



The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills  
**Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany**  
January 29, 2023



## 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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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 Classes meets in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. Children, Confirmation, and Youth classes also meet at 9:15 a.m. in the class rooms downstairs.



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 common cup will be offered to those who do not take an individual cup. 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.

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January 29, 2023

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"My Song Is Love Unknown"

LSB # 430 (v. 1,2,7)



1 My song is love un - known, My Sav - ior's love to  
2 He came from His blest throne Sal - va - tion to be -



me, Love to the love - less shown That they might love - ly  
stow; But men made strange, and none The longed - for Christ would



be. Oh, who am I That for my sake  
know. But, oh, my friend, My friend in - deed,



My Lord should take Frail flesh and die?  
Who at my need His life did spend!

7 Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine!  
Never was love, dear King, never was grief like Thine.  
This is my friend, in whose sweet praise  
I all my days could gladly spend!

**+ HOLY BAPTISM +**

**(10:30 a.m.)**

**Sarah Thompson**

*Daughter of Emily & Brett Thompson*

**We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as a fellow member of the body of Christ, a child of the same heavenly Father, to work with us in His Kingdom.**

*~the 10:30 service continues on page 3 with the Prayer of the Day~*

**CALL TO WORSHIP (8:00 a.m.)**

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

**Amen.**

God demonstrated His own love for us in this,

**While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (8:00 a.m.)**

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.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty, everlasting God, through Your only Son, our blessed Lord, You commanded us to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us. Therefore, we earnestly implore You that by Your gracious working our enemies may be led to true repentance, may have the same love toward us as we have toward them, and may be of one accord and of one mind and heart with us and with Your whole Church; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **FIRST READING**

Ephesians 4:29-5:2

*(Imitate the Love of God)*

<sup>29</sup>Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

<sup>1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup>And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**"Blest Are They"**

*Violin: Pei-Ju Wu*

*Guitars: Todd Pickard & Aaron Tallo*

*Djembe: Melissa Phillips*

*Blest are they, the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of God.  
Blest are they, full of sorrow; they shall be consoled.  
Rejoice and be glad, be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!*

*Blest are they, the lowly ones; they shall inherit the earth.  
Blest are they who hunger and thirst; they shall have their fill.  
Rejoice and be glad, be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!*

*Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs.  
Blest are they, the pure of heart; they shall see God.  
Blest are they who seek peace; they are the children of God.  
Blest are they who suffer in faith; the glory of God is theirs.  
Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!*

*Blest are you who suffer hate, all because of me.  
Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see.  
Rejoice and be glad, be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad, oh be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!  
Yours is the Kingdom of God!  
Yours is the kingdom, the kingdom of God, kingdom of God!*

## EPISTLE READING

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

(Love)

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant <sup>5</sup>or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup>it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup>Love never ends.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL PREPARATION HYMN

"Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service"

LSB 848 (v. 1,4)



1 Lord, whose love through hum - ble ser - vice Bore the weight of  
4 Called by wor - ship to Your ser - vice, Forth in Your dear



hu - man need, Who up - on the cross, for - sak - en,  
name we go, To the child, the youth, the a - ged,



Of - fered mer - cy's per - fect deed, We, Your ser - vants, bring the  
Love in liv - ing deeds to show; Hope and health, good - will and



wor - ship Not of voice a - lone, but heart, Con - se -  
com - fort, Coun - sel, aid, and peace we give, That Your



crat - ing to Your pur - pose Ev - 'ry gift that You im - part.  
ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom May Your mer - cy know and live.

*(Love Your Enemies)*

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

<sup>2</sup>And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

<sup>9</sup>"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

<sup>10</sup>"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

<sup>43</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' <sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup>And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup>You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

LSB #700 (v. 1-2)



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of  
 2 Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to



heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us Thy  
 ev - 'ry trou - bled breast; Let us all in



hum - ble dwell - ing, All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown.  
 Thee in - her - it; Let us find Thy prom - ised rest.



Je - sus, Thou art all com - pas - sion, Pure, un -  
 Take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha



bound - ed love Thou art; Vis - it us with  
 and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as



Thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.

**SERMON**

*"Love Your Enemy"*

**Matthew 5:44**

Rev. Michael Ahlemeyer

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"*

LSB #700 (v. 3-4)

3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; Let us  
4 Fin - ish then Thy new cre - a - tion, Pure and

all Thy life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re -  
spot - less let us be; Let us see Thy

turn, and nev - er, Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave.  
great sal - va - tion Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee,

Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, Serve Thee  
Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, Till in

as Thy hosts a - bove, Pray and praise Thee  
heav'n we take our place, Till we cast our

with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.  
crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise!

