

# VALLEYS *of* LENT

*Worship for the  
Sacred Season*

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m. Worship Service  
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
AND STUDENT CENTER

Rev. Marty Marks  
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511 Russell Road  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
March 11, 2026

11am & 7:00 p.m. *in-person*  
*YouTube & Facebook Live*

**Lenten Mid-week Worship 3** – Welcome to “The Valleys of Lent” series in which we look at different valleys from Scripture that point to something about the suffering Christ endured. Today’s Week 3 service finds us with Gideon in the “Valley” of the Winepress, where God calls this unlikely man to victory over his Midianite enemies. Our unlikely Savior will declare victory over sin, death and the devil on the cross.

♪ Pre-Service Music  
Ringing of the Bells  
Welcome

The Opening Hymn “In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

---LSB #427

The Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit  
**C** Amen

The Responsive Reading

- P** I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where will my help come?  
**C** **My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.**  
**P** He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.  
**C** **He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**  
**P** Even in the darkest valley, no evil need be feared.  
**C** **With Jesus by my side, The righteous path I take. I in his flock abide E’en for his own name’s sake. He cares for me in all my needs, Through each dark valley safely leads, On verdant pasture richly feeds.**  
**P** The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.  
**C** **The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.**  
**P** The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.  
**C** **The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.**  
**P** Even in the darkest valley, no evil need be feared.  
**C** **When wandering I stray Into some valley deep, My Shepherd finds the way, Restores his wayward sheep To him whose glory fills the skies, Who came to earth in human guise— Unto the Lord I lift my eyes.**  
**P** To you we lift up our eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!  
**C** **As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy on us.**

Prayer of the Day

- P** Dear God, in the “valley” of the winepress, Gideon was feeling hard-pressed by his situation. Enemies were all around him, and he was feeling alone. We, too, are hard-pressed by the trials and tribulations of life, and we feel alone sometimes. Help us to remember that you are always with us, O Lord. Give us strength to fight against our enemy, the devil, and defeat him by your power within us. Help us in our daily tasks not to lose heart, but to trust in your will for our lives and your ability to overcome every obstacle that hinders our faith in you. Amen.

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:26-31

Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God”? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

- P** This is the Word of the Lord. **C** **Thanks be to God.**

## The Second Reading

*Isaiah 9:2-7*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## The Sermon Text

*Judges 6:1-16*

The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in. And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the Lord.

When the people of Israel cried out to the Lord on account of the Midianites, the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of slavery. And I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. And I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.’ But you have not obeyed my voice.”

Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.” And Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.” And the Lord turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?” And he said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.” And the Lord said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## J Sermon Hymn: “On Eagles Wings”

*---LSB #727*

### The Drama: Gideon and the Lord

*Rev. Marty Marks*

*Tom Sawyer (11am); Tom Sawyer (7pm)*

### Sermon: “The ‘Valley’ of the Wine Press”

*Rev. Marty Marks*

### The Prayers

**P** How many enemies we face, O God; how fiercely they may frighten us. Give peace to the faint, O God; renew their strength.

**C** Bear them up on wings like eagles.

