



*Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb;
and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it...*

— Exodus 17:6 —



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As We Gather

Have you ever followed your GPS faithfully, only to end up on a dead-end road or stuck in a ditch? You trusted the directions, but the destination feels completely wrong. As we continue our Lenten journey, we find the Israelites in a similar predicament. They followed God's pillar of cloud perfectly, yet arrived at a camp with absolutely no water. It felt like a divine dead end. Why would a loving God guide His people straight into a barren, life-threatening wasteland? As we open Exodus 17 this morning under the theme, "When God's 'GPS' Leads You Into a Ditch," we will explore those difficult seasons when God's perfect guidance brings us to impossible places, and where our parched souls can always find life.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn

1 – Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 143:10; 63:1; 78:15-16

P Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God;

C **Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.**

P O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You;

C **My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.**

P He split the rocks in the wilderness,

C **And gave them drink in abundance like the depths.**

P He also brought streams out of the rock,

C **And caused waters to run down like a river.**

Confession and Absolution

P We often expect God's path to be smooth and easy, but sometimes His route leads straight into the wilderness. When we feel stranded in a ditch of our own struggles, our sinful reaction is to grumble and doubt His goodness. We are tempted to ask, "Is the Lord among us or not?" Let us confess our doubt and rebellion to God our Father, seeking His forgiveness for Christ's sake.

C Almighty God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean, often rebelling against Your guidance. When our path is difficult, we doubt Your care. We test Your patience, demanding our own way instead of trusting Your providence. We try to quench our thirst with worldly things rather than Your steadfast provision. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P God has not left you in the wilderness to perish. In His infinite mercy, He has given His only Son, Jesus Christ, to be struck down for your transgressions, that from Him might flow the living water of forgiveness and eternal life. As a called 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.

C Amen.

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Glory be to the Father

Gloria Patri

P In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie

Lord, have mer-cy on us. Christ, have mer-cy
on us. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: "Lord, have mer-cy on us. Christ, have mer-cy". The second staff contains the melody for the second line of lyrics: "on us. Lord, have mer - cy on us.". The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.


Kyrie Eleison
LORD, HAVE MERCY

Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria in Excelsis



Glo - ry to God, we give you thanks and praise; Of
Lord Je - sus Christ, the Fa - ther's on - ly Son, You
A - lone, O Christ, You on - ly are the Lord, At



heav'n - ly joy and peace on earth we sing. We wor - ship
bore for us the load of this world's sin. O Lamb of
God's right hand in maj - es - ty most high: Who, with the



You, to You our hearts we raise, Lord God, al -
God, Your glo - rious vic - t'ry won, Re - ceive our
Spir - it wor - shiped and a - dored, With all the



might - y Fa - ther, heav'n - ly King.
prayer, grant us Your peace with - in.
heav'n - ly host we glo - ri - fy.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Epistle Reading

Romans 5:1-8

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation

produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. ⁶ For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 95:1-9

- P** Oh come, let us sing to the LORD!
- C** **Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.**
- P** Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving;
- C** **Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.**
- P** For the LORD is the great God,
- C** **And the great King above all gods.**
- P** In His hand are the deep places of the earth;
- C** **The heights of the hills are His also.**
- P** The sea is His, for He made it;
- C** **And His hands formed the dry land.**
- P** Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
- C** **Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.**
- P** For He is our God,
- C** **And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand.**
- P** Today, if you will hear His voice:
- C** **“Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of trial in the wilderness,**
- P** When your fathers tested Me;
- C** **They tried Me, though they saw My work.**

Gospel Reading

John 4:5-30, 39-42

⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” ¹¹ The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is

deep. Where then do You get that living water? ¹² Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." ¹⁵ The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." ¹⁹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵ The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." ²⁷ And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" ²⁸ The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ²⁹ "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" ³⁰ Then they went out of the city and came to Him. ³¹ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of His own word. ⁴² Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

Response

P Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.

