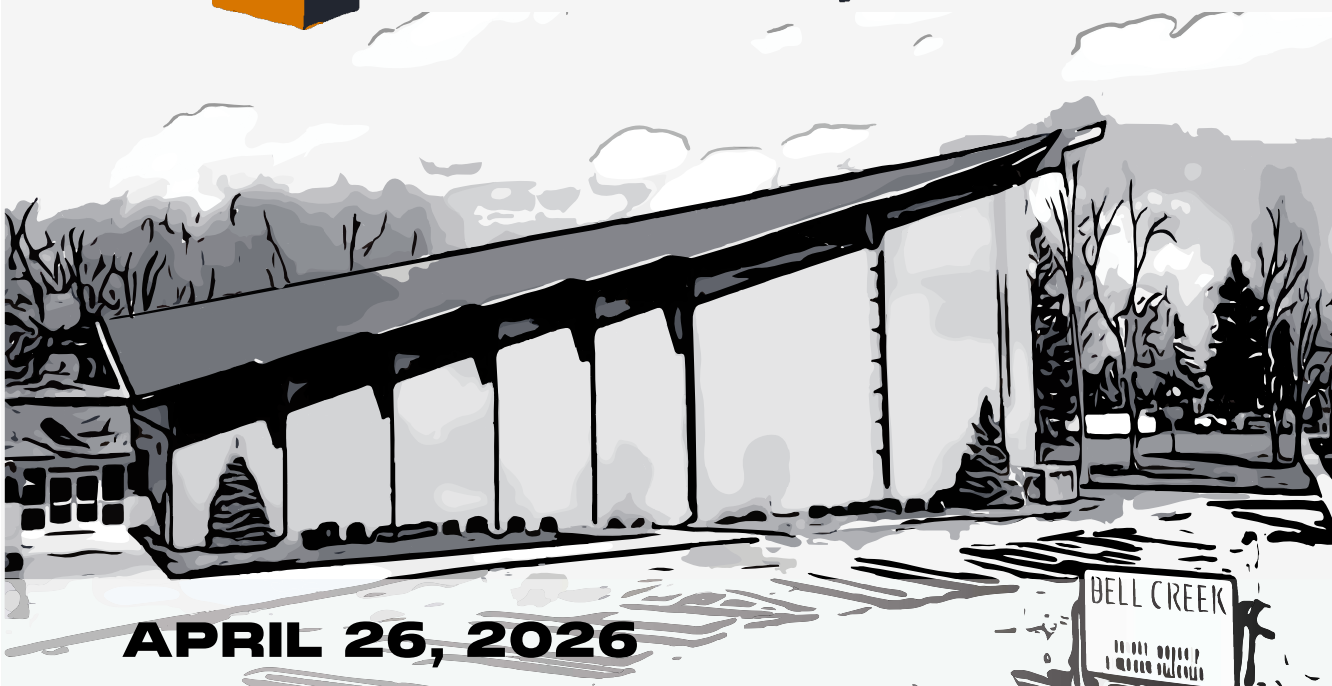


WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK

Community Church



APRIL 26, 2026

WHO WILL GO UP FOR US?

JUDGES 1:1–21

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:
JUDGES—THE GOD WHO DELIVERS

WHO WILL GO UP FOR US?

JUDGES 1:1–21

A Strong Start Under God's Direction (1:1–7)

A Glimpse of Wholehearted Faith (1:8–15)

The First Signs of Half-Hearted Trust (1:16–21)

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Judges 1:22-2:5 again, and more if you can!

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

APRIL 26: PSALM 73; 77-78

APRIL 27: 1 CHRONICLES 6

APRIL 28: PSALM 81; 88; 92-93

APRIL 29: 1 CHRONICLES 7-10

APRIL 30: PSALM 102-104

MAY 1: 2 SAMUEL 5:10; 1 CHRONICLES 11-12

MAY 2: PSALM 133

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

GREETERS NEEDED

Our Greeter Ambassador team is in need of a few more smiling faces! This is a 45-minute commitment once a month, and a great way to serve on Sunday mornings. If you are interested, please contact Tim Pendell at 810-602-3774 or pendelltim@gmail.com

APOLOGETICS CLASS

Join Pastor Dylan in the Prayer Room at 11:00 AM for our Apologetics Class. If you have questions, please email dylan@bellcreek.org.

MEET & EAT

Our next Meet & Eat is today following both services. This is held in the gym and is a great opportunity for fellowship with others at Bell Creek, we hope to see you there! Visitors enjoy a complimentary meal, otherwise \$5 a person or \$20 per family donation please. Cash or check can be made out to Bell Creek Community Church accepted the day of. If you prefer to pay online, you can do so at www.bellcreek.org/give and select the "Meet & Eat" option from the pull down menu.

TESTIMONY NIGHT

All ladies are invited to hear the testimonies of two of our Sisters in Christ, Caryn Schmitt and Sue Schotten, today from 4:30-6:00 PM. We will meet in the Prayer Room. Light refreshments will be served.

