



The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

REFORMATION

October 31, 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
WORSHIP: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sundays
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:15 a.m.
Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer – pastor@vestavialutheran.org text: 205-201-8866
PASTOR EMERITUS: The Reverend Clifford Hellmers – vestluth@juno.com 205-422-4951
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Ruth Johnson – ruthinbham@gmail.com
DIRECTOR OF MOTHER'S DAY OUT: Brooke Heisler – bheisler@vestavialutheran.org
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: Leigh Walter – lwalter@vestavialutheran.org
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR ASSISTANT: Amy Alvis - aalvis@vestavialutheran.org
BOOK KEEPER: Paula Shivers - pshivers@vestavialutheran.org
ADOPTED MEDICAL MISSIONARIES - Arianna and David Shirk, Madeline & Annabelle - shirkdavid@gmail.com



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.



SUNDAY SCHOOL Adult Bible Class meets in the Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. Children, Confirmation, and Youth Classes meet downstairs in the Sunday School classrooms.



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 individual cups; 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

Reformation Sunday

October 31, 2021

PRELUDE "Worship and Praise our Lord and King" Handbell Choir (10:30)

OPENING HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

LSB #657 (v. 1-2,4)



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, A sword and shield vic -
2 No strength of ours can match his might. We would be lost, re -
4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, No thanks to foes, who



to - rious; He breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod And wins sal -
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, Whom God Him -
fear it; For God Him - self fights by our side With weap - ons



va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe Has sworn to
self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be? The Lord of
of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house, Goods, hon - or,



work us woe. With craft and dread - ful might He
hosts is He, Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord, God's
child, or spouse, Though life be wrenched a - way, They



arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
can - not win the day. The King - dom's ours for - ev - er!

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

Amen.

"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith,

As it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

--Romans 1:17

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.

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.

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
He utters his voice, the earth melts.

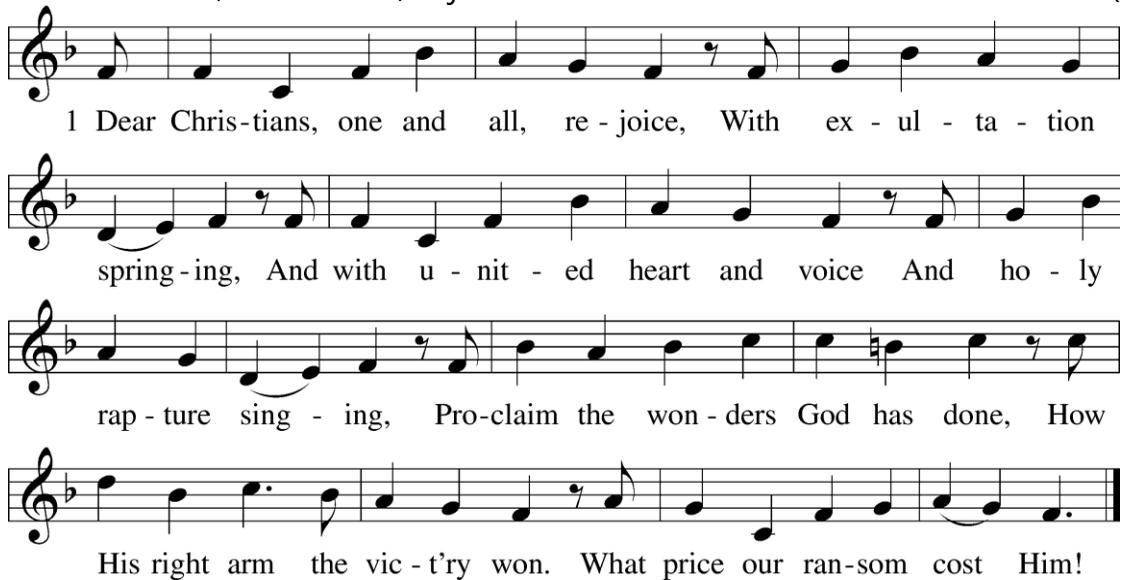
The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

THEME HYMN

"Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice"

LSB #556 (v. 1)



