)

WORSHIP: 8:00 AM AND 10:30 AM, Sundays

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

Church Office Hours: 9 AM to 1 PM Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer –[pastor@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:pastor@vestavialutheran.org) (205 ) 201-8866

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ADOPTED MEDICAL MISSIONARIES - Arianna and David Shirk, Madeline & Annabelle - [shirkdavid@gmail.com](mailto:shirkdavid@gmail.com)



**TO OUR GUESTS:** We offer you a warm welcome in the name of Jesus. Please sign the Friendship Register during the offering. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to have you become a part of our church family. Please feel free to speak with the Pastor about membership in our congregation. If you do have a church home, we pray that God will bless you as you continue your growth in faith and love.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL** Christian education classes are offered for all ages at 9:00 AM.



**CHILDREN'S CHURCH and NURSERY** Following the Children's Message, all children ages 3-7 are invited to Children's Church downstairs. They will return to the sanctuary during the offering. A nursery attendant is provided for children ages birth to 3 years during our 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM services.



**COMMUNION** We invite all baptized Christians who acknowledge their sinfulness, trust in Christ as their Savior, and who recognize the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the bread and wine to join us at the Communion table. The practice of our congregation is to place the bread into the extended hand of the communicant. The wine is offered in both individual cups and the chalice. If you wish to receive it from an individual cup, please take one from the tray as it is offered by the Elder. The cups in the center of the tray are filled with non-alcoholic wine, in consideration of persons who should not drink wine. Also, children who have not received Communion instruction are invited to come to the Communion rail, fold their hands and receive a blessing.

# The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

## FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

March 5, 2017

### PRELUDE

### OPENING HYMN

"Salvation unto Us Has Come"

LSB #555 (v. 1-2,5,9)



1 Sal - va - tion un - to us has come By God's free grace and fa - vor;  
2 What God did in His Law de - mand And none to Him could ren - der



Good works can - not a - vert our doom, They help and save us nev - er.  
Caused wrath and woe on ev - 'ry hand For man, the vile of - fend - er.



Faith looks to Je - sus Christ a - lone, Who did for all the  
Our flesh has not those pure de - sires The spir - it of the



world a - tone; He is our one Re - deem - er.  
Law re - quires, And lost is our con - di - tion.

5. Yet as the Law must be fulfilled  
Or we must die despairing,  
Christ came and has God's anger stilled,  
Our human nature sharing.  
He has for us the Law obeyed  
And thus the Father's vengeance stayed  
Which over us impended.

9. Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone  
And rests in Him unceasing;  
And by its fruits true faith is known,  
With love and hope increasing.  
For faith alone can justify;  
Works serve our neighbor and supply  
The proof that faith is living.

## INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of † the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

I lift up my eyes to the hills.

**From where does my help come?**

My help comes from the LORD,  
**who made heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved;  
**he who keeps you will not slumber.**

Behold, he who keeps Israel  
**will neither slumber nor sleep.**

The LORD is your keeper;  
**the LORD is your shade on your right hand.**

The sun shall not strike you by day,  
**nor the moon by night.**

The LORD will keep you from all evil;  
**he will keep your life.**

The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in  
**from this time forth and forevermore.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Merciful Father, You did not spare Your only Son but delivered Him up to bear all of our sins. By Your Spirit strengthen our faith that, despite life's circumstances, we might never doubt Your great love for us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 12:1-9

*(God's Promise to Abram)*

<sup>1</sup>Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

<sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. <sup>5</sup>And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, <sup>6</sup>Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. <sup>7</sup>Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup>From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD. <sup>9</sup>And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE READING

Romans 4:1-8,13-17

*(Abraham Justified Not by Works but by Faith)*

<sup>1</sup>What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup>For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup>For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." <sup>4</sup>Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. <sup>5</sup>And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, <sup>6</sup>just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

<sup>7</sup>"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;

<sup>8</sup>blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

<sup>13</sup> The promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

<sup>14</sup>For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup>For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

<sup>16</sup>That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, <sup>17</sup>as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL PREPARATION VERSE



**C** Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for He is gra - cious and



mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in



stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## HOLY GOSPEL

John 3:1-17

*(God Sent Jesus to Save the World)*

The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the third chapter.



**C** Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

<sup>2</sup>This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless

God is with him." <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup>Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

<sup>7</sup>Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup>The wind blows



where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

<sup>9</sup>Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” <sup>10</sup>Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? <sup>11</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup>If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup>And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## **NICENE CREED**

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**

# CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

## HYMN OF THE DAY

"Christ, the Life of All the Living"

LSB #420 (v. 1-4)



1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of  
2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast tak - en on Thee Bonds and stripes, a  
3 Thou hast borne the smit - ing on - ly That my wounds might  
4 Heart - less scof - fers did sur - round Thee, Treat - ing Thee with



death, our foe, Who, Thy - self for me once giv - ing  
cru - el rod; Pain and scorn were heaped up - on Thee,  
all be whole; Thou hast suf - fered, sad and lone - ly,  
shame - ful scorn And with pierc - ing thorns they crowned Thee.