AS THEY GO PRAYER MEETING

Join our group of parents of adult children to pray together in the Prayer Room from 9:00-10:00 AM on Saturday, May 10. We will continue to meet every month on the 2nd Saturday of the month moving forward. Join us as we cry out to God in praise for the amazing gift our children are and cry out for guidance and mercy as they navigate life as adults. Please reach out with any questions to Kelly Salter (ksalter1122@gmail.com).

VERTICAL MARRIAGE WORKSHOP

Mike & Mary King and Alex & Elyse Quint are hosting a 2-day Marriage Workshop on Friday, June 5 from 6:30-9:00 PM and Saturday, June 6 from 9:00 AM-12:30 PM at Bell Creek. "Vertical Marriage" by Dave and Ann Wilson provides a series of videos, small group discussions, and a couples' workbook. Registration is required, so if you would like to participate, please visit www.bellcreek.org. If you have questions, please reach out to Pastor Dylan (dylan@bellcreek.org) or Elyse Quint (elyse@bellcreek.org) No food is provided, but we will have coffee, tea, and water. Childcare is available upon request.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

2ND SERVICE

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37-40

He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments."

MATTHEW 28:19-20

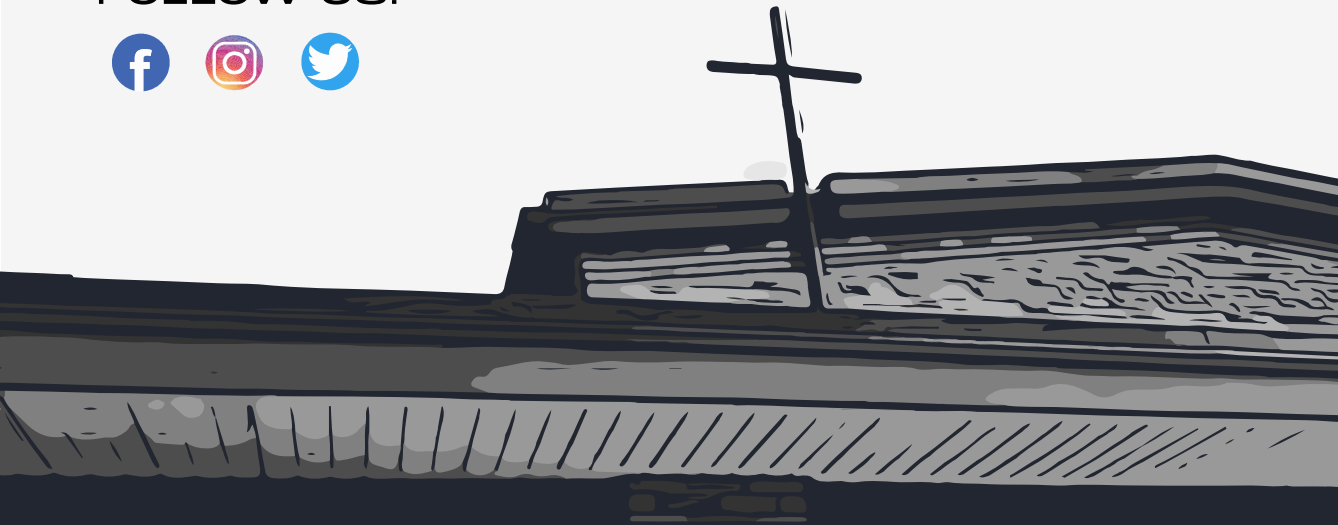
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

WWW.BELLCREEK.ORG/CONTACT-US

FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sermon Series: Judges – The God Who Delivers

Sermon 1 | Judges 1:1–21

Who Will Go Up for Us?

Scripture Reading:

“O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us, what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old: you with your own hand drove out the nations, but them you planted; you afflicted the peoples, but them you set free; for not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and your arm, and the light of your face, for you delighted in them.” (Psalm 44:1–3, ESV)

Introduction

The Book of Judges opens at a moment of transition. Joshua is gone. Have you ever noticed how new beginnings are punctuated by the earthly end of God’s servants? Exodus begins with the death of Joseph. Joshua begins with the death of Moses. Judges begins with the death of Joshua. 1 Kings begins with the death of David. And yet for all that, God’s kingdom does not collapse, not even when death takes God’s most useful servants. The kingdom of God continues though the servants of God die. That is the witness of Judges 1. Joshua died, but God was still with them.

Now, the people are in the Promised Land. Will they continue to follow the LORD and take hold of their inheritance? At first glance, the answer seems to be yes, but this section reveals the subtle beginning of decline. But, we still see God speaking, guiding, and delivering His people from powerful enemies.

A Strong Start Under God’s Direction (1:1–7)

Things start off well! Israel asks, “Who shall go up first for us?” This is a good sign. They are seeking God’s direction, not acting independently, not leaning on their own wisdom. God answers clearly, “Judah shall go up.” They listen to the Lord, and the result is powerful enemies like Adonai-Bezek are defeated! The command to take rest of the land has begun. This is faith! They are seeking God, listening to God, and acting on what He says.

