



*We the People*

HOLY BIBLE

God & Country

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## 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](http://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](mailto:pastor@vestavialutheran.org) text: 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. 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.



**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 after the sermon. 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 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*

## **PRAYER SERVICE FOR OUR NATION**

**Independence Day Service of Celebration & Thanksgiving**

July 3, 2022

### **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.**

## PSALMODY

*~select verses from Psalm 33*

Let all the earth fear the LORD;

**Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him!**

For He spoke, and it came to be;

**He commanded, and it stood firm.**

The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

**He frustrates the plans of the peoples.**

The counsel of the LORD stands forever,

**the plans of His heart to all generations.**

Blessèd is the nation whose God is the LORD,

**the people whom He has chosen as His heritage!**

Our soul waits for the LORD;

**He is our help and our shield.**

For our heart is glad in Him,

**because we trust in His holy name.**

Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,

**even as we hope in You.**

# HYMN

## "Eternal Father, Strong to Save"

LSB #717



1 E - ter - nal Fa - ther, strong to save, Whose arm hath bound the  
2 O Christ, whose voice the wa - ters heard And hushed their rag - ing  
3 Most Ho - ly Spir - it, who didst brood Up - on the cha - os



rest - less wave, Who bidd'st the might - y o - cean deep Its  
at Thy word, Who walk - edst on the foam - ing deep And  
dark and rude, And bid its an - gry tu - mult cease, And



own ap - point - ed lim - its keep: O hear us when we  
calm a - mid its rage didst sleep: O hear us when we  
give, for wild con - fu - sion, peace: O hear us when we



cry to Thee For those in per - il on the sea.  
cry to Thee For those in per - il on the sea.  
cry to Thee For those in per - il on the sea.

4. Praise to the Father, to the Son, and to the Spirit three in one.  
May we, who walk now led by faith, continue in thy love and grace;  
Help us to be here in this place, thy hands, thy feet, thy shielding face.  
Amen!

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Lord, keep this nation under Your care. Bless the leaders of our land that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to the other nations of the earth. Grant that we may choose trustworthy leaders, contribute to wise decisions for the general welfare, and serve You faithfully in our generation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **FIRST READING**

1 Timothy 2:1-3

*(Christians Are Called to Pray for Governing Authorities)*

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. <sup>3</sup>This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **SECOND READING**

Romans 13:1-10

*(Christians Are Called to Honor Governing Authorities)*

<sup>1</sup>Let 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. <sup>2</sup>Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup>For 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, <sup>4</sup>for 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.

<sup>5</sup>Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. <sup>6</sup>For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. <sup>7</sup>Pay 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.

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The 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." <sup>10</sup>Love 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)



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.**

*(Give to the Government What Is the Government's; Give to God What Is God's)*

<sup>13</sup>And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. <sup>14</sup>And 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?" <sup>15</sup>But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." <sup>16</sup>And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." <sup>17</sup>Jesus 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.**

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

### 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**

*"Praying for Old Glory to God's Glory"*

**1 Timothy 2:1-3**

Rev. Michael Ahlemeyer

**DOXOLOGY**

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

LSB #805

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all  
crea - tures here be - low; Praise Him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly  
host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Almighty God, You have given us this good land as our heritage. Lord, in  
Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Grant that we remember Your generosity and constantly do Your will. Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Grant that we, who came from many nations with many different languages, may become a united people. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Support us in defending our liberties, and give those to whom we have entrusted the authority of government the spirit of wisdom, that there may be justice and peace in our land. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

When times are prosperous, may our hearts be thankful, and in troubled times do not let our trust in You fail. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For [\_\_\_\_\_ and for] all who have any need, that even as Jesus has borne the burdens of all mankind, He might likewise look upon them in mercy and grant them healing now and patience to await the resurrection on the Last Day. Lord, in Your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Into Your hands, Heavenly Father, we commit all for whom we pray trusting in Your mercy through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## 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.**

## 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.

## GOSPEL PREPARATION HYMN

"Just As I Am"

LSB #570 (v. 1)



I Just as I am, with - out one plea But that Thy  
blood was shed for me And that Thou bidd'st me come to  
Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

*~please be seated for the Distribution~*

## DISTRIBUTION

### 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!**

*~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)