C Amen.

Confession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

Hymn

376 – Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

Sermon Text

Exodus 17:1-7

¹ Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. ² Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.” So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?” ³ And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, “Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” ⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!” ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”



Sermon

When God's "GPS" Leads You Into a Ditch

Offertory

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Your pres - ence. Take not Your Ho - ly
Spir-it from me. Re store to me the joy of Your sal -
va - tion. Up - hold with Your Spir - it free.

Hymn

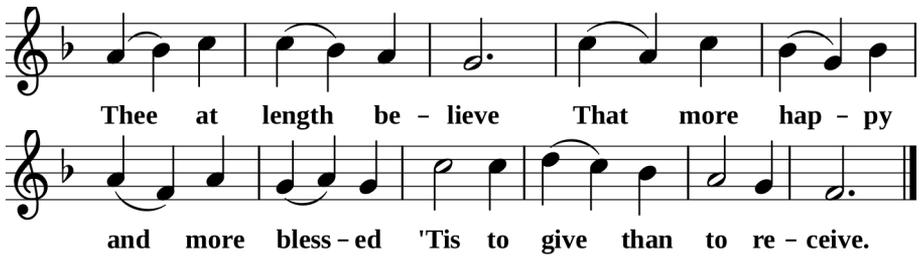
410 – Jesus, Lead Thou On

Offering

Offering Hymn

442 (2)

Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to yield Thee Glad - ly,
free - ly, of Thine own; With the sun - shine of Thy
good - ness Melt our thank - less hearts of stone
Till our cold and self - ish na - tures, Warmed by



Thee at length be - lieve That more hap - py
and more bless - ed 'Tis to give than to re - ceive.

General Prayer

The 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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
- C** Amen.

Hymn

54 – Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

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✝ Announcements ✝

Upcoming Schedule – winterhavenlutheran.com/church-calendar

March 8	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
March 11	2:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship
March 13	10:30 am	Learning with Littles
March 15	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service
March 18	2:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship
March 22	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)

Upcoming Meetings: Here is a schedule of our upcoming meetings:

- **April 5** – Quarterly Voters’ Meeting
- **May 3** – Education/Elders
- **June 7** – Trustees/Church Council

In Our Prayers: Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers: Don Beymer, Bob & Joan Doriot, Johanna Jaehnigen, David & Elsie Kleinschmidt, Shirley Rosenberry, and Mike Sheffield.

Looking Forward to Next Sunday: Have you ever been absolutely certain you were right, only to discover you were completely in the dark? Next Sunday, we turn to John 9 and the dramatic healing of a man born blind. Yet, the physical miracle is only half the story. The true tragedy unfolds among the Pharisees—religious experts who proudly boasted, “We see,” while remaining dead in spiritual darkness. Their self-righteous pride blinded them to the Savior standing right before their eyes. Join us next week as we explore “The Blindness of ‘Seeing.’” Come and hear how Jesus, the true Light of the world, graciously washes away our natural, sinful blindness so that we may clearly behold our crucified Redeemer in faith.

Midweek Lenten Series: Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus: Our midweek Lenten services have begun. This year, our meditation follows the theme “Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus.” We are exploring how the Old Testament account of Israel’s rescue from Egypt foreshadows our own rescue from sin and death. Just as God heard the cries of His people in bondage, He hears us and answers us in Christ Jesus.

Please join us for the remainder of these opportunities to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Savior’s passion. All services are at 2:00 PM.

Service Schedule:

- **Mar 11:** The Good News of a God Who Passes over Us in Mercy (Exodus 12:1-14)
- **Mar 18:** The Good News of a God Who Makes a Way for Us (Exodus 14:5-31)
- **Mar 25:** The Good News of a God Who Sustains on Our Journey (Exodus 16:1-18, 35)

Learning with Littles – Easter Bag Donations Needed: We're planning to put together special Easter bags for the children to enjoy at our March 27th Learning with Littles Session! We're aiming to assemble about 70 bags for children ages 4 and under, and we'd love your help. We're looking for both food and non-food items to fill the bags. Some suggestions include:

- **Food items:** fruit snacks, Cutie oranges, granola bars, Goldfish crackers, Easter-themed chocolate or candy
- **Non-food items:** small containers of Play-Doh, mini slinkies, bubbles, stickers, sticky hands, toy cars, hair bows, pop-its, slap bracelets

Thank you for supporting this outreach and helping us share the love of Jesus with young children and their families in our community!

Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday: We invite you to help beautify our sanctuary for Easter Sunday by purchasing an Easter lily in honor or memory of a loved one. Each lily is \$10. If you would like to participate, please sign up at the back of church by March 29.

CLC Call News: Calls were returned by Pastor Johnathan Schnose (Bethel, Morris, MN) to Messiah (Eau Claire, WI), Pastor Stefan Sonnenfeld (Redeemer, Sister Lakes, MI) to Living Hope (Appleton, WI), and Teacher Katie Naumann (Immanuel, Winter Haven, FL) to Redeemer (Cheyenne, WY). Calls were accepted at Immanuel (Mankato, MN) by Teacher Debra Mayhew for full-time grades 1-2, and Pastor Emeritus Paul Nolting for a one-year part-time religion post. Calls were received by Pastor Tom Naumann (Mt. Zion, Madison Heights, MI) to both Holy Cross (Phoenix, AZ) and Grace (Fridley, MN), and by Teacher Noah Ohlmann (Grace, Valentine, NE) for grades 3-4 and associate principal at Messiah (Eau Claire). Additionally, the CLC Call Committee called Dr. Daniel Sullivan as a professor and Dr. Daniel Schierenbeck for a two-year term as President at Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary (Eau Claire). Finally, Teacher Karen Swyter resigned from Faith (Markesan, WI).

Fruits of Faith		March 1, 2026	Attendance: WH – 36	
<u>Immanuel Lutheran Church</u>		<u>Church of the Lutheran Confession</u>		
<i>General Budget</i>		<i>General Budget</i>		
\$2,960.00	General Budget	\$300.00	CLC General Budget	
\$1,362.00	Weekly Need	\$67.31	Weekly Need	
+\$1,598.00	-Under / +Over	+\$232.69	-Under / +Over	
\$11,177.72	Year to Date Offerings	\$325.00	Year to Date Offerings	
\$12,258.00	Year to Date Need	\$605.79	Year to Date Need	
-\$1,080.28	Year to Date (+/-)	-\$280.79	Year to Date (+/-)	
<i>Non-Budgetary</i>		<i>Non-Budgetary</i>		
\$500.00	School Fund			

✠ Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions ✠

March 9 – March 14, 2026

Monday - Luke 11:14-28

When Jesus drives out a demon, some are amazed. Others credit Beelzebul, or demand more signs. Jesus answers His detractors, and warns of the danger of worse things than one demon.

Tuesday - Ephesians 5:1-9

God made us His children so that like dear children we might imitate Him, not walking in the immorality, impurity, and greed of this world. May we ever walk as children of light (verse 8).

Wednesday - 2 Samuel 22:1-7

David praises the LORD, his rock and refuge in the face of all his enemies. In great distress (verses 5-6) he called to the LORD, who heard and answered his cry for help.

Thursday - Psalm 86:1-10

The servant of the LORD calls to his good and forgiving God, confident that there is no one like the true God, who is great and does marvelous deeds.

Friday - Psalm 86:11-17

The LORD's servant seeks the LORD's truth in order to walk in it, even when ruthless men seek his life. The LORD's help and comfort remain with him, for the LORD remains a gracious God.

Saturday - Psalm 43

Oppressed by his enemy, the psalmist looks to God to show him the way to His dwelling. Surely His light and truth will guide to His holy mountain, to joy and gladness, to God's salvation!