

Life is In the Sap

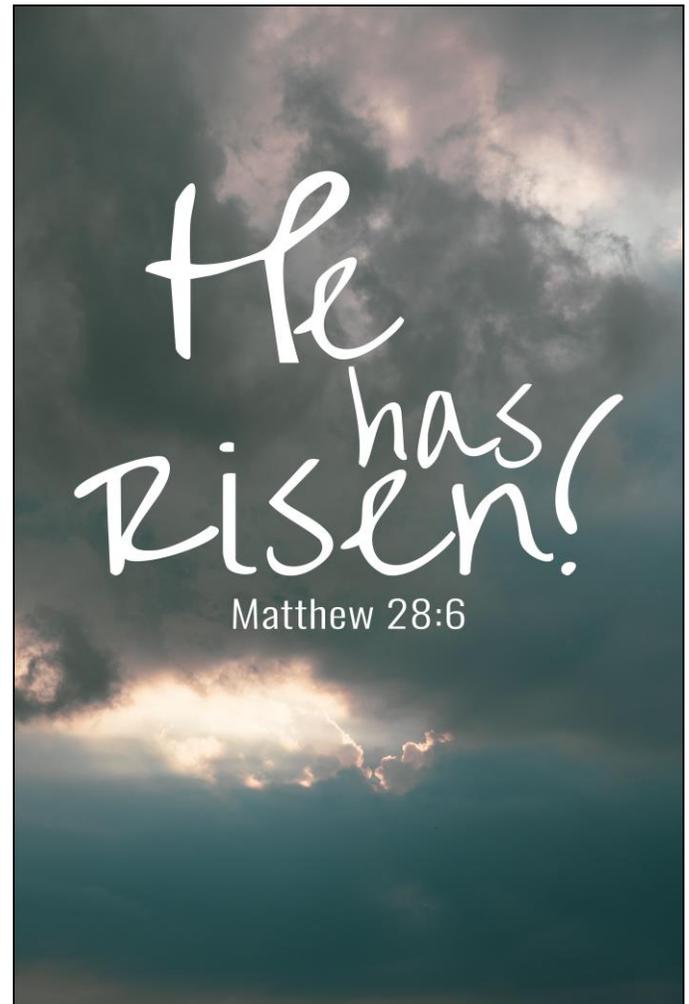
By Pastor Andrew Straubel

In February Janice and I were invited to Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell Township to see how maple syrup is made. The grandkids joined us at the farm, and we all bundled up and headed for the first stop. What did I know about making maple syrup? Nothing! I grew up in the city. In short order we were tromping around the woods trying to follow our tour guide dressed in homesteading garb from the 1800s. Our first stop was about a half mile down the road and into the trees, maple trees.

I fully anticipated Aunt Jemima's best to ooze out once the tap was hammered into the tree, but that didn't happen. To my surprise it was a gusher of clear liquid having the consistency of clear spring water. I was surprised to say the least; and, for the next thirty minutes or so, the lady with the 19th century bonnet and cape described how sap from a tree is produced. There is more to making maple syrup than I had ever realized.

Please forgive me if I don't get the science right, but from what I gathered sap flows up and down the tree as the result of the fluctuating temperatures outside. The sap flows best when it is very cold at night and warms up during the day. That, coupled with positive and negative pressures inside the tree, forces the sap upward from the roots to the crown. Consequently, sap will pour out of holes and cracks, or in our case "taps," which then is caught in buckets and taken to the "Hot House" to be boiled down. Two men confessed they had spent an entire day boiling down the sap. Apparently, it takes thirty-five buckets of sap to make one bucket of maple syrup, a thirty-five to one ratio. How interesting!

