

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of the American flag. The stars are in the upper right corner, and the red and white stripes are visible across the frame. The colors are a mix of deep reds, bright whites, and dark blues.

God Bless
America

In GOD We Trust

The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills
SUNDAY SERVICES
July 4, 2021

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF VESTAVIA HILLS



201 So. Montgomery Highway Birmingham, Alabama 35216
Church office: 205-823-1883 PreSchool/MDO: 205-791-5200
Web Site: www.vestavialutheran.org or lcvh.org
Church Office Hours: 9 AM to 1 PM Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer -pastor@vestavialutheran.org

PASTOR EMERITUS: The Reverend Clifford Hellmers -vestluth@juno.com 205-422-4951

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TO OUR GUESTS: We offer you a warm welcome in the name of Jesus. 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.



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 in Communion.

Current Worship Schedule:

Saturday, 6:00 p.m.	Sanctuary Worship with individual family table communion no singing
Sunday, 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.	Sanctuary Worship with individual family table communion
Sunday, 9:15 a.m.	Pastor's Adult Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

AN AMERICAN MASS

Independence Day Service of Celebration & Thanksgiving

July 4, 2021

PRELUDE

"America, the Beautiful"

Arr. J. Head & S. Mitchell-Wallace

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN

"Christ by Heavenly Hosts Adored"

LW #499

*Christ by heavenly hosts adored, gracious, mighty sovereign Lord,
God of nations, King of kings, Head of all created things,
By the Church with joy confessed, God the Son forever blessed,
Pleading at Your throne we stand, save Your people, bless our Land.*

*On our fields of grass and grain send, O Lord, the kindly rain,
And throughout this spacious land crown the labors of each hand.
Let Your kind protection be over commerce on the sea.
Open, Lord, Your bounteous hand; Bless Your people, bless our land*

*Give us rulers faithful, true, such as love and honor You;
Let the powers You ordained be in righteousness maintained.
In the people's hearts increase love of piety and peace.
Thus united, we shall stand one wide, free, and happy land.*

INVOCATION

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

Amen.

CONFSSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins to God, our merciful Father.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all people, we admit and confess our sinfulness. We have turned away from each other in our thinking, speaking, and doing. We have done the evil You forbid and have not done the good You demand. We do repent and are truly sorry for these our sins. Have mercy on us, kind Father, because of the obedience of our Brother, Jesus Christ, Your Son. Forgive us all that is past, and with the power of the Holy Spirit move us to serve You faithfully. Set our feet upon the new path of life, and build Your kingdom here through Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

KYRIE

Melody: "Amazing Grace"

*Have mercy on your people, Lord.
Have mercy, Christ, our King.
Renew us by your mercy, Lord;
Accept the prayers we bring.*

GLORIA

Melody: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

*"Glory be to God on high!" This is now our joyful cry.
Peace to all who live on earth, Grace and favor for new birth.
You we praise and glorify, Worship You, O Lord most high.
Gracious Father, heav'nly King, To Your name alone we sing:
Praise the glory of Your name, Now and evermore the same!*

*Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, Sole-begotten, holy One,
Born on earth from realms on high, Born true man for us to die,
Lamb of God, You take away This world's sin: Grant peace we pray.
With the Spirit, You alone Are most high, O God the Son,
And the Father, God above. Praise we now Your glorious love.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, Whose mercies are new every morning and Whose goodness, though undeserved, still abundantly provides for all our wants of body and soul, grant us, we humbly pray, Your Holy Spirit that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness toward us, give thanks for all Your benefits, and service You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 33:1-5, 8-12, 20-22

¹Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous!
Praise befits the upright.
²Give thanks to the LORD with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!
³Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.
⁴For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
⁵He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.
⁸Let all the earth fear the LORD;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!
⁹For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.
¹⁰The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.
¹¹The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the plans of his heart to all generations.
¹²Blessèd is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!
²⁰Our soul waits for the LORD;
he is our help and our shield.
²¹For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
²²Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

¹Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. ⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL PREPARATION HYMN

"Before You, Lord, We Bow"

LSB 966 (v. 1-2)

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in common time, treble clef, and A major. The lyrics are integrated into the music, appearing below the notes. The first two staves contain the first two stanzas of the hymn, while the third staff contains the concluding stanza.