Questions:

Are you seeking God in your decisions, or leaning on your own understanding for direction? Where is God calling you to trust and obey Him?

A Glimpse of Wholehearted Faith (1:8–15)

Remember Caleb? See Numbers Chapters 13 and 14, as well as Joshua 14:6-15 and Joshua 15:13-19. Caleb and Joshua were the only two who spied out the land and trusted that God would help Israel take it. This is a callback to Caleb’s confidence in God’s promises. He shows us that courage flows from trust in God, not from self-reliance. Caleb’s daughter Achsah reflects the same bold, faith-filled expectation.

This is what obedience fueled by trust in God looks like. It is active, confident, and rooted in God’s Word.

This is an intentional reminder to the readers of the Book of Judges that Caleb knew God's promises and had seen God's faithfulness. He KNEW God was good and powerful. He knew God WAS God.

It is also a bridge to the first Judge, Othniel

The First Signs of Half-Hearted Trust (1:16–21)

The tone begins to shift. We start to see repeated phrases: "did not drive out...did not drive out." Then we reach verse 1:21: "The people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites." This is the first clear statement of failure, without excuse, justification, or explanation. Simply that they did not do what God commanded.

This is not yet a full rebellion or a total collapse. But it is just as dangerous because it reflects incomplete trust in God, which leads to incomplete obedience. And incomplete obedience is not neutral. It is the seed of everything that follows in the Book of Judges.

But even here, God has not withdrawn. He has spoken, directed, and led. The problem is not God's absence; it is Israel's half-hearted response. The God who delivers is present, yet His people are beginning to drift.

Questions:

Where in your life is trust in the Lord and obedience to Him incomplete? What has God clearly said to you that you are delaying or avoiding?

The Real Issue Beneath the Surface

Though Judges 1:1-21 does not yet explicitly name idolatry, it is setting the stage. Allowing the Canaanites to remain in the land is not merely a military decision; it is a spiritual one. It means their influence, practices, and gods remain (see Deuteronomy 18:9-14). This is the beginning of what will become unrestrained idolatry. Idolatry is often not a complete abandonment of God but the worship of other things alongside Him, things that will eventually become competitors and then masters.

Question for those of us that Know Jesus:

What idols or sins are you allowing to remain in your life that God has called you to remove? What seems small or acceptable now that may grow to rule you later?

Conclusion

Judges 1:21 does not end in collapse. It ends in a subtle drift away from the Lord, and that is the warning. Spiritual decline does not usually begin with dramatic failure. It begins with half-hearted trust in God, half-hearted obedience, and small compromises.

Jesus, the Always-Faithful One

The writer of Hebrews draws directly on this wilderness-and-conquest generation as a warning: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7–8). The partial obedience of Judges 1 mirrors the hardened heart that Hebrews warns against. But whereas Israel's partial faithfulness leads to spiraling decline, Jesus is described as a Son who is "faithful over God's house" (Hebrews 3:6). He is faithful where Israel was not, and obedient where they compromised. That's why we need Him! Because Israel's story is our story too! Like Israel in the Book of Judges, we often fail to seek God, listen to God, trust God, and act in faith. But Jesus never fails. He perfectly obeyed His Father for us and paid for our failures with His body, blood, and life. He is the true Israel who hears and acts, so that by faith in Him, we can enter the rest that Israel's partial obedience forfeited.

Question for Those who are Considering Jesus: What would it mean to you to know that you could seek God for help, hear Him, trust Him, and move forward in life with His presence and blessing? Would you want that? It begins with surrendering to Jesus, asking Him for forgiveness of your sins, and being willing to listen to Him. He will forgive you and give you new life because He said He came to give us life and give it abundantly!

Question for Those Who Are Suffering: Are you weary yet still trying to walk with Jesus? Where is trusting and obeying Jesus difficult, not because you resist Him but because life is hard? Start by telling Him your troubles and fears. Open the Bible, read His Word, and listen to His voice. Trust Him, ask for strength to obey Him, and move forward in faith amid your troubles. The Lord promises to be with you and to walk with you. He says, "I will never leave you or forsake you." Trust that He is near and helping you, even now.

BENEDICTION:

"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it."
(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, ESV)



Who Will Go Up for Us?

1. What did you think of the sermon "Who Will Go Up for Us"?

2. Israel begins by seeking God's direction. Why do you think it is difficult for us to seek God first? Do you tend to lean on your own judgement rather than follow God's direction?

3. How would you describe the difference between wholehearted faith and half-hearted trust? How can you faithfully seek God and wholeheartedly trust in His promises?

4. Israel did not obey God's direction, and thus the people began to drift. Why are "small compromises" often more dangerous than obvious, total disobedience? How have you seen this play out in your life or in others?

5. Jesus is faithful where we are not and He calls us to trust Him. When following Jesus feels difficult, how do you keep the faith and obey Him? Think of a brother or sister in Christ you can encourage and help them act in faith.

