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Weekly Letter – 22 February 2026 – First Sunday in Lent

Matthew 4.1-11

The courage and fortitude of Jesus

One of the greatest joys of being a disciple of Christ is step by step getting to the truth about the Lord of Life, and therefore taking the time to read the Scriptures.

As we read through this part of Jesus' life in which he is tempted in the wilderness, it becomes increasingly clear that overcoming the temptations is much more than his personal victory. For what Jesus achieved is also a triumph for all human beings. How do we know this?

You will know from the scriptures that Jesus is both fully divine and fully man. In the temptations there is no hint that he uses his divine power to vanquish the tempter. Instead you can see that he faces the demanding trials with his human will, in full solidarity with all human beings. He overcomes the temptations as a man. And, it's important that we see this because it has practical implications for Christian discipleship.

To begin with Jesus gives us an example to follow, for he overcomes such huge temptations by drawing upon 'the sword of the Spirit', which is the Word of God'. (Ephesians 6.17) Jesus not only knows and uses scripture, but he is also thoroughly committed to following God's truth. Knowing your bible, i.e. reading it regularly with helpful notes is an essential means in our spiritual life.

In addition to this eternal truth, we also discover that Jesus was no stranger to the pressures and temptations that you and I have to face. The letter to Hebrews clarifies this truth about Jesus' life: "because he himself was tested through what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested". (Hebrews 2.18). These words invite us to turn to Jesus for grace and inner strength in times of need. You will also recall that Jesus was anointed with the Spirit (3.16) and so was able to face the trials ahead. Disciples share in the Messiah's baptism, and therefore with the scriptures and God's Spirit you can find the will to overcome the deceiver's temptations.

Enjoy getting to know the saviour of all creation during Lent!

Stephen

**Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Simon Walkling
Bible Readings: Matthew 4.1-11: Genesis 3.1-7.**

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Hall Street, Llanelli

Lent Connections – Bible stories, reflection, conversations

Lent is a time of preparation to celebrate the mystery of Jesus dying and rising through Holy Week and Easter. We will have opportunities to meet in the Lounge and on Zoom. You can note these dates, and there will be a reminder each week in the newsheet.

- Wednesday 25th February, 2:30pm in the Lounge
- Tuesday 10th March, 7pm on Zoom – usual worship link
- Wednesday 18th March, 2:30pm in the Lounge
- Tuesday 24th March, 7pm on Zoom – usual worship link
- Wednesday 1st April, 2:30pm in the Lounge

This coming week we will be reflecting on Lent as preparation for the mystery of Easter and the mix of sadness and celebration.

INTO THE WILDERNESS

(Lectionary Readings: Genesis 2.15, 3:1-7: Psalm 32: Romans 5.12-19: Mathew 4.1-11)

Spirit of truth, give us courage to enter the wilderness,

a place our hearts both fear and crave.

Strip away from us the things we won't be needing

and the weight of all that isn't ours to carry.

In the desert, there is nowhere to hide from ourselves.

Our desires and vulnerabilities are laid bare.

Let the scouring wind cleanse us of deceit.

Let the silence be our teacher.

May we rediscover our kinship with the earth.

May the wide skies remind us of our smallness.

Help us surrender to the breaking and remaking.

Holy One, beyond all names, meet us here.

Cara Heafey (URC Prayer Handbook 2026)