## **OFFERING**

*~please sign the Record of Fellowship during the Offering*

## **OFFERTORY**

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

## **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.**

# AGNUS DEI

"The Lamb"

LSB #547 (v. 1-2)



1 The Lamb, the Lamb, O Fa - ther, where's the sac - ri - fice?  
2 The Lamb, the Lamb, One per - fect fi - nal of - fer - ing.



Faith sees, be - lieves God will pro - vide the Lamb of price!  
The Lamb, the Lamb, Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing.

*Refrain*



Wor - thy is the Lamb whose death makes me His



own! The Lamb is reign - ing on His throne!

*~please be seated for the Distribution~*

# DISTRIBUTION

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table"

LSB #618



1 I come, O Sav - ior, to Thy ta - ble, For weak and  
2 Thy heart is filled with fer - vent yearn - ing That sin - ners  
3 Un - wor - thy though I am, O Sav - ior, Be - cause I  
4 Wea - ry am I and heav - y lad - en; With sin my  
5 What high - er gift can we in - her - it? It is faith's



wea - ry is my soul; Thou, Bread of Life, a -  
may sal - va - tion see Who, Lord, to Thee in  
have a sin - ful heart, Yet Thou Thy lamb wilt  
soul is sore op - pressed; Re - ceive me gra - cious -  
bond and sol - id base; It is the strength of



lone art a - ble To sat - is - fy and make me whole:  
faith are turn - ing; So I, a sin - ner, come to Thee.  
ban - ish nev - er, For Thou my faith - ful shep - herd art:  
ly and glad - den My heart, for I am now Thy guest.  
heart and spir - it, The cov - e - nant of hope and grace.



Lord, may Thy bod - y and Thy blood Be for my soul the high - est good!

~Distribution Hymns Continue on the following page~

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

"Song for the Nations" (10:30)

Adult Choir

"Jesus Comes Today with Healing"

LSB #620 (v. 1-4)



1 Je - sus comes to - day with heal - ing, Knock - ing at my  
2 Christ Him - self, the priest pre - sid - ing, Yet in bread and  
3 Un - der bread and wine, though low - ly, I re - ceive the  
4 God de - scends with heav'n - ly pow - er, Gives Him - self to



door, ap - peal - ing, Of - f'ring par - don, grace, and peace.  
wine a - bid - ing In this ho - ly sac - ra - ment,  
Sav - ior ho - ly, Blood and bod - y, giv'n for me,  
me this hour In this or - di - nar - y sign.



He Him - self makes prep - a - ra - tion, And I hear His  
Gives the bread of life, once bro - ken, And the cup, the  
Ver - y Lamb of God from heav - en, Who to bit - ter  
On my tongue His pledge re - ceiv - ing, I ac - cept His



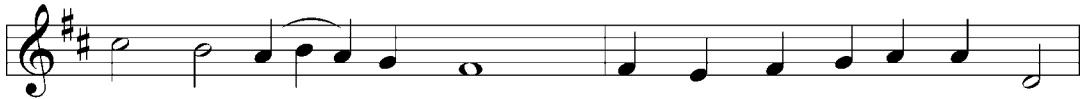
in - vi - ta - tion: "Come and taste the bless - ed feast."  
pre - cious to - ken Of His sa - cred cov - e - nant.  
death was giv - en, Hung up - on the curs - ed tree.  
grace, be - liev - ing That I taste His love di - vine.

"At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"

LSB #633 (v. 1-3)



1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to  
2 Praise we Him, whose love di - vine Gives His  
3 Where the pas - chal blood is poured, Death's dread



our vic - to - rious King, Who has washed us in the tide  
sa - cred blood for wine, Gives His bod - y for the feast—  
an - gel sheathes the sword; Is - rael's hosts tri - um - phant go



Flow - ing from His pierc - ed side. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Christ the vic - tim, Christ the priest. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Through the wave that drowns the foe. Al - le - lu - ia!

**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.**

## SENDING HYMN

"Go, My Children, with My Blessing"

LSB #922 (v. 1-3)



1 Go, My chil-dren, with My bless - ing, Nev - er a - lone.  
2 Go, My chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, At peace and pure.  
3 Go, My chil-dren, fed and nour - ished, Clos - er to Me;



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you; You are My own. In My  
Here you learned how much I love you, What I can cure. Here you  
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, Joy - ful and free. Here My



love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you Mine for - ev - er.  
heard My dear Son's sto - ry; Here you touched Him, saw His glo - ry.  
Spir - it's pow - er filled you; Here His ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, My chil-dren, with My bless - ing— You are My own.  
Go, My chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, At peace and pure.  
Go, My chil-dren, fed and nour - ished, Joy - ful and free.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE