

**SUNDAY February 22, 2026**

**“Called into the Wilderness”**

**Genesis 9:8-17 Matthew 4:1-11**

As Scouts/ cubs and beavers one of the highlights each year is to go to camp. There are different ways that you do camp- inside in tents, inside a building and you go on hikes and full out camping with food cooked over the fire. And it is in these moments when you might wonder am I ok even though I hear creatures of the forest making noises that are unfamiliar. Or even seeing snakes or big bugs and you may ask was this a good plan?

God created the world and in our story about Noah, he promised he would not destroy it again. A sign for this was the rainbow-- God's promise /covenant with people. This was important because there was no more wilderness to explore-- but in time God enabled things to grow again. And because of this there are places to camp and enjoy the great outdoors.

After Jesus was baptized he was called into the wilderness and was there a long time 40 days and 40 nights. It was like camping but he didn't eat but he prayed. He was also tempted at end of this time of preparation. For we do know that once Jesus left the wilderness he began his ministry. These temptations are what we too may be tested.

Jesus was very hungry and the devil tested Jesus by appealing to physical desire. But Jesus doesn't fall for that-- he quotes scripture, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God".

The second temptation was when the devil took Jesus up the pinnacle of the Temple and urged him to throw himself down. After all the angels would save him. Jesus replied, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test".

And the third temptation was that Jesus was offered all the kingdoms of the world and their glory if he would bow down and worship him. Jesus commanded him to leave, stating, "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only".

Were these temptations a part of Jesus' training before his ministry began? Yes and then some for he also is prepared because of the time in the wilderness lead him to pray. It would have been lonely for all that time but he would focus on the task of preparing for what is to come. Being prepared. Jesus knew what would happen- he would die and rise again he need assurance that God was with him.

Sometimes need the assurance that God is with us. Whether it's your first time camping, or you are now taking on leadership within the group, be assured that you are not alone as you go into the wilderness.

#### PRAYER

God of grace and love bless these youth and leaders of the 45<sup>th</sup> Scouting group as they teach and share their knowledge and experiences of the wilderness. Remind us all that whenever we go into the wilderness we are not alone. Amen.