



## **Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast for October 10, 2021 “Two Trees in Paradise”**

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*“Other than God and people, the Bible mentions trees more than any other living thing.”  
- from Reforesting Faith by Matthew Sleeth.*

There is a tree on the first page of Genesis, in the first Psalm, and on the first and last pages of The New Testament. As we explore the meaning of trees in the Bible in the next weeks and months, we should remember: Whenever a tree appears, God is there, and we should pay attention!

### **Two Trees in Paradise**

*“And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” – Gen 2:8-9*

Most of us are very familiar with one of these trees: The tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. (More about the Tree of Life later). When God planted the Tree of Knowledge at the center of paradise, He warned Adam:

*“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Gen 2:16-17)*

Adam and Eve learned that ignoring what God wanted for them resulted in exile from the garden, physical and spiritual suffering, and death. The spiritual lesson for us is that when we eat the fruit of this tree (that is, disobeying God and making bad decisions), we open the door to a cornucopia of evil: pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth. We give into our hunger and desires which are contrary to what God wills for us. It means spiritual death and separation from God, just as Adam and Eve were expelled from the paradise of Eden.



### **Why would God put such a tree in paradise?**

In Genesis we read that God put the poisonous tree in the middle of the garden of Eden right next to the Tree of Life where Adam and Eve couldn't miss it. It is almost as if God said, “The Tree of Life is always here right beside temptation, the Tree of Knowledge, to remind you that for every bad decision you may take in life, there is a good alternative.” May we remember the Tree of Life when we face the Tree of Knowledge in our lives. Amen.

**Please offer prayers for . . .** those who mourn, the hungry, the homeless, prisoners, and those who struggle to let go of hate; those suffering from severe weather and wildfires; those with COVID.