



Two Shires Link - Weekly News

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

February 22nd, 2026



The First Sunday of Lent always takes us into the wilderness.

In the Gospel reading this Sunday we hear of Jesus being led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days. It is a stark beginning: dry, quiet, exposed. There are no crowds, no miracles, no celebrations. Just space, hunger, and testing.

Lent begins there too.

The wilderness is not simply a place of hardship; it is a place of clarity. With distractions stripped away, we begin to see what truly shapes us. What do we rely on? What sustains us? What temptations do we face? Jesus faced temptation not with spectacle, but with trust in God's word. He chose faithfulness over shortcuts, obedience over power. The wilderness did not defeat him; it strengthened him for what lay ahead. There, in hunger and solitude, the foundations of his mission were tested and clarified and Jesus understood who he was and whose he was.

For us, this first Sunday is an invitation. We may not step into a literal desert, but we are encouraged to create space. Perhaps by setting aside noise, habits, or comforts that crowd out prayer. In that quieter place, we discover that God is present even where life feels challenging.

The First Sunday of Lent reminds us that testing is not abandonment. The Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness did not leave him there. And the same Spirit walks with us. As we begin these forty days, may we not fear the desert places in our lives. Instead, may we trust that even there, God is making us stronger, deepening our faith, and preparing us for resurrection hope.

Lord Jesus, who faced the wilderness with courage and trust, strengthen us in our own desert places. When we are tempted to take shortcuts, help us choose faithfulness. When we feel weak or uncertain, anchor us in your love. Shape us through every trial, and lead us on in hope. Amen.

This Week's Services in the Benefice

Tatworth 8am Holy Communion

Thorncombe 10am Holy Communion

Winsham 6:30pm Service of Light

Chaffcombe 6:30pm BCP Evensong

Collect for this Sunday

Heavenly God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save: 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 forever,

This week's Readings

Genesis 2: 15-17 and 3: 1-7

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Matthew 4: 1-11

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they

will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’⁷ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour.⁹ “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Next Sunday's Services

Forde Abbey 8am Holy Communion BCP

Winsham 10am Holy Communion

Tatworth 10:30am Emmaus

Next Sunday's readings

Genesis 12: 1-4a and John 3: 1-17



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



To include your event in future editions email revdanne@outlook.com

Winsham

Tuesday 24th February at 2:30pm Share the Story at St Stephen's Church

Wednesday 25th February 10:30am Margaret's Coffee and Social Morning
Prayer group meets on the 3rd Monday of the month - see Brian for details

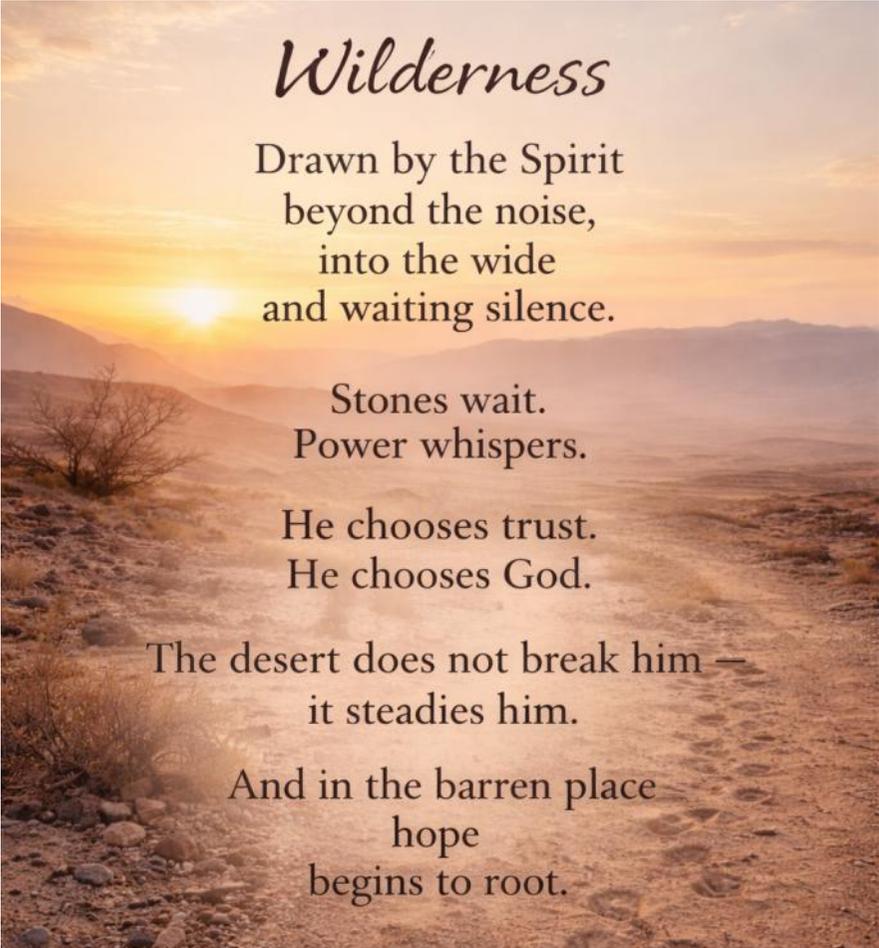


Thorncombe

David Mitchell classical and folk guitar concert

1st March 3pm at St Mary's Thorncombe,
entry by donation

Tea, coffee and cake during the interval, and raffle and cds for sale.



Wilderness

Drawn by the Spirit
beyond the noise,
into the wide
and waiting silence.

Stones wait.
Power whispers.

He chooses trust.
He chooses God.

The desert does not break him —
it steadies him.

And in the barren place
hope
begins to root.

Contact Us

For administrative and booking enquiries
contact **Claire** at adtwohires@gmail.com

Benefice Website: www.twoshiresbenefice.org

Revd Anne Perez: Deacon 07504338529 revdanne@outlook.com
(contact Anne to add your event to our newsletter/website)

Churchwardens

Tatworth: Susan Cox 07434 534827 Tom Down 01460 221164

Chaffcombe: Stan Robinson 01460 239121

Cricket Malherbie: Audrey Hinkins 01460 52783 Jane Helliard 01460 495180

Thorncombe: Charlotte Roper

Winsham: Tom Holt 01460 30302, John Webster 07989 675956