Now, being the pastor that I am, I looked for spiritual application. The Scriptures did not



disappoint. Psalm 92:12 speaks of the righteous who flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar of Lebanon. Trees! Not maple trees but note, these trees are planted in the house of the Lord; and, in verse 14 it says they still bear fruit in old age and are ever full of sap and green. Did you catch that? We are like trees—palm trees and cedar trees, and even in our old age we produce life giving sap. As those "planted in the house of the Lord," our roots can go deep and our leaves are healthy and green. Perhaps you have seen palm trees blowing around in hurricanes, their roots are strong. Cedars of Lebanon were considered the "first" of trees (1 Kings 4:33), strong and durable (Isaiah 9:10), graceful and beautiful (Psalm 80:10). They were God's choice in building Solomon's Temple. That is how the

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“Life is In the Sap,” continued...

righteous are described. That is how the Lord describes you, the one rightly related to Him through His son Jesus.

Don't think you are insignificant; you are not. You are planted! You are strong! You are durable! You are graceful! You are beautiful! You are God's building! (1Corinthians3:9) You are God's Temple! (1Corinthians3:16) Let your tree so shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Mathew 5:16) Be that tree! Shine in the Son! Bear fruit, much fruit, and fruit that remains. (John 15) Your pancakes will never taste better!

Thank you, Joe and Randi, for that invitation. It made our day!

**The righteous will flourish
like a palm tree,
they will grow like a cedar of
Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord,
they will flourish in the courts of our
God. They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and
green, proclaiming, “The Lord is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no
wickedness in him.”
Psalm 92: 12-15**

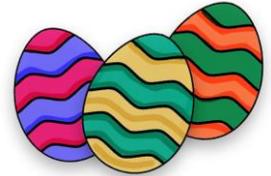
Perisseia

Our women's growth group will continue to look at the concept of free will in a four-week series beginning April 28, 7:00 pm, via Zoom. All women are welcome.

If you have not participated in Perisseia and would like to be included in the Zoom invitation, please contact Cindy Bills (cynthialbills@gmail.com).

Ministry Opportunity

Have you been looking for an enjoyable way to serve that will fit your busy schedule? A few hours of your time will be a tremendous help as we plan for our Easter Egg Hunt, one of our most important outreaches of the year. There are many ways you can help during the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 10, or on Saturday, April 9, as we prepare for the big day.



Please note the rain date for the Egg Hunt is Saturday, April 16. If you wish to serve in this rewarding ministry, please speak with Ed MacQueen on Sunday, or contact him by email at e.macqueen1@comcast.net or by phone at 609-751-6584.



Happy Birthday!

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes.

Gert Ferst	April 7
Lisa Yamamoto	April 9
Catherine MacQueen	April 12
Eva Bernheisel	April 14
Sarah Caroline MacQueen	April 15
John Hagestad	April 24

Work Day



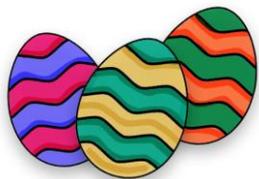
Please join us on Saturday, April 9, from 9:00 am to noon, for some healthy exercise as we spruce up our facilities in preparation for the Easter

Egg Hunt which will be held at 3:00 pm on Sunday, April 10.

We'll be weeding, trimming and raking outside. Bring wheelbarrows, gloves and gardening tools if you can. Coffee and donuts will be provided!



Easter Egg Hunt



Invite your family and friends and neighbors to the Chapel's Easter Egg Hunt, which will be held at 3:00 pm on Sunday, April 10. Free face painting,

prizes, crafts and more will be offered in addition to three Egg Hunts for children ages 2 -3, 4-5, 6-9. Join in the fun!

Please pray for Christ to be glorified as this event is used to invite folks to our Easter Sunday Service and other activities and inform parents about our children's program. The rain date is Saturday, April 16, at 3:00 pm.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.
Galatians 6:9



Holy Week and Easter Sunday Services



Reflect on Jesus' cross and celebrate His resurrection this Easter season with your family and friends:

Palm Sunday

(April 10, 9:30 am)

The children will lead us in a procession of praise during our worship service on Palm Sunday.

Good Friday Service

(April 15, 7:00 pm)

Our Good Friday service will feature reflective music, congregational singing and Scripture readings which will focus our hearts and minds on the Cross.

Easter Sunday Worship

(April 17, 9:30 am)

Don't miss this special service of celebration, combining special music and biblical reflection, on our only true foundation – Christ's resurrection! Invite your friends and family to experience the hope of our life in Christ.



Elders' Corner

By Ken Bills

In Genesis 25 and the chapters that follow, we read about Isaac, the son of Abraham, Rebekah, and their twin sons, Esau and Jacob. As with many Old Testament stories, the picture painted is not always a pretty one. Esau and Jacob were rivals, even from birth. (Genesis 25:22) The competition between them was no doubt exacerbated by the fact that Isaac and Rebekah played favorites. Isaac favored Esau, the first born and a skillful hunter. Rebekah's favorite was Jacob, a quiet man who preferred to remain close to home. (Genesis 25:27) The rivalry, it seems likely, was not helped by a prophecy before the twins' birth that, contrary to cultural customs, the older would serve the younger. (Genesis 25:23)

The competition between Esau and Jacob comes to a climax in chapter 27 when Isaac is old and nearly blind. Isaac, believing he will soon die, wants to impart his final blessing to Esau. In Genesis, these final blessings were serious business, not merely a wish, but something closer to a prophecy with the power to shape the future of the recipient. So Isaac asks Esau to hunt and cook him a savory dinner, at which time Isaac will bestow the blessing upon him. We don't know Isaac's motivation and whether he was intentionally trying to circumvent the prophecy that the older would serve the younger. Be that as it may, Rebekah overhears Isaac's instructions to Esau and decides to intervene.

Rebekah, while Esau is still out hunting, tells Jacob to get two goats from the flock. She uses them to prepare a dinner for Isaac, puts Jacob in Esau's best clothes and then sends him into Isaac's tent with instructions to impersonate Esau. When Isaac asks who is there, Jacob tells his blind father, "I am Esau, your firstborn," and he asks Isaac to sit up, eat the meal he has brought and give him the blessing. Jacob may be old and blind, but he still is suspicious. He asks how his son could be back from the hunt so quickly, but Jacob lies, claiming that the Lord blessed his hunt. Isaac knows that Esau is hairier than Jacob, and so asks to feel his

arm. But Rebekah had covered Jacob's arms with goatskin, so Jacob feels hairy to Isaac. Finally, Isaac asks Jacob to come close and kiss him, and smelling Esau's clothes, Isaac is satisfied and bestows the blessing he intended for Esau upon Jacob. Predictably, Esau is furious and vows that as soon as Isaac dies, he will solve the problem of the stolen blessing by killing Jacob.

What a distressing tale this is: a husband stubbornly pursuing his own way, a wife plotting against her husband and eldest son, brother scheming against brother, a son lying to his blind father on his deathbed. The striking thing about the above story, however, is how typical it is of the families of the patriarchs in Genesis. And yet, the high and holy God, whose eyes are too pure to look upon evil, does not reject them. When God identifies himself to Moses in Exodus 3:6, saying: "I am ... the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," it is the voice of grace that will not let go. Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau may not have fully realized it, but they were in need of a Savior. The Lord's faithfulness to them despite their sin had a cost, and it was one they could not pay.

Our sins and failures may or may not be as colorful as those we read about in Genesis, but they still testify against us. We cannot deny their existence, excuse their commission or undo the harm they cause. We cannot pay the debt that justice requires of us. As with the sins of our spiritual forebearers in Genesis, only God can pay the price. On Good Friday, we will corporately remember what it cost God to bear the penalty for our sins. The cross of Christ remains the central event of redemption history, the clearest expression of God's love for us; it is well worth taking time to ponder each year. You are cordially invited to join our annual service of remembrance at 7:00 pm on Friday, April 15. *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* (Romans 5:8)



Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

A Study in Contrasts

We have recently welcomed the vernal (spring) equinox of 2022. This marks the point in our year when the sun crosses the northern hemisphere, when in the journey of the earth around the sun, the northern hemisphere receives direct sunlight. The spring equinox represents the transition from winter to spring, a most welcome contrast. Although seasonal transitions and contrasts are not universal on our planet, I do believe that the contrast of seasons shows us something about the way the Creator likes to do things.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth; morning and evening; dry places and wet places. Even the quickest perusal of creation floods our senses with contrast: mighty oak trees and delicate lilies; hot springs and cold glaciers; blue jays and cardinals; deserts and rain forests; lions and lambs.

In His Word, God uses contrast to illustrate His truths and highlight our choices. Moses challenged the Israelites to choose life as he set before them the blessing and the curse (Deuteronomy 11:26), life and death (Deuteronomy 30:15). King Solomon's Proverbs are characterized by the contrast between the upright and the wicked, the wise and the foolish, the godly and the godless. When the Apostle John introduces Jesus in the beginning of his Gospel, he describes Jesus as the Light that shines in the darkness (John 1:5). The Apostle Paul uses contrast to teach the young believers in the churches under his care: we are justified by faith, not by works (Romans 3:27); believers are dead to sin and

alive to God (Romans 6); believers are to lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light (Romans 13:12); believers are to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit rather than manifest the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-23) and to lay aside falsehood and speak truth (Ephesians 4:25); believers are to set their minds on things above and not on the things on the earth (Colossians 3:2); we are to remember that we are called to sanctification and not for the purpose of impurity (1 Thessalonians 1:7).

As bondservants of Christ and heirs to the kingdom of God, we have an opportunity in the here and now to be light in a dark world, to answer Christ's call to be salt in a world that needs spiritual preservation. And in doing so, God's way of contrast is one of our potent strategies. When we encounter anger, we can respond in peace; when we encounter impatience, we can offer patience; when we encounter discouragement and despair, we can offer the hope of the Gospel; when we encounter lies, we can communicate truth; when we encounter critical spirits and/or narrow minds, we can apply grace. May the Holy Spirit guard and guide us as we offer ourselves to Him as He seeks to save the lost.

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or cynthialbills@gmail.com to continue the dialogue...

Financial Update

(Through February 28, 2022)

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$31,355	\$39,258
Expense	\$38,255	\$39,357

Windsor Chapel has sent \$4,715 to our missionary partners this year. That is 15% of your giving!

God's Perfect Faithfulness

By Janet Berrill

LuAnn and her seventeen-year-old daughter, Tabitha, went to a meeting over an hour's drive from their home. After the meeting, when the two returned to their car, LuAnn was unable to find the keys. Turning to her newly licensed daughter, she inquired if she had them. This inquiry made Tabitha look for her purse which she immediately realized she didn't have. When Tabitha returned to the car after having gone back into the building to get her purse, LuAnn was putting back all the items she had dumped out of her purse, minus the now found car keys.

Back in July at my semi-annual dental cleaning, I made my next six-month appointment for January. I recall requesting an appointment early in the morning and was told the earliest available appointment was at 11:00. With nothing I could do, I accepted the later appointment. In January I signed one of my sons up for a class that meets Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30. The class ended just in time for me to make my 11:00 dental appointment.

How many of us have been annoyed at little inconveniences? Could it be that God has a reason for the things that happen in our lives? LuAnn's lost keys caused Tabitha to realize she forgot her purse. Had Tabitha not realized it until she got home, it would have required an over two-hour drive to go back and get it. Had I gotten the earlier dental appointment, I would not have been able to make it. Rescheduling dental appointments at the last minute is difficult with my dentist, since most appointments are made six months in advance.

Isaiah 25:1 says, "O Lord, You are my God; I will exalt You and praise Your name, for in perfect faithfulness You have done marvelous things, things planned long ago." God is faithful. He is faithful in the big things and in the little things. And because of His faithfulness, He does marvelous things for us. In July I didn't know my son was going to be in a class on Thursday mornings, but God did, and He saw to it that my dental appointment was scheduled at a time when I could make it.

We might find out immediately why certain inconveniences happen (like with LuAnn and Tabitha), we might find out much later (like with me and the dentist appointment), or we might never find out (I'm sure everyone can think of an example for this one!), but what should our attitude be when these inconveniences occur? May the truth of God's perfect faithfulness cause our attitude to be one of praising His glorious name.

This article was originally published in the February 2008 issue of the Chapel Challenge.

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own
understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your
paths straight.
Proverbs 3:5-6**

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:
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