1 Be - fore You, Lord, we bow, Our God who reigns a - bove
2 The na - tion You have blest May well Your love de - clare,

And rules the world be - low, Bound-less in pow'r and love. Our thanks
From foes and fears at rest, Pro - tect-ed by Your care. For this

we bring In joy and praise, Our hearts we raise To You, our King!
bright day, For this fair land—Gifts of Your hand—Our thanks we pay.

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 12:13-17

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the twelfth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹³And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. ¹⁴And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" ¹⁵But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." ¹⁶And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." ¹⁷Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"God of Our Fathers"

LW #501 (v. 1,2,4)

*God of our fathers, Whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies:
Our grateful songs before Your throne arise.*

*Your love divine has led us in the past;
In this free land by You our lot is cast;
Oh, be our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay;
Your Word our law, Your paths our chosen way.*

*Refresh Your people on their toilsome way;
Lead us from night to neverending day;
Fill all our lives with heav'n-born love and grace
Until at last we meet before Your face.*

SERMON

"Render What to Whom?"

Mark 12:13-17

Rev. Clifford Hellmers, Pastor Emeritus

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

ADMONITION TO COMMUNICANTS

Dr. Martin Luther

I exhort you in Christ that you give attention to the Testament of Christ in true faith, and above all take to heart the words with which Christ presents his body and blood to us for forgiveness; that you take note of and give thanks for the boundless love that he showed us when he saved us from the wrath of God, sin, death, and hell by his blood; and that you then externally receive the bread and wine, that is, his body and blood, as a guarantee and pledge. Let us then in his name, according to his command, and with his own words administer and receive the Testament.

SANCTUS

Melody: "Holy, Holy, Holy"

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Day and night we join to praise
Your love and majesty.
You alone are holy, worthy and righteous.
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!*

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
We rejoice to join the hymns
Of earth and sky and sea.
Generations praise you, with saints and angels.
Holy and bless'd through all eternity.*

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and
ever. Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

Melody: "My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

*O Lamb of God, we pray:
Take all our sins away--
Our faith increase.
Have mercy on us all,
Strengthen us when we fall,
Answer our fervent call
And grant us peace.*

DISTRIBUTION

*~An usher will direct you to the front of the church. Please keep proper social distancing as we invite you to **stand** at the communion rail.~*

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

*Mine eyes have seen the glory
of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage
where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning
of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.*

*Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.*

*In the beauty of the lilies
Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom
that transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy,
let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.*

*Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.*

(REPEAT)

"America the Beautiful"

*O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain
For purple mountains majesty, above the fruited plain.
America! America! God shed His grace on thee!
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!*

*O beautiful for pilgrim feet whose stern impassioned stress,
A thoroughfare for freedom bear across the wilderness!
America! America! God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law!*

*O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
Who more than self their country love and mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness, and every gain divine!*

*O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years,
Thine alabaster cities gleam undimmed by human tears!
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!*

~*The Distribution Hymns continue on the following page*~

"God Bless America"

***God bless America, land that I love.
Stand beside her, and guide her
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam
God bless America, my home sweet home!
God bless America, my home sweet home!***

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Grant, O Lord, that the lips which have sung your praise in the sanctuary may glorify you in the world, that the ears which have heard the voice of your songs may be closed to the voice of clamor and dispute, that the eyes which have seen your great love may also behold your blessed hope, that the tongues which have confessed your name may ever speak the truth, and that the bodies of all who have tasted of your Son's living body and blood may be restored to newness of life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

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

"God Bless Our Native Land"

LSB #965



1 God bless our na - tive land; Firm may she ev - er stand
2 So shall our prayers a - rise To God a - bove the skies;



Through storm and night. When the wild tem - pests rave, Rul - er of
On Him we wait. Thou who art ev - er nigh, Guard-ing with



wind and wave, Do Thou our coun - try save By Thy great might.
watch-ful eye, To Thee a - loud we cry: God save the state!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"My County 'Tis of Thee"

Arr. J. Head & S. Mitchell-Wallace

We thank these musicians for sharing their God-given talents with us this morning and adding to our Independence Day Worship:

James Zingara (trumpet)

Steve Roberts (trumpet)

Ruth Johnson (organ)



*Thank you to Jim Little for the art work
for the cover of this weekend's worship folder*