

Which of the two sons  
did the will of his father?  
Matthew 21:28

The  
Parable  
of the  
Two Sons

The Lutheran Church *of* Vestavia Hills  
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
October 1, 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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VICAR: Matthew Vatthauer – [vicar@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:vicar@vestavialutheran.org)  
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BOOK KEEPER: Melanie Goodson - [bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org](mailto:bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org)  
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 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. Please notify an usher if you need a communion assistant to bring the Lord's Supper to you in the pew.

**The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills**  
**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

October 1, 2023

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OPENING HYMN**

"Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices"

LSB #811 (v. 1-2,4)



1 Oh, that I had a thou - sand voic - es To praise my  
2 O all you pow'rs that He im - plant - ed, A - rise, keep  
4 All crea-tures that have breath and mo - tion, That throug the



God with thou-sand tongues! My heart, which in the Lord re -  
si - lence now no more; Put forth the strength that God has  
earth, the sea, the sky, Come, share with me my heart's de -



joic - es, Would then pro-claim in grate - ful songs To all, wher -  
grant - ed! Your no - blest work is to a - dore. O soul and  
vo - tion, Help me to sing God's prais - es high. My ut - most



ev - er I might be, What great things God has done for me.  
bod - y, join to raise With heart - felt joy our Mak - er's praise.  
pow'rs can nev - er quite De - clare the won - ders of His might.

## INVOCATION

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

## 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.**

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.**

## KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



**C** A - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"This is the Feast"

*Refrain*

**C** This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

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

1 — Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose  
 2 Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and  
 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and  
 4 Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to  
 5 For the Lamb who was slain has be -

blood set us free to be peo - ple of God. *Refrain*  
 hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are His. *Refrain*  
 join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: *Stanza 4*  
 God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*  
 gun His reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Final Refrain*

*Final Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

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

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God, the strength of all who put their trust in You, because of the weakness of our sinful nature we can do nothing to earn salvation. Grant us the help of Your grace that we may please You with faith and 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**

Ezekiel 18:25-32

*(Repent and Turn from Transgression)*

<sup>25</sup>“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way not just? Is it not your ways that are not just? <sup>26</sup>When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it; for the injustice that he has done he shall die. <sup>27</sup>Again, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he shall save his life. <sup>28</sup>Because he considered and turned away from all the transgressions that he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, are my ways not just? Is it not your ways that are not just?

<sup>30</sup>“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin. <sup>31</sup>Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup>For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## CHORAL ANTHEM

J.M. Martin

### *"The Life of My Song"*

*Lord, You are the life of my song. You are the reason I lift up my praise.  
Lord, You are the heart of my worship, You fill my mouth with the music of grace.  
Alleluia, alleluia, Lord, I will love You all of my days.  
Alleluia, alleluia, Lord, You are worthy, worthy of praise.  
Let me trumpet the call of salvation. Let me sing Your song in the night.  
Lord, I will give You the honor and glory. Make me an instrument of Your light!  
Lord, make me an instrument of light!  
Lord, You are the life of my song. You are the reason I lift up my praise.  
Let, You are the heart of my worship, You fill my mouth with the music of grace.  
Alleluia, alleluia, Lord, I will love You all of my days.  
Alleluia, alleluia, Lord, You are worthy, worthy of praise.  
Lord, You are worthy, worthy of praise. Worthy of praise.*

## EPISTLE READING

Philippians 2:1-4,14-18

### *(Christ's Example of Humility)*

<sup>1</sup>So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>14</sup>Do all things without grumbling or questioning, <sup>15</sup>that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup>holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup>Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. <sup>18</sup>Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



## ALLELUIA VERSE

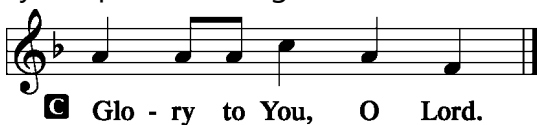


Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 21:28-32

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.



Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

*(The Parable of the Two Sons)*

<sup>28</sup>“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ <sup>29</sup>And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Praise to You, O Christ.

