



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

David B. Clark

pastordavid@shen.church

Office Manager

Jeff Hiser

office@shen.church

Pianist

Terry Stafford

Bells & Choir Directors

Dan & Linnea Shook

Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Media Booth

Alan Hutchison

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Pastor David

*Our Vision: **Growing** as disciples of Jesus while **connecting** with others and **servicing** our community.*



The Temptation of Jesus and What We Learn About Our Own Wilderness Moments

When we read about the temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4 and Mark 1, we can read it as a cosmic, supernatural battle between titans. The field of battle is marked out in a way that has cinematic imagery: Jesus is tired and near-starved. Satan comes to him in full power; there's evidently been no physical struggle for the prince of this world, and he has a plan of attack to get at Jesus at this early point in the Savior's life and ministry.

As with the hero in many movies, Jesus is seemingly at a disadvantage here. He is a relative newcomer who is just starting his life's ministry. He has spent most of his first 30 years following the prescribed path for a devout Jewish boy and young man, learning about the Scriptures and working with his hands in the family business. But now his life has taken a dramatic change; he finds himself at a crossroads, tested in a way that seems almost impossible to resist.

Again, using a cinematic context, the hero in this story has a hidden, supernatural power to resist these temptations. In the previous story in Matthew 3, we realize that this young man is no mere carpenter when we hear Jesus receive divine affirmation of his true identity and of his ministry:

Continued on page 2

“The reason we struggle with insecurity is because we compare our behind the scenes with everyone else’s highlight reel.” Steve Furtick

“I will not lose, for even in defeat, there’s a valuable lesson learned, so it evens up for me.” Jay Z

Reminders

February 8th

Sunday Service 9:00 a.m.
PK-6 S.S. during the message
Jr/Sr High S.S. – 10:30 a.m.

February 10th

Mat Making (Loom Room) 1:00 p.m.

February 11th

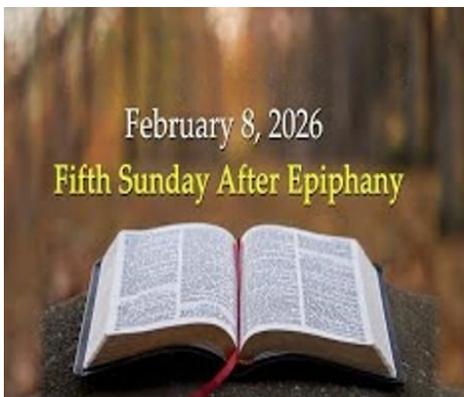
Bible Study – 11:00 a.m.
Praise Team - 4:00 p.m.
Bell Choir – 4:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir – 5:30 p.m.

February 12th

T.O.P.S.

Meals-On-Wheels Deliveries
Sign up at the Welcome Counter

** Fellowship Volunteers and treats
needed, sign up in Fellowship Hall



Wilderness - continued from page 1.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment, heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:16–17

In the next scene, Jesus moves from this spiritual high point and takes on a difficult assignment: Spending 40 days and nights in the wilderness without any provided food or water. It is then that the opposition, embodied in the devil, seeing Jesus physically weak and exhausted from his wilderness trial, takes the opportunity to cleverly tempt Jesus, attempting to get him to abandon his mission.

This is the point in the movie where the entire audience is watching breathlessly: What will Jesus do? Will he give in to these temptations and change the outcome of this story?

Yet this is no mere movie. Indeed, the fate of all of humanity stands in the balance. But Jesus is stalwart, despite his emaciated physical state. Through parched lips, he rasps out his answers to each of the devil’s temptations, pointing the tempter back to passages of Scripture that Satan knows only too well.

When the battle ends, we find that this was no contest because Jesus never was—nor will he ever be—at a disadvantage in this ancient fight. We watch the battle unfold, and we understand that Jesus was in control all along. In fact, Satan knew who Jesus was and thereby also likely knew of the hopelessness of his efforts.

Yet these passages in the Bible tell us of Jesus’ temptation and his valiant responses, showing us his wisdom and power in the face of temptations. While we can’t claim to have divine authority when we face our challenges, we can definitely learn from the patterns and lessons that our Savior pointed to in these accounts.

Preparation for the Wilderness

Like Jesus, each of us face our own wilderness moments. These are the times when we feel isolated, worn down, and wiped out.

Continued on page 6

Volunteers Needed



LAST PERSON LEAVING
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS
AND LOCK DOORS

First United Methodist Church
Please wear your name tag on Sunday mornings



Church Ad Board Members

- Bob Lynn - Chair*
- Mary Peterson - Secretary*
- Darlene Howard – At-Large*
- Roger Jones - Trustee*
- Dave Christensen - SPRC*
- Dan Weiss – Finance/Stewardship*
- Dave Lashier - Treasurer*
- Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference*
- Connie Anderson - Memorials*
- Linda Haldane - Membership*
- David Clark - Pastor*

Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High Sunday School – PK-6 during service Jr/Sr High 10:30 a.m.**

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Wednesday Praise Team – 4:00 p.m. Bell Choir – 4:30 p.m. Chancel Choir – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday Office Closed
Bible Study 11:00

Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

The front door to the church will be locked during office hours. Please ring the doorbell to be let into the church.

Please continue to call in advance if you need to enter the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine, please leave your name, number, and a brief message, and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned on the next business day.



Who said, "A bridegroom of blood."?

- a) Rebekah
- b) Rachel
- c) Sarah
- d) Zipporah

In the book of Revelations, how many were sealed from the tribes of Israel?

- a) 24,000
- b) 144,000
- c) 192,000
- d) 212,000

Paul was delivered to Italy under the supervision of a centurion How many persons were aboard this ship?

- a) 116
- b) 123
- c) 210
- d) 276

Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.



- 9th – Dustin Christiansen, Lorraine Shook
- 10th – Della Staples
- 11th – Lorene Whitehill
- 12th – Janette Vermillion

****See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added? Please call the office or send an email to office@shen.church**

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new look at
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: Teach us, O Lord, the way of your statutes,

People: and we will observe it to the end.

L: Give us understanding, that we may keep your law

P: and observe it with our whole hearts.

L: Lead us in the path of your commandments,

P: for we delight in your path.

“LIVING IN GOD’S KINGDOM”

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Songs

Trust and Obey #467

Breathe #3112

Take Time to Be Holy #395

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus #2129

Last Week’s Attendance

In-Person Worship – 73

Online Worship – 13

Our Vision:

“Growing as disciples of Jesus while connecting with others and serving our community.”

**Answers for Feb. 1st are c) Jehu d) The Holy Spirit c) Deborah
Quiz hints – Q1) Exodus Q 2) Revelation Q3) Acts**



February 2026

Mandarin Oranges, Cake, Brownie, and Cookie Mixes, Macaroni & Cheese, Spaghetti Sauce (with any type of pasta), Chicken Noodle Soup, Chili Beans, Tuna and Chicken Helpers, Microwave Popcorn, Hot Chocolate Mix, Chunky Style Soup, Bar Soap

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals home with their food items. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Community Food Pantry. We exist totally on donations; we couldn't assist those in need without your help!

If you or anyone who would be interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please have them contact Jeannine K. Liljedahl at 712-215-2488.

Bring Your Change to Make a Change

*Collected each Sunday after
the children's message*



Each of you should GIVE what you have decided in YOUR HEART to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for GOD LOVES a cheerful GIVER." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The Noisy Offering is one more way to do ministry for those in need and teach your children the importance of giving and serving. Each Sunday, a new opportunity for mission giving will take place after the Children's Message. Sunday School students will walk around the congregation, collecting your loose coins and currency in their colorful metal pails. This would be a good time to clean out the loose change from your pockets or purse. The money donated in February will go to the **Shenandoah Food Pantry**. **We also will collect boxes of cereal throughout the month.**



Wilderness - continued from page 2.

The battles that come to us are not necessarily ones involving titans on a cosmic scale, nor do they usually involve 40 days of fasting. But similar temptations may come to us during seasons of intense spiritual and emotional pressure.