1 Dear Chris-tians, one and all, re - joice, With ex - ul - ta - tion
spring - ing, And with u - nit - ed heart and voice And ho - ly
rap - ture sing - ing, Pro-claim the won - ders God has done, How
His right arm the vic - t'ry won. What price our ran-som cost Him!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we pray that You would continue to pour out Your Holy Spirit upon Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth. Protect us from all temptations to stray from Your Word. Comfort us in all guilt and shame. Give us Your saving peace and unity in the church here on earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Revelation 14:6-7

(An Eternal Gospel)

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM (10:30 a.m.)

arr. S. Pethel

"Come, Christians, Join to Sing"

*Come, Christians, join to sing Alleluia! Amen!
Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia! Amen!
Let all, with heart and voice, before His throne rejoice;
Praise His gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!*

*Come, lift your hearts on high, Alleluia! Amen!
Let praises fill the sky; Alleluia! Amen!
He is our guide and friend; to us He'll condescend;
His love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!*

*Praise yet our Christ again. Alleluia! Amen!
Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen!
On heaven's blissful shore His goodness we'll adore,
Singing forevermore, "Alleluia! Amen!"
Come, Christians, join to sing!*

(The Righteousness of God through Faith)

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ²⁷Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

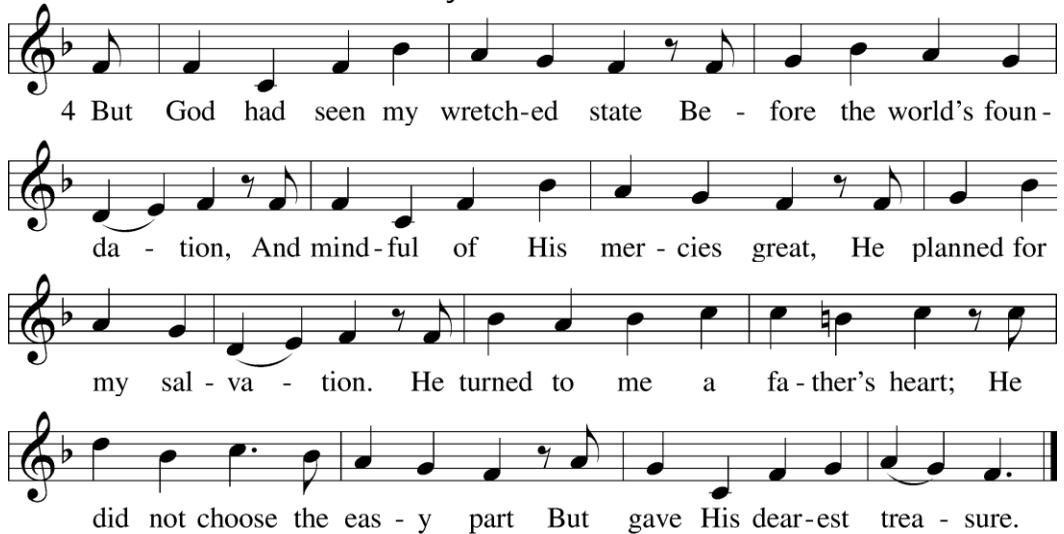
This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THEME HYMN

"Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice"

LSB #556 (v. 4)



4 But God had seen my wretch-ed state Be - fore the world's foun -
da - tion, And mind - ful of His mer - cies great, He planned for
my sal - va - tion. He turned to me a fa - ther's heart; He
did not choose the eas - y part But gave His dear - est trea - sure.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 8:31-36

(The Truth Will Set You Free)

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the Eighth Chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

CATECHISM

Explanation to the Second Article of the Creed

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

BIBLE PRESENTATION TO THIRD GRADERS (10:30 a.m.)

Anne Cahill

Hans Dietrich

Joey Graham

Avalyn House

Carolyn Phillips

Caroline Schmidtke

Brady Taylor

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Thy Strong Word"

LSB #578 (v. 1,3-4)



1 Thy strong word did cleave the dark - ness; At Thy
3 Thy strong Word be - speaks us righ - teous; Bright with
4 From the cross Thy wis - dom shin - ing Break - eth



speak - ing it was done. For cre - at - ed
Thine own ho - li - ness, Glo - rious now, we
forth in con - qu'ring might; From the cross for -



light we thank Thee, While Thine or - dered sea - sons run.
press toward glo - ry, And our lives our hopes con - fess.
ev - er beam - eth All Thy bright re - deem - ing light.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Praise to



Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,
Thee who light dost send! Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!
al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia with - out end!