## APOSTLES' CREED

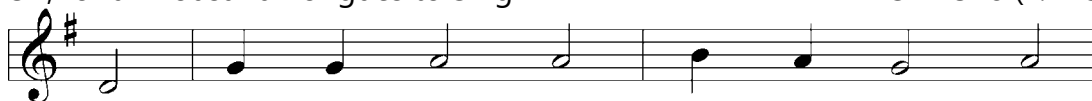
~inside back LSB pew hymnal cover

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

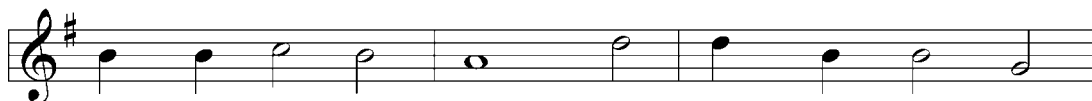
## HYMN OF THE DAY

"Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

LSB #528 (v. 1-3,7)



1 Oh, for a thou - sand tongues to sing My  
2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, As -  
3 Je - sus! The name that charms our fears, That



great Re - deem - er's praise, The glo - ries of my  
sist me to pro - claim, To spread through all the  
bids our sor - rows cease; 'Tis mu - sic in the



God and King, The tri - umphs of His grace!  
earth a - broad, The hon - ors of Thy name.  
sin - ner's ears, 'Tis life and health and peace.

7 To God all glory, praise, and love  
Be now and ever giv'n  
By saints below and saints above,  
The Church in earth and heav'n.

## SERMON

*"Actions Speak Louder than Words"*

**Matthew 21:28-32**

Vicar Matthew Vathauer

## OFFERING

*~Please sign the Record of Fellowship during the offering~*

## VOLUNTARY

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord in Your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

*~inside back LSB pew hymnal cover*

## SANCTUS



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

### AGNUS DEI

☐ Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a-way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*~Please be seated for the Distribution~*

### DISTRIBUTION

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

LSB #790



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly  
3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,  
4 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -



a - tion! O my soul, praise Him, for He is your  
reign - ing And, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -  
made you, Health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly  
fend you; Sure - ly His good - ness and mer - cy shall



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to His  
lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen All that is  
fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief Ev - er has  
dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new What the Al -



tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
need - ful has been Sent by His gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
failed of re - lief? Wings of His mer - cy did shade you.  
might - y can do As with His love He be - friends you.

- 5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before Him!  
Let the Amen  
Sound from His people again;  
Gladly forever adore Him!

## DISTRIBUTION HYMNS (continued)

"We Are Called to Be God's People" (10:30 a.m.)

LCVH Adult Choir

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

LSB #793



1 Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en; To His feet your  
2 Praise Him for His grace and fa - vor To His peo - ple  
3 Fa - ther - like He tends and spares us; Well our fee - ble  
4 An - gels, help us to a - dore Him; You be - hold Him



trib - ute bring; Ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,  
in dis - tress; Praise Him still the same as ev - er,  
frame He knows; In His hand He gent - ly bears us,  
face to face; Sun and moon, bow down be - fore Him,



Ev - er - more His prais - es sing: Al - le - lu - ia,  
Slow to chide and swift to bless: Al - le - lu - ia,  
Res - cues us from all our foes. Al - le - lu - ia,  
All who dwell in time and space. Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King.  
al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in His faith - ful - ness.  
al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly yet His mer - cy flows.  
al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

"O Worship the King"

LSB #804



1 O wor - ship the King, all - glo - rious a - bove.  
2 O tell of His might, O sing of His grace,  
3 This earth, with its store of won - ders un - told,  
4 Thy boun - ti - ful care what tongue can re - cite?



O grate - ful - ly sing His pow'r and His love;  
Whose robe is the light, whose can - o - py space;  
Al - might - y, Thy pow'r hath found - ed of old,  
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light,



Our shield and de - fend - er, the An - cient of Days,  
His char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der - clouds form,  
Es - tab - lished it fast by a change - less de - cree,  
It streams from the hills, it de - scends to the plain,



Pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor and gird - ed with praise.  
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.  
And round it hath cast, like a man - tle, the sea.  
And sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord God, bless Your Word wherever it is proclaimed. Make it a word of power and peace to convert those not yet Your own and to confirm those who have come to saving faith. May Your Word pass from the ear to the heart, from the heart to the lip, and from the lip to the life that, as You have promised, Your Word may achieve the purpose for which You send it; 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.**

## CLOSING HYMN

"From All That Dwell Below the Skies"

LSB #816



1 From all that dwell be - low the skies      Let the Cre - a - tor's  
2 E - ter - nal are Thy mer - cies, Lord;      E - ter - nal truth at -  
3 All praise to God the Fa - ther be,      All praise, e - ter - nal



praise a - rise;      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!  
tends Thy Word.      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!  
Son, to Thee.      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!



Let the Re - deem - er's name be sung      Through ev - 'ry land by  
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore      Till suns shall rise and  
Whom with the Spir - it we a - dore      For - ev - er and for -



ev - 'ry tongue.      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!  
set no more.      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!  
ev - er - more:      Al - le - lu - ia,      al - le - lu - ia!



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