



VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship *for the*
Sacred Season

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

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

Rev. Marty Marks
Rev@godwithusilc.org

511 Russell Road
DeKalb, IL 60115
March 25, 2026

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

Lenten Mid-Week Worship 5 – 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 for our sake so that we might be lifted from the low places of life. Today’s Week 5’s service puts us in The Valley of Decision, where Joshua says to the Children of Israel: “Choose this day whom you will serve.” Who is it that we serve in our lives today?

♪ **Pre-Service Music**
The Opening Hymn “Christ the Life of All the Living”
The Invocation

Ringing of the Bells

Welcome

---LSB #420 vs 1, 6-7

- 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** O Lord, our God, we have many things in this world that vie for our attention: money, fame, fortune, smartphones, televisions, computers. But what should receive the most attention is you. Help us to focus on you in all that we say and do. May our words and actions be ways in which we serve you and not ourselves. Show us how to make our devotion to you known in the world, and give us the ability to make our commitment to your Son, Jesus, our highest priority. Amen.

The First Reading

Joshua 24:1-15

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac. And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in the midst of it, and afterward I brought you out. Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time. Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow.

I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.' Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

John 11:45-57

P The holy Gospel according to St. John the 11th Chapter

C Glory to You O Lord

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they made plans to put him to death. Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples. Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?" Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

The Sermon Text

Joel 3:14-18

Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. The Lord roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake. But the Lord is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel. So you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain. And Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall never again pass through it. And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord and water the Valley of Shittim.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

♪ Sermon Hymn: "God of Grace and God of Glory"

---LSB 850

The Drama: "Joel and the Lord"

Rev. Marty Marks

Russ Coloumbe (11am); Charlie Schmidt (7pm)

Sermon: "The Valley of Decision"

Rev. Marty Marks

The Prayers

P Lord God, in the Garden of Gethsemane, your obedient Son Jesus made a choice: "Not my will, but yours be done." The cup of suffering would not be removed from him, but he chose instead to drink it for our sakes. We thank you this Lent for that blessed obedience, for the divine choice that leads to our redemption. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

C Help us ever to choose you, saying, "We will serve the Lord."

P We thank you as well for the examples of faithful saints throughout the centuries who have been moved to choose your will, O God, by whom the faith was passed on at length to our generation, to us. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

C Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”

P Lead us by your Holy Spirit to serve those whom you love, Lord God, especially those in any kind of need. Let us bring healing to the sick, comfort to the grieving, sustenance to the hungry, relief to the oppressed, hope to the hopeless, the Gospel to those who know it not or who have not yet come to believe it. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

C Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”

P You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. It is with full awareness of your providence that we dare to pray: “Give us this day our daily bread.” and open our hearts and our hands to share our daily bread with those who hunger in this world, that they may join us thankfully in following you. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

C Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”

P Let strife and selfishness be removed from among us, and grant to the nations of this earth and their leaders a passion for peace, that all may share your bounty with glad and generous hearts. Make us instruments of your peace. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

C Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”

P Now give us grace to follow Christ in faith through the solemn days ahead, that we may behold his holy suffering with true repentance and firm trust, and be led at last to that joyful gathering of all the faithful, where you have chosen to welcome us, where you live and reign as God forever and ever. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

C 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.

The Benediction

Isaiah 40:28-31

P The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

C He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

P He gives power to the faint and to him who has no might he increases strength.

C Even youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall fall exhausted;

P But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,

C They shall mount up with wings like eagles,

P They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

♪ The Closing: “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”

---LSB # 575

Silent Prayers

Announcements

Postlude

Participants – March 25, 2026

Altar Guild: Jackie Hanson

	11:00 a.m.	7:00 p.m.
Organist	Linda Conrad	Linda Conrad
Pastor	Rev. Marty Marks	Rev. Marty Marks
Voice Actors	Russ Coulombe & Pastor Marty	Charlie Schmidt & Pastor Marty