SERMON

"Free Indeed!"

John 8:31-36

Rev. Clifford Hellmers, Pastor Emeritus

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord in Your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"In the Wonder of His Grace"

Adult Choir (10:30)

*As we come to the table of the Lord,
To renew our minds and feast upon His Word,
Here we celebrate our faith, on this holy sacred day;
As we come to the table of the Lord.*

*Here we share the bread of life, freely given;
Together, we receive His sweet embrace;
And we drink the cup of love sent from heaven.
We live in the wonder of His grace.*

*As we come into the presence of the Lord,
To commune with Him, and hear His precious Word,
Now we seek to learn His ways. And we lift our hearts in praise,
As we come into the presence of the Lord.*

*Here we share the bread of life, freely given;
Together, we receive His sweet embrace;
And we drink the cup of love sent from heaven.
We live in the wonder of His grace, of His grace.*

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

"God Loved the World So That He Gave"

LSB #571



1 God loved the world so that He gave His on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, Who was made
3 God would not have the sin - ner die; His Son with
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son For - gives all



Son the lost to save, That all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; All then who trust in
sav - ing grace is nigh; His Spir - it in the
sins which you have done; And, jus - ti - fied by



Him be - lieve Should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Him a - lone Are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
Word de - clares How we in Christ are heav - en's heirs.
Je - sus' blood, Your Bap - tism grants the high - est good.

5 If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

6 Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O lessed Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

"Salvation unto Us Has Come"

LSB #555



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
3 It was a false, mis - lead - ing dream That God His Law had giv - en
4 From sin our flesh could not ab - stain, Sin held its sway un - ceas - ing;



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.
That sin - ners could them - selves re - deem And by their works gain heav - en.
The task was use - less and in vain, Our guilt was e'er in - creas - ing.



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
The Law is but a mir - ror bright To bring the in - bred
None can re - move sin's poi - soned dart Or pu - ri - fy our



world a - tone; He is our one Re - deem - er.
Law re - quires, And lost is our con - di - tion.
sin to light That lurks with - in our na - ture.
guile - ful heart— So deep is our cor - rup - tion.

~the distribution hymns continue on the following page~

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness"

LSB #563



1 Je - sus, Thy blood and righ - teous - ness My beau - ty
2 Bold shall I stand in that great day, Cleansed and re -
3 Lord, I be - lieve Thy pre - cious blood, Which at the
4 Lord, I be - lieve, were sin - ners more Than sands up -



are, my glo - rious dress; Midst flam - ing worlds, in
deemed, no debt to pay; Ful - ly ab - solved through
mer - cy seat of God Pleads for the cap - tives'
on the o - cean shore, Thou hast for all a



these ar - rayed, With joy shall I lift up my head.
these I am From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.
lib - er - ty, Was al - so shed in love for me.
ran - som paid, For all a full a - tone - ment made.

5 When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
This then shall be my only plea:
Jesus hath lived and died for me.

6 Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,
Whose boundless mercy hath for me,
For me, and all Thy hands have made,
An everlasting ransom paid.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

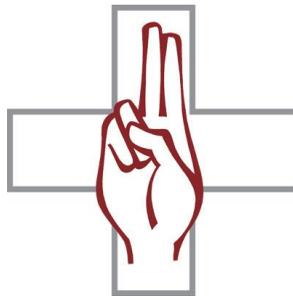
Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord Almighty bless us and direct our days and our deeds in His peace.

Amen.



CLOSING HYMN

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

LSB #575 (v. 1-2,4)



1 My hope is built on nothing less Than Je - sus'
2 When dark - ness veils His love - ly face, I rest on
4 When He shall come with trum - pet sound, Oh, may I



blood and righ - teous - ness; No mer - it of my
His un - chang - ing grace; In ev - 'ry high and
then in Him be found, Clothed in His righ - teous -



own I claim But whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
storm - y gale My an - chor holds with - in the veil.
ness a - lone, Re - deemed to stand be - fore His throne!

Refrain



On Christ, the sol-id rock, I stand; All oth-er ground is sink-ing sand.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE