



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast for October 17, 2021 “The Tree of Life”

*“The largest and longest living form of life on the earth is a tree.”
- from Reforesting Faith by Matthew Sleeth.*

Life is so abundant on the earth that we take it for granted. Life is under the ocean, in the driest desert, and in forests and fields. Yet, God chose a tree as a symbol of life. Trees are always supporting life, whether alive or dead, and it’s been said (perhaps an exaggeration) that trees can live without people, but people cannot live without trees! Perhaps the most notable tree in the Bible is “The Tree of Life.”

The Tree of Life in the Bible

“God spoke: ‘Earth, green up! Grow all varieties of seed-bearing plants, every sort of fruit-bearing tree.’ And there it was. Earth produced green seed-bearing plants, all varieties, and fruit-bearing trees of all sorts. God saw that it was good. It was evening, it was morning— Day Three.” – Gen 1:11-13 (The Message)

Besides in Genesis, the term "tree of life" appears in Proverbs (3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4) and Revelation (2:7; 22:2,14,19). It also appears in 2 Esdras (2:12; 8:52) and 4 Maccabees (18:16), which are included among the Jewish books in the Apocrypha. Each of these appearances has a special message.

A Message for Us

“Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches. I’m about to call each conqueror to dinner. I’m spreading a banquet of Tree-of-Life fruit, a supper plucked from God’s orchard.” – Rev 2:7 (The Message)

It should not be a surprise to us that the Word spoken by the author of life would put a tree at the beginning and end of the Bible as a message. When we look at a tree, we look into and beyond creation as we know it in this life, and we see not just the beginning of all life but the promise of eternal life in Revelation. If we read Genesis through Revelation, we will see the unfolding of the triune God’s grace: creator, sustainer, and giver of new life. For Christians, the gift of life through Christ is well symbolized by a tree:



“...Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior...” – from Acts 5:29-31 (NRSV)

The Celtic Tree Symbol Above

...shows the Tree of Life as the visible connection between heaven and earth, God and humankind. May we all become blessed planters of spiritual trees to honor our ancestors, our descendants, and our God. May it be so. Amen.