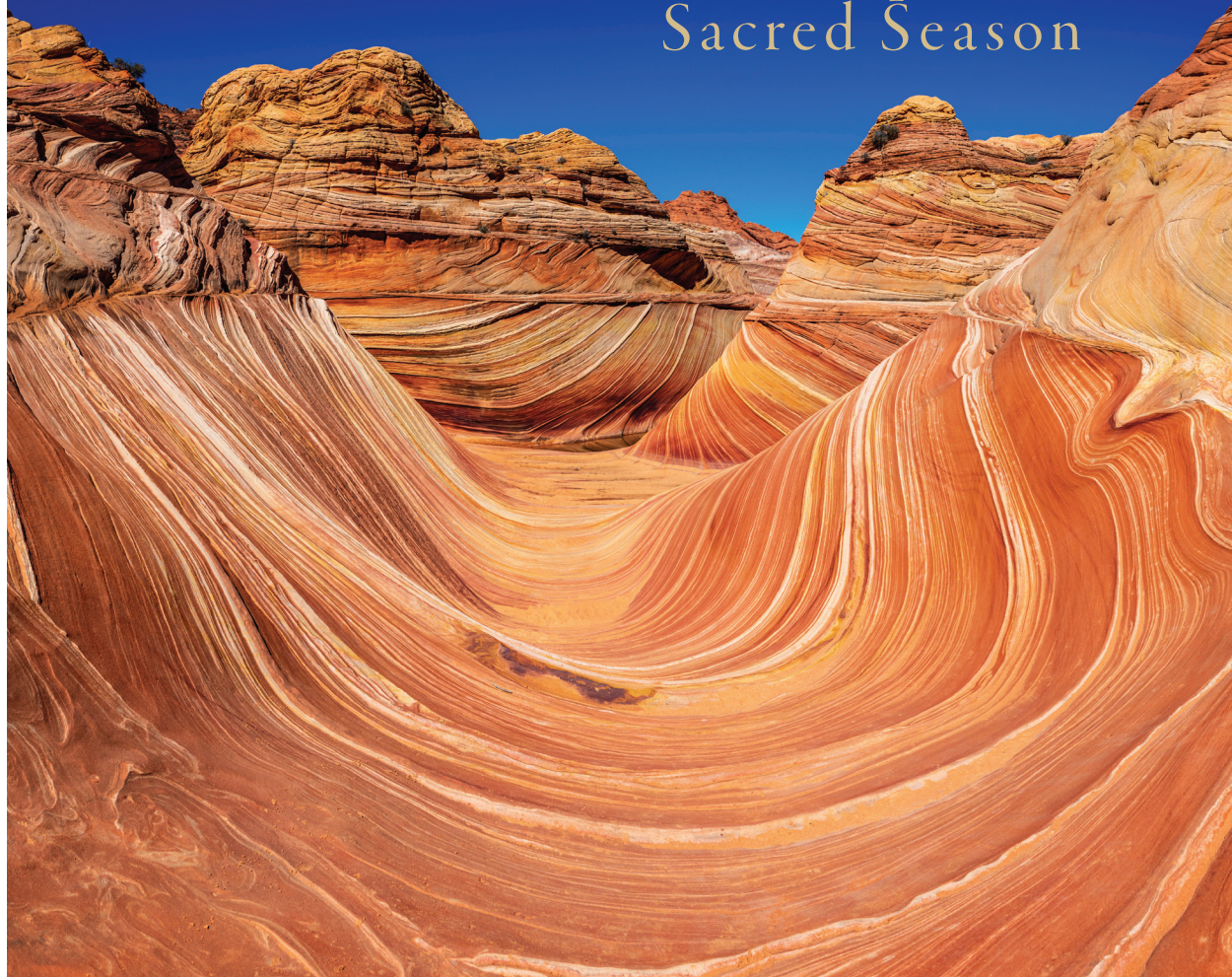


VALLEYS *of* LENT

*Worship for the
Sacred Season*



VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship *for the* Sacred Season

About This Series

The Valleys of Lent series of special services for Lent includes six Biblical sites from which we may derive lessons for the sacred season. Every service also comes with a order of service, a drama in dialog form (an insightful discussion between the Lord and a character from Scripture), a sermon, a children's sermon, prayers, PowerPoint documents, notices for promotion and hymns.

Ash Wednesday: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return," the Lord God said to Adam and Eve, in words the church recalls each Ash Wednesday. Ezekiel's **Valley of Dry Bones** provides a vivid picture of that, along with the hope of the Spirit's gift of new life.

Week 1: Sin begins to show its ugly results in **The Hebron Valley**, where the sons of Jacob plot to murder their brother Joseph, reminiscent of Cain and Abel.

Week 2: At **The Jordan Valley**, about to cross the river into the promised land, we have the opportunity, like Moses, to look back at all the Lord has provided us and to look forward to what God has in store.

Week 3: Gideon was hiding from the marauding Midianites in **The "Valley" of the Winepress**, a poor place to be threshing wheat. From there, God called this unlikely hero to valiant victory.

Week 4: "Every Valley Shall Be Lifted Up," says the prophet Isaiah about the coming of the Lord to rescue his people from captivity. Valleys still need to be raised up (and mountains and hills made low) for the Lord's arrival.

Week 5: "Choose this day whom you will serve," Joshua said to the Children of Israel before he died. Lent continues to call us to what the prophet Joel calls **The Valley of Decision**.

VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship *for the* Sacred Season

Week 1 The Hebron Valley

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special series of worship services called “The Valleys of Lent.” Each service looks at a different valley from Scripture that points to something about the suffering Christ endured.

Week 1’s service takes us to the Hebron Valley, where Jacob’s sons plotted to kill their brother Joseph, foreshadowing the sinister plot to crucify Christ.

BULLETIN NOTICE

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 1 service takes us to the Hebron Valley, where Jacob’s sons plotted to kill their brother Joseph, foreshadowing the sinister plot to crucify Christ.

VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship *for the* Sacred Season

Week 1

The Hebron Valley

Order of Service

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. Genesis 37:23-24

Opening.....Rhosymedre 66 66 888

In ev'ry trying need
My Shepherd's voice I know.
With Jesus in the lead
To pastures green I go.
Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
His rod and staff shall still prevail;
His grace and mercy never fail.

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.

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.

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

Children's Sermon

First Reading..... Genesis 4:1-11

Theme HymnMendon LM

Valleys of Lent before us loom,
Broad vistas fraught with dread and gloom.
Good Shepherd, be our help and guide;
Safely we travel at your side.

Holy Gospel..... John 8:31-47

Where brothers strive in jealousy,
Valleys of grief ahead there be.
“Am I my brother’s keeper?” Yes,
If you would live in blessedness!

Sermon Text..... Genesis 37:12-28

Breathe on us, Lord; behold our strife;
Breathe on us with your breath of life.
In you, O Lord, we place our trust.
We who were made from fragile dust.

Drama

Sermon

Hymn Wem In Leidenstagen 65 65

Glory be to Jesus, who in bitter pains
Poured for me the lifeblood from his sacred veins.

Grace and life eternal in that blood I find;
Blest be his compassion, infinitely kind.

Blest through endless ages be the precious stream
Which from endless torment did the world redeem.

Abel’s blood for vengeance pleaded to the skies,
But the blood of Jesus for our pardon cries.

Oft as earth exulting wafts its praise on high,
Angel hosts rejoicing make their glad reply.

Lift we, then, our voices, swell the mighty flood;
Louder still and louder praise the precious blood!

Offering

Prayers

Each petition concludes with the following response:

P Deliver us from blood-guiltiness, O God of our salvation,

C And our tongues shall sing aloud of your deliverance.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Closing Hymn..... Gethsemane 77 77 77

In the steps our Savior trod
Let us follow faithfully,
Where the sinless Son of God
Went to set us sinners free.
Mark each footstep in the strife
Of the Way, the Truth, the Life.

VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship *for the* Sacred Season

Week 1

The Hebron Valley

Complete Script For Worship Leaders

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

[shutterstock.com/image-photo/breathtaking-aerial-view-winding-river-through-2481888185](https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/breathtaking-aerial-view-winding-river-through-2481888185)

- This **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. Genesis 37:23-24

- The **Opening** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregations with interspersed hymn verses sung by the congregation to the tune Rhosymedre 66 66 888, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

In ev'ry trying need
My Shepherd's voice I know.
With Jesus in the lead
To pastures green I go.
Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
His rod and staff shall still prevail;
His grace and mercy never fail.

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.

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.

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.**

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor:

P O Lord, though you have created us in love, we have let sin have reign in our hearts. We have lashed out against one another, like the sons of Israel lashed out at their brother Joseph in the Hebron Valley. We have held grudges and been jealous of each other. We have even, at times of weakness, sought to destroy those closest to us. The blood of betrayal is on our hands. We are guilty of great sins. Yet, we ask you for your forgiveness. And in your mercy, though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow because of the blood our brother Jesus shed on the cross for us. Let that cleansing blood wash over us and relieve us of the punishment we so justly deserved. Amen.

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Hello, children. Welcome to the season of Lent, as we prepare our hearts to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. In these weeks of Lent, we are focusing on the Valleys of Lent. This week's valley is the Hebron Valley. This is the valley where the sons of Jacob threw their brother Joseph into a pit and then sold him into slavery in Egypt because they were jealous of him and wanted to punish him.

That was a very mean thing for those brothers to do to Joseph, wasn't it? But we can be jealous of people sometimes, too, can't we? We may want to yell at someone or hurt someone or just wish we had what they had or wish we had a life like theirs. Those are all normal human responses, right? But they are sinful thoughts as well. We are sinners, just like those brothers. And we cannot free ourselves from sin, no matter how hard we try.

No, the only One who can save us is the Son of God, Jesus. He took our sins upon his shoulders and died on the cross for us so that we would be forgiven for all our sins of thought, word and deed. Jesus made us part of God's family the day that he died on the cross. And when he rose again on Easter, he opened the door to heaven for all God's children to enter in. Isn't that wonderful? Let us pray:

Dear God, we know we have said, thought and done mean things, and for that we are sorry. Thank you for forgiving us through the blood of your Son, Jesus, and making it possible for us to live in harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen.

- The **First Reading**, Genesis 4:1-11, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.” And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, and you must rule over it.”

Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” And the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.”

- The **Theme Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Mendon LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Valleys of Lent before us loom,
Broad vistas fraught with dread and gloom.
Good Shepherd, be our help and guide;
Safely we travel at your side.

- The **Holy Gospel**, John 8:31-47, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.” They answered

him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are doing the works your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.” Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

- The **Theme Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Mendon LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Where brothers strive in jealousy,
Valleys of grief ahead there be.
“Am I my brother’s keeper?” Yes,
If you would live in blessedness!

- The **Sermon Text**, Genesis 37:12-28, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Now his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock near Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, “Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.” And he said to him, “Here I am.” So he said to him, “Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word.” So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, “What are you seeking?” “I am seeking my brothers,” he said. “Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.” And the man said, “They have gone away, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.” But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue

him out of their hand to restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him. Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

- The **Theme Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Mendon LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Breathe on us, Lord; behold our strife;
Breathe on us with your breath of life.
In you, O Lord, we place our trust.
We who were made from fragile dust.

- The **Drama** is delivered by two readers from the back of the church or the balcony. **I** is Israel and **II** is the Lord.

I My throat is raw. My lungs are tired. My head is pounding, and thunder is storming through my hot ears.

And I can't cry anymore. I'm done. I'm spent. No more of my wailing will be heard echoing through this rolling valley of Hebron.

And no more of my laughter, either. For my son is dead. My son. Joseph, my beloved.

Rachel's little baby boy. He and tiny Benjamin were the only ones who could finally silence my tears after my dear Rachel died. But now...

...now my tears have nearly washed his blood from his coat—his beautiful coat. My beautiful boy's beautiful coat. It's soaked through with my tears. His blood is nearly washed away.

But not entirely. The shadow of blood remains.

And the shadow of doubt. And guilt. I sent him down there. Down to be with his brothers in the fields, tending the sheep. I sent him. I did this thing.

And now he is dead.

The night at Bethel—the night I fell asleep upon a rock and dreamed a dream of angels, ascending and descending a great stairway that led to God—I felt a connection.

II **“I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.”**

I I felt the joy of being an heir of God’s promises. I called the place “The House Of God,” for I felt, somehow, at HOME there. An heir...a child of God.

II **“Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”**

I The morning at Peniel—after a night of wrestling with a man whom I found to be, at morning’s light, the Almighty God himself—I felt a closeness.

II **“You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.”**

I My name was changed...my life was made new. I called the place “The Face Of God,” for I had looked God in the face...and been blessed by him.

But today in the valley of Hebron—my tears dried up, my throat sore—I wonder where my God is now. Can the Almighty understand my grief? Can the Lord perceive the agony of a father for his butchered son? The son I sent to his death? Oh, how I would love to muster one last cry...

II **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

I ...here, in this valley of Hebron.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

P This is the Valley of Hebron. The Hebrew patriarch Jacob lives here, son of Isaac and Rebekah, grandson of Abraham and Sarah. Jacob, whose name the Lord had changed to Israel, lives here now in this valley with his flocks—and his twelve sons. They are already known as “the children of Israel,” and by that name, their descendants will be known throughout the rest of history. Whether these original children of Israel realize it or not, history is being made in this valley. Each of these young men will become the father of a tribe, eventually, together the progenitors of a nation.

Meanwhile, here in the Valley of Hebron at this point in history, history is being re-enacted, in a way—one of the saddest stories in the Bible. It's the story of jealousy between brothers, of sibling rivalry, of seething anger that finally boils over into murderous intent. The story of Joseph and his brothers could just as well be the story of Cain and Abel, almost line for line, attitude for attitude, action for action.

Joseph probably should know better. He is his father's favorite, of course, and parades that favoritism by wearing the lavish coat his dad has given him. Now that Joseph is 17, which is where this story begins, he visits his brothers out in the fields where they are tending the family flocks, and proceeds to tell them of a dream he has had: "We were binding sheaves of grain in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it, and bowed down to my sheaf." His brothers, all but one older than he, reply, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?" So they hate him even more because of his dreams and words, the Bible tells us. They want him dead. This favored one. This dreamer of arrogant dreams.

Apparently they don't remember the history of their ancestor Cain, who was jealous of his brother Abel, back in the beginning. Be careful, God had warned Cain. Keep that up, and you will discover that "sin is lurking at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must master it." Good Lenten lessons for all of us to listen to.

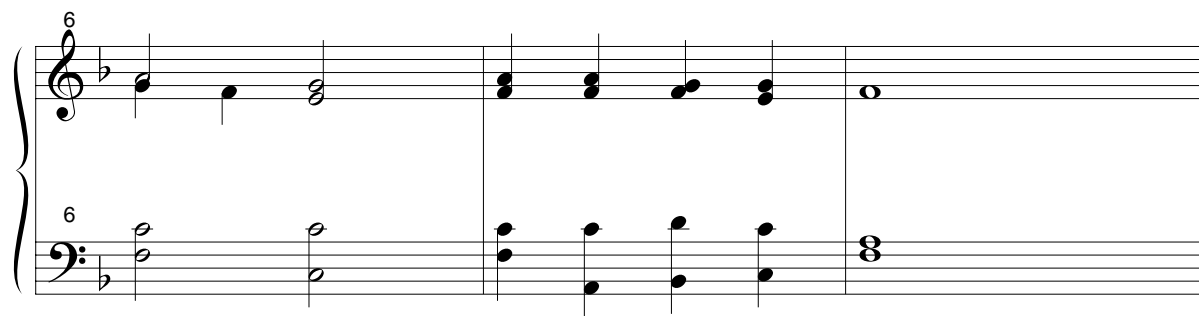
But Cain didn't. And we know how that story played out: "Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' He said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' And the Lord said, 'What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.'"

And now history is repeating itself. Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery and then take blood (the blood of a goat) to soak his fancy coat, which they have torn to shreds, so that their father will think Joseph has been killed by a wild animal. Here in the valley, there is blood again, the blood of hatred, of "sin lurking at the door." In the accounts of Cain and Abel, and of Joseph and his jealous brothers, we see where it can lead. "Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin," Jesus says. "If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." Providing we are paying attention. Listen!

The story ends, you may remember, years later, when Joseph, now prime minister of Egypt, forgives his brothers rather than taking revenge on them, foreshadowing a voice from the cross that will pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Listen!

This Lenten season do we need to be reminded that the blood that really matters is not the blood we choose to spill on the ground, the blood that God hears crying to him, but the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which makes us clean from every sin? That is more than enough blood to make things right again among sisters and brothers.

Tune..... Wem In Leidenstagen 65 65



- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Wem In Leidenstagen 65 65, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Glory be to Jesus, who in bitter pains
Poured for me the lifeblood from his sacred veins.

Grace and life eternal in that blood I find;
Blest be his compassion, infinitely kind.

Blest through endless ages be the precious stream
Which from endless torment did the world redeem.

Abel's blood for vengeance pleaded to the skies,
But the blood of Jesus for our pardon cries.

Oft as earth exulting wafts its praise on high,
Angel hosts rejoicing make their glad reply.

Lift we, then, our voices, swell the mighty flood;
Louder still and louder praise the precious blood!

VALLEYS *of* LENT

Worship for the Sacred Season

Week 1

The Hebron Valley

Contemporary Music Song Suggestions

- The following song suggestions can be used for a more contemporary worship service in place of the more traditional hymns included in this kit. Rights to use these songs in the service must be purchased by your parish through CCLI or other copyright licensing agencies.

“No Longer Slaves” by Jonathan David and Melissa Helser

“Covered by the Blood” by Bryan Torwalt, Josiah Funderburk, Matthwe Ryan Harris

“Nothing But the Blood” by Andy Cherry, Robert Lowry

“Trading My Sorrows” by Darrell Evans

“Behold the Lamb” by Keith and Kristyn Getty