



Two Shires Link - Weekly News

for the Parishes of
**Tatworth, Chaffcombe, Winsham,
Thorncombe and Cricket Malherbie**

August 16th, 2026



Both readings this week begin with people who might appear to be on the outside.

In Romans, Paul firmly rejects the idea that God has abandoned the Jewish people: "By no means!" God remains faithful because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." God does not discard people when they fail or turn away. His mercy is greater than human disobedience, and his promises can be trusted.

In Matthew's Gospel, a Canaanite woman approaches Jesus because her daughter is suffering. She is a foreigner and someone the disciples would rather send away. Yet she refuses to be silenced. Her love for her daughter gives her courage to continue: "Lord, help me." This is not an easy conversation to read. Jesus' words sound harsh, but the woman responds with remarkable faith and determination. She trusts that even the smallest crumb of God's goodness will be enough. Jesus recognises her faith, answers her prayer and heals her daughter.

These readings challenge us to notice those whose voices are easily ignored: the person struggling to make ends meet, the refugee seeking safety, the parent fighting for a child's needs, or the lonely person longing to belong. Like the disciples, we may be tempted to turn away because someone's need feels inconvenient or difficult. Jesus calls us to stop, listen and allow mercy to overcome the boundaries we create.

The woman also encourages us when prayer seems to be met with silence. She reminds us that faith is not always quiet or comfortable. Sometimes faith keeps calling, keeps asking and keeps trusting when nothing appears to be happening.

At the heart of both readings is the faithfulness of God. None of us earns a place at his table; we come because we are loved and shown mercy. God's grace is not a scarce resource to be guarded. There is room at the table, bread to share and mercy enough for all. Perhaps our calling this week is simple: to listen to a voice we might otherwise overlook, welcome someone who feels on the outside, and remember that God has not given up on anyone, including us. Revd Anne

Services this week

10am Morning Worship Winsham

10:30am Holy Communion Tatworth



Readings

Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew ²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. ³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Matthew 15: 21-28

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' ²⁴ He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' ²⁶ He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' ²⁷ She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Collect

O, God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Services Next Week

Tatworth 8am Holy Communion

Thorncombe 10am Holy Communion

Winsham 6:30pm Service of Light

Chaffcombe 6:30pm BCP Evening Prayer



Loving God, you are close to the brokenhearted and you hold the weary in your arms. Be near to all who are unwell, bringing them peace and strength. Be gentle with those who grieve, surrounding them with your love and the hope of eternal life. May they know they are never alone, for you walk beside them, today and always. Amen.

Dates for your diary

17th August St Stephen's Monthly Prayer group: see Angela or Brian

26th August 10:30am St Stephen's , Winsham Coffee and Social Morning

If you have any events to share please contact Revdanne@outlook.com



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Mercy at the Table

When doors seem closed and hope feels small,
God hears the heart that dares to call.
No one forgotten, none denied—
His table opens deep and wide.

A crumb of grace, a word of care,
Can show another God is there.
For mercy reaches one and all,
And love will always hear our call.

I AM MARK



A Daring Staging of the Gospel of Mark

Join Stefan Smart as he draws a uniquely intimate and provocative portrait of the Son of God and breathes new life into the Greatest Story Ever Told.

FRINGE sell out show 2019!



**One Man
One Chair
One Incredible
True Story**

Directed by Lisa Gilmour

Friday 4 September 2026

7pm

All Saints' Church, Martock TA12 6JL

FREE EVENT - Places limited - BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Use QR code or follow link to book your place now!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/i-am-mark-tickets-1992807391553?aff=oddtcreator>
or PHONE 01935 826 113

More information from benefice.martock@gmail.com OR www.iam-mark.com

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Churchwardens

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