We see in the baptism of Jesus the preparation he received from his Father in heaven before this battle unfolded. In fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus went to be baptized by John the Baptist, the one who was sent to make the way clear for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3; 61:1–2). Then came the incredible, audible word from the Father in heaven (noted above).

Right after this moment of profound spiritual affirmation, Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted. This teaches us an important lesson: significant tests can (and often do) follow moments of growth. Understanding how Jesus navigated his wilderness experience provides a practical blueprint for our own struggles.

Wilderness Moments***The Temptation for Immediate Gratification***

The accounts in Matthew 4 and Mark 1 show Jesus facing temptations that are surprisingly relevant to our lives today. After going without food, He was physically weak and vulnerable. It's in this state that the tempter approached with challenges that in some ways can be seen to mirror our own modern-day battles.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Matthew 4:1–3

First comes the temptation of immediate gratification. The devil gives a seemingly simple message encouraging Jesus to use his supernatural power to survive. After 40 days without food, why would the Bread of Life not want to instantly manufacture some sustenance? This makes sense to the average reader: If you have a need that you personally can fill, go ahead and fill it. It's simple problem solving.

Yet Jesus patiently waits for provision from God. Why? Because following orders from those who stand against the power of God in this world is always a bad decision. In this instance, the consequences of giving in to these temptations would be the destruction of God's mission for Jesus on earth.

Have you found yourself in a similar situation? Many of us do at different moments nearly every day. What needs do we fulfill ourselves without consulting the God who knows us better than we know ourselves? How often do we feel pressure to prioritize our immediate wants or financial security above

all else? We are told to work longer hours at the expense of our families, quite often with the result being that we strive to find our worth in what we own rather than relying on the God who provides us with whatever we need.

Jesus' response, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God," (v. 4) is a powerful reminder. It's a call to find our worth and satisfaction not in what we can acquire, but in our connection to God.

This isn't about denying our needs; when the cupboards are bare, we certainly can understand the need to go to the grocery store rather than having our families go hungry. But the difference comes for the believer in knowing and understanding the Source behind the provision that we seek. This story is not about denying ourselves or not filling our needs; rather, it's about giving those needs the right priority.

The Temptation of Seeking Validation

Next, Satan tempts Jesus to test God by throwing himself from the temple in full view of the gathered crowds.

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "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."*

Matthew 4:5–6

Surely surviving this act would prove to the people that Jesus is the Son of God, paving the way for his new era of ministry to thrive. This suggestion from Satan takes the temptation to make bread out of stones to the next level, and we get the sense that the consequences of these challenges are building exponentially.

Again, what's being said here makes sense in some ways: perform a great act to better sway people to believe in Jesus. But Jesus, ever the wise Son of God, sees through the tempting words; this is not God's plan for him.

In our world today, we see a similar temptation in our desire to seek validation through public, dramatic statements or actions, or to doubt God's quiet presence in our lives. In an age of social media, the desire for gaining public approval through posting spectacular displays of faith can be overwhelming. We might feel like our quiet, steady faithfulness is not enough. Jesus' reply, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (v. 7), teaches us to trust God's plan without demanding a spectacle. True faith is built on quiet trust, not on public proof.

Again, in a day when literally anyone can post a video and collect hundreds or thousands of likes and comments, this temptation is strong. We may begin to determine our worth in the positive feedback of the masses. But doing so can discount the call of God on our lives and our reliance on his steadfast will for our path forward.

In a large midwestern church, a young pastor started his ministry by walking before the congregation in the robes he received when he graduated with advanced degrees. This was a well-established church that had been previously led by a beloved and renowned pastor. This young man had been raised in the same church, and his appointment to the lead pastor role was enthusiastically accepted by the congregation. Yet this young man, feeling the need to communicate the heft of his resume, stood on the stage in this robe and tassels to express his worth to the crowd, providing them with a visual representation of his qualifications.

Years later, this now-experienced pastor repented of his actions. He reminded the congregation of this event and pointed to it as an act of pride. He called it out as an act of reliance on himself and his academic achievements rather than on God's clear calling.

How often might we be tempted to do the same thing? What actions do we take to honor and promote ourselves and our qualifications rather than relying on the purposeful path of a loving God?