To the dark - est depths of woe: Through Thy suf - f'rings,  
O Thou sin - less Son of God! Thus didst Thou my  
Rest to give my wea - ry soul; Yea, the curse of  
All dis - grace Thou, Lord, hast borne, That as Thine Thou



death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.  
soul de - liv - er From the bonds of sin for - ev - er.  
God en - dur - ing, Bless - ing un - to me se - cur - ing.  
might - est own me And with heav'n - ly glo - ry crown me.



Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

**SERMON**

*"Your Father Really Loves You"*

**John 3:1-17**

Vicar Luke Watt

**GATHERING OF THE OFFERING**

**VOLUNTARY**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

(inside back LSB cover)

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

**AGNUS DEI**



☐ Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the



world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

## **DISTRIBUTION**

"I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table"	LSB #618
"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"	LSB #611
"God Loved the World So That He Gave"	LSB #571 (v. 1-4)
"I Lay My Sins on Jesus"	LSB #606

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

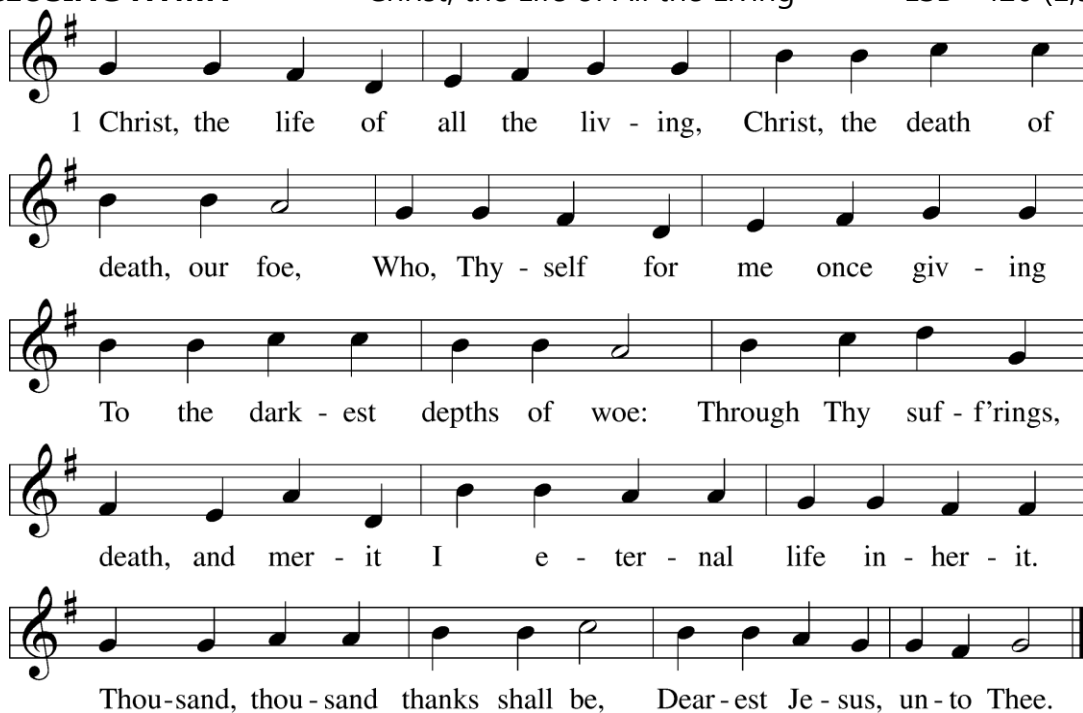
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN****"Christ, the Life of All the Living"**

LSB #420 (1,5-7)



1 Christ, the life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the death of  
death, our foe, Who, Thy - self for me once giv - ing  
To the dark - est depths of woe: Through Thy suf - f'rings,  
death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to Thee.

- 5 Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee,  
That from pain I might be free;  
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee:  
Thence I gain security;  
Comfortless Thy soul did languish  
Me to comfort in my anguish.  
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,  
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

- 6        Thou hast suffered great affliction  
          And hast borne it patiently,  
Even death by crucifixion,  
          Fully to atone for me;  
Thou didst choose to be tormented  
That my doom should be prevented.  
          Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,  
          Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 7        Then, for all that wrought my pardon,  
          For Thy sorrows deep and sore,  
For Thine anguish in the Garden,  
          I will thank Thee evermore,  
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,  
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,  
          For that last triumphant cry,  
          And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**