

The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

March 10, 2024





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

VICAR: Matthew Vatthauer – 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



<u>TO OUR GUESTS:</u> 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.



<u>SUNDAY SCHOOL</u> 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.



<u>CHILDREN'S CHURCH and NURSERY</u> 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.



<u>COMMUNION</u> 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.

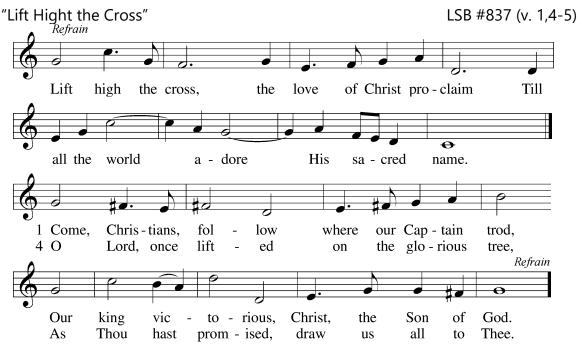
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PRELUDE

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN



Let ev'ry race and ev'ry language tell
 Of Him who saves our lives from death and hell. Refrain

CALL TO WORSHIP ~1 John 3

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

By this we know love, that Christ laid down His life for us.

So we ought to lay down our lives for others.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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.

HYMN



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!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal God, You so loved the world that You gave Your only Son into death for our sin. Take our lives, Lord, and use them to lift up Your Son so that all will be drawn to Him and find eternal life, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(The Bronze Serpent)

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. ⁵And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." ⁶Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." ⁹So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM (10:30 a.m.)

M. Hurley

"Amazing Grace and Love"

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

Amazing love, how can it be that he would die for you and me?

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;

How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.

Amazing love, how can it be that he would die for you and me?

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come;

It's grace that's brought me so very far, and grace will lead me home.

Amazing love, how can it be that he would die for you and me?

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,

We've no fewer days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun!

Amazing grace! Amazing grace! Amazing love!

EPISTLE READING Ephesians 2:1-9

(By Grace through Faith)

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁵and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ³so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL PREPARATION VERSE



HOLY GOSPEL John 3:14-21

The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the third chapter. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(As Moses Lifted Up the Serpent, so Must the Son of Man Be Lifted Up)

¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶[Jesus said:] "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life

→ everlasting. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE





SERMON

"Faithful Love"

John 3:16-18

Vicar Matthew Vatthauer

OFFERING

VOLUNTARY

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

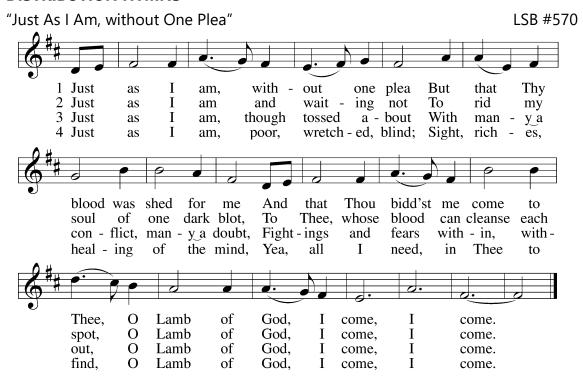
THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

~please be seated for the Distribution~

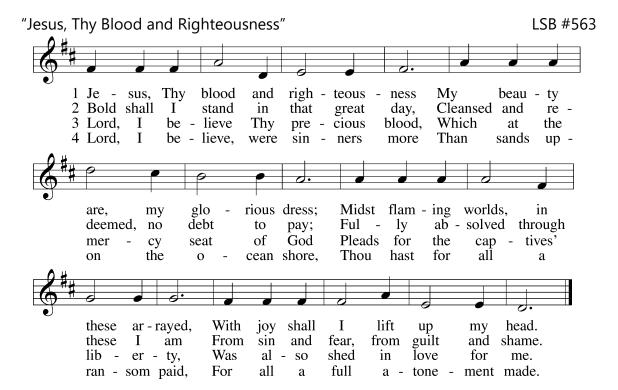
DISTRIBUTION HYMNS



- Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
 Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
 Because Thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 6 Just as I am; Thy love unknown Has broken ev'ry barrier down; Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

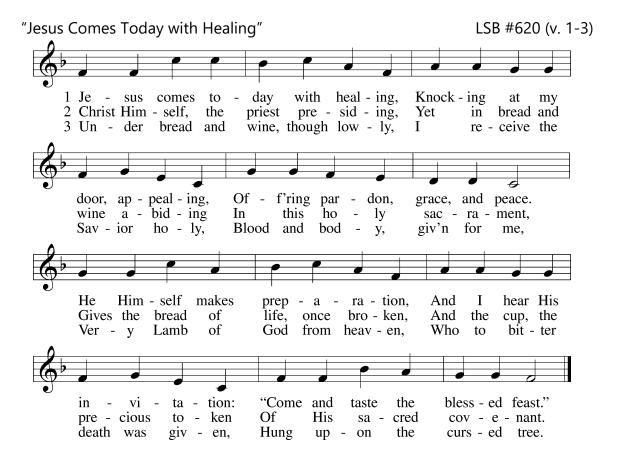
"For God So Loved" (10:30 a.m.)

LCVH Adult Choir



- 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.

~Distribution Hymns continue on the following page~



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 mouth received the holy Sacrament, 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.

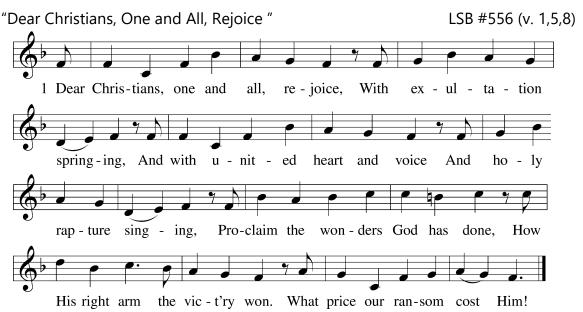
BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN



~the hymn continues on the following page~

God said to His belovèd Son:

 "It's time to have compassion.

 Then go, bright jewel of My crown,

 And bring to all salvation.

 From sin and sorrow set them free;

 Slay bitter death for them that they
 May live with You forever."

8 "Though he will shed My precious blood,
Me of My life bereaving,
All this I suffer for your good;
Be steadfast and believing.
Life will from death the vict'ry win;
My innocence shall bear your sin,
And you are blest forever.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