The Temptation to Give Oneself Over to Godlessness

Finally, the devil offers Jesus, still parched and starving, a view of all the temptations and majesty of the kingdoms of the world.

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Matthew 4:8–9

In our cinematic eye, we can see the global wealth, power, and influence that is offered to this starving carpenter. Today, it's easy to imagine what Jesus saw, for we can see these things just as clearly as we sit in front of our televisions and search on our computer screens.

All this grandeur can belong to Jesus, the devil explains, in exchange for one brief moment of worship. But Jesus is resolute. He knows that one seemingly simple decision would change the course of redemptive history. Also, as the Creator of each one of these entities that are now presented as temptations, Jesus understands the lure of each one. After all, as the writer of Hebrews tells us, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Not one of us on earth today can claim the kind of command over sin that Jesus evidences here. In the face of this temptation, he rejects Satan and his offer. He shuts down the one who is urging him to throw away everything that he was put on earth to do. Jesus gives the only answer we would ever expect of him: “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only’” (Matthew 4:10). The power and authority in his statement show us Jesus’ status as the Messiah, sent to become the Savior of the world.

Similar kinds of life-changing temptations occur in our lives each day. One simple action can change the trajectory of a person’s life: starting a flirtation with a married coworker; using someone else’s school work as your own; changing a few numbers on a document at work; telling a “little” lie; making split-second choices while driving without considering the repercussions. All these are decisions that people make every single day. The human mind has an unbelievable capacity for deceiving itself and justifying actions that seem trivial. But we all know that such decisions can have massive downstream impacts.

How do we respond when tempted to make one of these decisions or to take a shortcut? Satan’s offer here tempts us like it tempted Jesus: “Think of what I could gain if I just do this one little thing. I can make this decision in secret. How will anybody know?” We can often hide these kinds of decisions in the moment, but the results of these decisions can have long-term and even eternal consequences.

Jesus’ firm command draws a clear line. It shows us the importance of unwavering integrity. The destination is never worth it if we have to sacrifice or deny who we are in Christ to get there.

The Biblical Option

In each of the temptations that Satan presents, Jesus fights back with Scripture. This is our most practical takeaway from this story today. Later in the Gospel of Matthew, he records Jesus saying, “What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” (Matthew 16:26). Here Jesus embodies these statements in the decisions that he makes to stay on the path his Father has for him.

As we face temptations in our own lives, let us always be aware of the incredible heavenly resources at our disposal. God has given us his story in the Bible. When we read those life-giving words, we see God’s plan, and we gain tools for battling whatever Satan throws at us.

When we face self-doubt, the pressure for more, or the temptation to cut corners, grounding ourselves in truth is our strongest defense. Jesus’ time in the wilderness shows that we can face our own trials—not with our own limited strength—but with a firm reliance on God’s unchanging Word. Jesus faced these tests with courage and boldness so that we would have a guide and a template for when we will inevitably face our own wilderness moments.

3 Things You Learn While Wandering in the Wilderness

Nobody enjoys wandering in the wilderness, yet we've all found ourselves there. Maybe you're navigating a difficult relationship, wrestling with job loss, or carrying the burden of grief while wondering if life will ever feel "normal" again.

Here's what you need to know: When God calls you into the wilderness, He wants to meet you there. In that meeting, He has profound lessons waiting to transform your heart and prepare you for what's ahead.



Provision Over Performance: When Your Resources Run Dry, His Never Do

The desert is merciless—hot, dry, and stripped of everything we need to survive. That's precisely what makes it the perfect classroom for God to demonstrate this truth: when our resources run dry, His never do.

Consider the Israelites during their 40-year wilderness journey. Every morning, God rained down manna from heaven (Deuteronomy 8:2-3). But He made it impossible to hoard—the manna would spoil if they tried to save it, forcing them to depend on His fresh provision each day. No performance required—just simple, daily dependence on a faithful God.

When Elijah fled to the wilderness to escape King Ahab's rage, God commanded ravens to bring him bread and meat twice daily (1 Kings 17:2-6). Neither the Israelites nor Elijah worked for their food nor exhausted themselves trying to manufacture miracles. They were tenderly cared for by a God who knows every need before we voice it.

In the wilderness, our frantic striving is exposed as utterly powerless compared to God's effortless provision. When we stop performing and start trusting, everything changes.

Intimacy in Isolation: Where God's Whisper is Clearer Than the World's Noise

The wilderness is undeniably lonely. But when distractions are stripped away, something beautiful happens—you finally have space to look up. Without the world's noise drowning out heaven's voice, you hear what's been there all along: your Creator whispering, "You are not alone."

Elijah discovered this in a cave on Mount Horeb. After running for his life, feeling abandoned and ready to die, God met him not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:11-18). In that quiet moment, God gave Elijah comfort and clear direction.

Jesus understood the power of wilderness solitude. Despite the crowds constantly pressing around Him and demanding his attention, He regularly withdrew to lonely places to pray (Luke 5:16). He sought mountainsides and deserts where He could commune with the Father without interruption.

In the quiet emptiness of wilderness, God's presence feels closer, His voice sounds clearer, and His love penetrates deeper than ever. If you're feeling isolated today, recognize it as a divine invitation for intimacy with the One who never leaves you.

Preparing for Your Purpose: Welcome to God's Boot Camp

The wilderness isn't just testing—it's God's training ground, designed to prepare His people for their calling. Moses spent 40 years in the desert before God called him to deliver His people.

Moses entered the wilderness at 40 as a hothead who murdered an Egyptian. This is radically different from the Moses who emerged at 80, ready to stand before Pharaoh and calmly declare, "Let my people go" (Exodus 7:16). Those desert years transformed him from someone relying on his own strength into a leader depending entirely on God's power.

Jesus, too, entered the wilderness for preparation. For 40 days, He faced hunger, thirst, and Satan's temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). When He emerged from that spiritual boot camp, He was ready to launch His ministry with a crystal-clear purpose.

The wilderness strips away everything non-essential and refines what remains. It burns off self-reliance, deepens faith, and aligns our hearts with God's will. What feels like wasted time is actually sacred preparation.

So, if you're struggling in the wilderness today, take heart. This isn't punishment—it's preparation. Rely on God's provision, draw close in isolation, and trust Him to shape you into who He's called you to be.

Your wilderness wandering has an expiration date, but the strength and intimacy with God you gain there will last a lifetime. The wilderness may feel like the end of your story, but it's actually where your next chapter begins.

Adapted from author Erica Hale, a writer with Biblica, NIV Weekly Blog. All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, January 26, 2026.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday

to Deliver Meals

**Sign-Up Sheet is on the
Welcome Center Counter**



Ladies' Coffee & Fellowship
All Ladies Are Welcome

February 12th at 2:00 p.m. – Homestead with Jane Foster
 February 19th at 2:00 p.m. – Accura – Church Members
 If you have questions please contact Gloria Mauer. Please text her at
 712-246-8130

Dear Church Family,



In Matthew 6, Jesus speaks to people who are trying to live faithfully in a crowded, demanding world. His words about generosity, prayer, and fasting aren't about religious achievement. They're about learning where to place our trust—and where not to. Again and again, Jesus draws us away from performance and anxiety and back toward a peace that can actually sustain us.

That peace doesn't come from getting everything right. It grows through daily practices that loosen our grip on approval, accumulation, and control.

Generosity trains us to trust that we have enough. Giving without recognition—sharing food, offering help, supporting someone in need—reorients our hearts away from fear and toward gratitude.

Prayer keeps us grounded in relationship. Setting aside a few minutes to speak honestly with God, or simply to sit in God's presence, reminds us that we are held by something deeper than our to-do lists.

Fasting invites simplicity. Whether from food, screens, or constant noise, choosing to go without for a time helps us notice how much we rely on consumption to manage stress—and how faithful God remains when we stop reaching for more.

Jesus promises that where our treasure is, our heart will be also. When our lives are shaped by generosity, prayer, and simplicity, our hearts begin to settle.

May these practices help us discover a peace that doesn't depend on circumstances—a peace that steadies us, holds us, and carries us through ordinary days with grace.

Grace and peace,

Pastor David Clark
 308-258-7749 (cell)