



The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

May 21, 2023

8:00 a.m. Worship Service



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
VICAR: Andrew Frerichs – vicar@vestavialutheran.org
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: Melanie Goodson - bookkeeper@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. 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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PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"O Holy Spirit, Enter In"

LSB #913



1 O Ho - ly Spir - it, en - ter in, And in our hearts
2 Give to Your Word im - pres - sive pow'r, That in our hearts
3 O might - y Rock, O Source of life, Let Your dear Word,



Your work be - gin, Your dwell - ing place now make us.
from this good hour As fire it may be glow - ing,
in doubt and strife, In us be strong - ly burn - ing



Sun of the soul, O Light di - vine, A - round and in
That in true Chris - tian u - ni - ty We faith - ful wit -
That we be faith - ful un - to death And live in love



us bright - ly shine, To joy and glad - ness wake us
ness - es may be, Your glo - ry ev - er show - ing.
and ho - ly faith, From You true wis - dom learn - ing.



That we may be Tru - ly liv - ing, To You giv - ing
Hear us, cheer us By Your teach - ing; Let our preach - ing
Your grace and peace On us show - er; By Your pow - er



Prayer un - ceas - ing And in love be still in - creas - ing.
And our la - bor Praise You, Lord, and serve our neigh - bor.
Christ con - fess - ing, Let us see our Sav - ior's bless - ing.

INVOCATION

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

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.

If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition.

Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. 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.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS



1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat - ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Blessed Lord, as the disciples stared into heaven as You ascended, You promised that You would return in glory. Keep our eyes always watchful of Your coming, and let us see the places where You are at work in the world; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 1:1–11

¹In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³To them He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴And while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, “you heard from Me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶So when they had come together, they asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Philippians 3:17-21

¹⁷Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior,

the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of three phrases of the word "Alleluia". The first phrase starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G, then eighth notes A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The second phrase starts with a quarter note G, then eighth notes A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The third phrase starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G, then eighth notes A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The piece ends with a double bar line.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 24:44–53

The Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

⁴⁴Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." ⁵⁰Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. ⁵¹While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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 High-Ascended, Now in Glory Seated"

LSB #840 (v. 1,3-5)



1 Christ high-as-cend-ed, now in glo-ry seat-ed, Throned and ex-
3 Christ, who in dy-ing won for us sal-va-tion, Lives now the
4 Christ in His splen-dor, all do-min-ion gain-ing, Christ with His
5 As at His part-ing, joy shall ban-ish griev-ing, Faith in His



alt-ed, vic-to-ry com-plet-ed, Death's dread do-min-ion
first-born of the new cre-a-tion; To win dis-ci-ples
peo-ple ev-er-more re-main-ing, Christ to all a-ges
pres-ence strength-en our be-liev-ing; Filled with His Spir-it,



fi-nal-ly de-feat-ed, We are His wit-ness-es.
out of ev-'ry na-tion, We are His wit-ness-es.
glo-ri-ous-ly reign-ing, We are His wit-ness-es.
love and pow'r re-ceiv-ing, We are His wit-ness-es.

SERMON

"What Are You Looking At?"

Luke 24:48

Vicar Andrew Frerichs



OFFERING

~please sign the Record of Fellowship during the Offering

VOLUNTARY

PRAYERS 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 OF THE LORD

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

~Please be seated for the Distribution~

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia"

LSB #466



1 Christ has a - ris - en, al - le - lu - ia.
2 For three long days the grave did its worst
3 The an - gel said to them, "Do not fear!
4 "Go spread the news: He's not in the grave;
5 Christ has a - ris - en; He sets us free;



Re - jice and praise Him, al - le - lu - ia.
Un - til its strength by God was dis - persed.
You look for Je - sus who is not here.
He has a - ris - en this world to save.
Al - le - lu - ia, to Him prais - es be.



For our Re - deem - er burst from the tomb,
He who gives life did death un - der - go;
See for your - selves the tomb is all bare;
Je - sus' re - deem - ing la - bors are done;
Je - sus is liv - ing! Let us all sing;



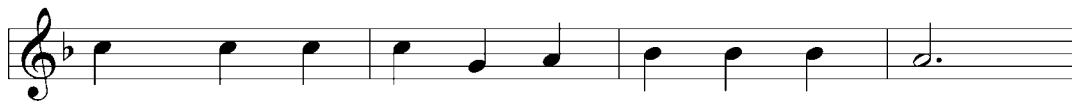
E - ven from death, dis - pel - ling its gloom.
And in its con - quest His might did show.
On - ly the grave cloths are ly - ing there."
E - ven the bat - tle with sin is won."
He reigns tri - um - phant, heav - en - ly King.

~please see the following page for the Refrain~

Refrain



Let us sing praise to Him with end - less joy;



Death's fear - ful sting He has come to de - stroy.



Our sin for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

"Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious"

LSB #495 (v. 1,3-4)



1 Look, ye saints, the sight is glo - rious; See the Man of
3 Sin - ners in de - ri - sion crowned Him, Mock - ing thus the
4 Hark, those bursts of ac - cla - ma - tion! Hark, those loud tri -



Sor - rows now! From the fight re - turned vic - to - rious,
Sav - ior's claim; Saints and an - gels crowd a - round Him,
um - phant chords! Je - sus takes the high - est sta - tion;



Ev - 'ry knee to Him shall bow. Crown Him! Crown Him!
Own His ti - tle, praise His name. Crown Him! Crown Him!
Oh, what joy the sight af - fords! Crown Him! Crown Him!



Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crowns be - come the
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Spread a - broad the
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! King of kings and



vic - tor's brow. Crowns be - come the vic - tor's brow.
vic - tor's fame. Spread a - broad the vic - tor's fame.
Lord of lords! King of kings and Lord of lords!

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank and praise You for feeding us the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with our mouths received this gift of grace, we may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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.

~the service continues on the following page with the Recessional Hymn~

RECESSIONAL HYMN

"Up through Endless Ranks of Angels"

LSB #491 (v. 1, 3-4)



1 Up through end - less ranks of an - gels, Cries of tri - umph
3 To our lives of wan - ton wan - d'ring Send Your Spir - it,
4 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Oh, to breathe the



in His ears, To His heav'n - ly throne as - cend - ing,
prom - ised guide; Through our lives of fear and fail - ure
Spir - it's grace! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Hav - ing van - quished all their fears, Christ looks down up -
With Your pow'r and love a - bide; Wel - come us, as
Oh, to see the Fa - ther's face! Al - le - lu - ia,



on His faith - ful, Leav - ing them in hap - py tears.
You were wel - comed, To an end - less Eas - ter - tide.
al - le - lu - ia! Oh, to feel the Son's em - brace!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE