

## Rose of Jericho

By Pastor Andrew Straubel



Early this summer I came home to find what looked like a pinecone twisted up and sitting next to our kitchen sink. It remained there for a

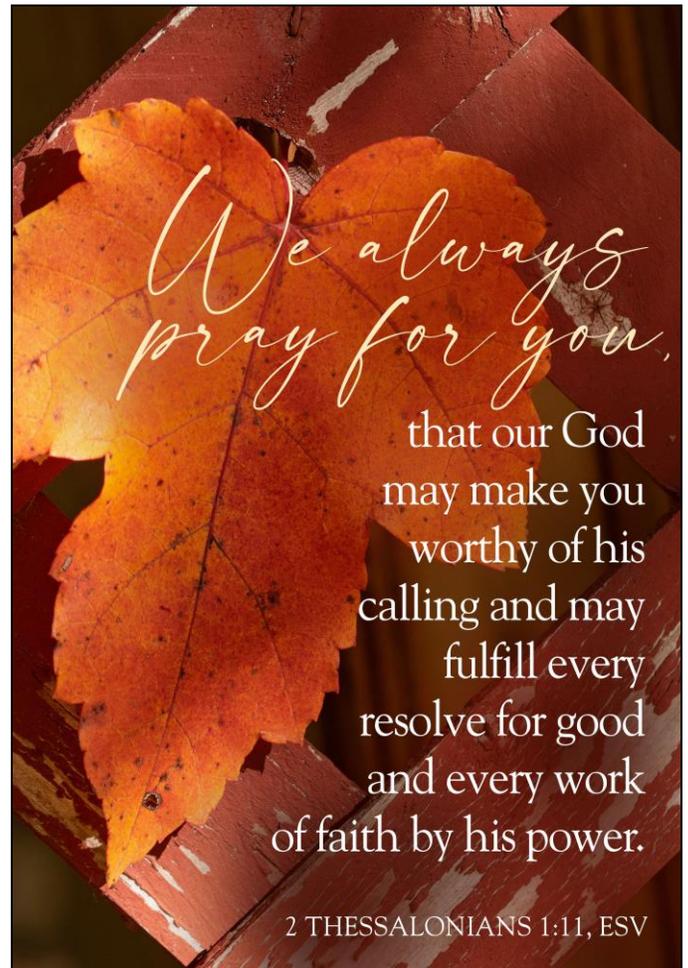
couple of weeks before I began asking questions. Sudden and strange plants are not unusual around our house as our daughter Hannah is ever exploring and seeing wonders in God's creation. It turns out that "pinecone" in question was actually a Rose of Jericho. I had never heard of it before. To me, it looks dead and shriveled up.

The plant is called the Rose of Jericho or the resurrection plant. The technical term is Selaginella Lepidophylla, a native of the Chihuahuan Desert, spanning the border between the US and Mexico, and is a member



of the spike moss family. During the dry weather its stems curl into a tight ball and the plant enters a period of dormancy. It can even become a tumbleweed.

It can revive or "resurrect" in the presence of moisture even if its roots are disrupted. The plant, when revived, becomes green and



fernlike in appearance and appears like it had never fallen asleep. I am told the plant can survive for years tight as a ball, then to awaken again a flourishing plant bearing white minute flowers.

Weeks went by and I found myself thinking about that plant and all the spiritual applications it might have to our lives as believers. It is called the rose of Jericho; Jesus is called the Rose of Sharon! The plant appears dead; Jesus died! The plant "resurrects"; Jesus resurrected from the grave. You get the idea. What really impressed me, however, was the fact that with a little moisture that plant could transform into a thing of beauty. I saw this for myself and could hardly believe it. Weeks have gone by and that rose

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## “Rose of Jericho,” continued...

has found a spot next to our kitchen sink reminding me of the hope of the resurrection.

The resurrection is the hope for the genuine believer in Jesus Christ, and Jesus wanted us to have that hope. *“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:13) *“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”* (Romans 6:5) *“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”* (John 5:28-29) At the tomb scene of Lazarus Jesus said to Martha, *“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”* What a question? Jesus gets right to the point. He gets personal. What we believe about Jesus will determine our eternal destiny.

For those who may be reading this and pondered matters of life and death, there is no greater hope than the resurrection. If you have never placed your hope and trust in Jesus, may I encourage you to do so right now. You will never be sorry that you did. Jesus’ resurrection guarantees our resurrection (read 1 Corinthians 15). The real question is, do YOU believe it. If so, you become the newest Rose of Jericho.

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**You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.**  
(John 15:14-15)



## 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.

|                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| Mark Warner     | October 1  |
| Elise Bruno     | October 2  |
| Marina Cull     | October 3  |
| Rose Ventura    | October 3  |
| Nancy Muldrow   | October 4  |
| Robert MacQueen | October 12 |
| Donald MacQueen | October 20 |

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## Believer's Baptism

A Believer's Baptism will be held on Sunday, October 18, during the worship service. An act of obedience, baptism is an outward act symbolizing an inward change and an important step in the faith journey of a believer. It is an opportunity for believers to make a public profession of their faith in Jesus.

Through baptism we identify with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If anyone is interested in a Believer's Baptism, please contact Pastor Andy or speak with one of the elders.

## Elder's Corner

By Ken Bills

*"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father..."* (Ephesians 3:14)

In the book of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul gives us a glimpse into his prayer life. While we refer to this book as Ephesians, some of the oldest New Testament manuscripts do not contain the words "in Ephesus," and for that and other reasons, many scholars believe that this letter was written to be circulated among several churches. If so, then Paul's prayer in his letter is not a reaction to a particular situation in a particular church, but a prayer of his heart for first century churches generally—and one that would be equally applicable to us today.

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.* (Ephesians 3:14)

There is a lot here, and way more than what can be explored in a short article like this! But there are some powerful things that we would do well to ponder. Starting at the end of Paul's prayer, the goal of Paul's petition is that each

believer would "*be filled with all the fullness of God.*" This echoes a common New Testament theme: "*Abide in Me, and I in you*" says Jesus in John 15:4; "*Be filled with the Spirit*" (Ephesians 5:18); "*It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in Me.*" (Galatians 2:20) Even so, the thought itself is breathtaking: Paul is praying that we would be filled with "*all of the fullness of God.*" Paul's prayer is not first about what we will do (although Paul clearly cares about how we live as is evident from the rest of the letter). But His first concern is about what God must do and about who we are inside, and that on the inside, we will be filled with God's fullness.

With such a lofty goal, it's no surprise that twice in his prayer, Paul prays for us to be strengthened. We are, of course, not worthy of having God's fullness dwell in us, and we are also too weak to be a vessel for such glory. So Paul prays that God will grant us to be "*strengthened with power through His Holy Spirit in your inner being.*" (Ephesians 3:16) We are not and cannot be strong enough on our own independently of God's grace, but only as He from His riches gives us strength through His Spirit to our inner being. "*Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.*" (2 Corinthians 4:16)

But with the Spirit strengthening us, Christ himself can "*dwell in our hearts through faith.*" With Christ dwelling in our hearts, not because of anything we have done or deserve, we can experience that we are "*rooted and grounded*" in love. And experiencing God's love as our foundation, Paul prays that we would have strength "*with all the saints*" to comprehend the "*breadth and length and height and depth of Christ's love*" even though it surpasses knowledge. Paul's language clearly reflects his struggle to describe the unimaginable richness of the love of God.

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## “Elder’s Corner, “continued...

So, in Paul’s prayer, we see all three persons of the Trinity active: the Father granting, the Spirit strengthening, Christ in-dwelling. We see that, as unbelievable as it sounds, we are intended to be filled with the fullness of God, fullness that is inextricably intertwined with our acceptance and experience of the breathtaking extent of the love of God. What a privilege! What a prayer!

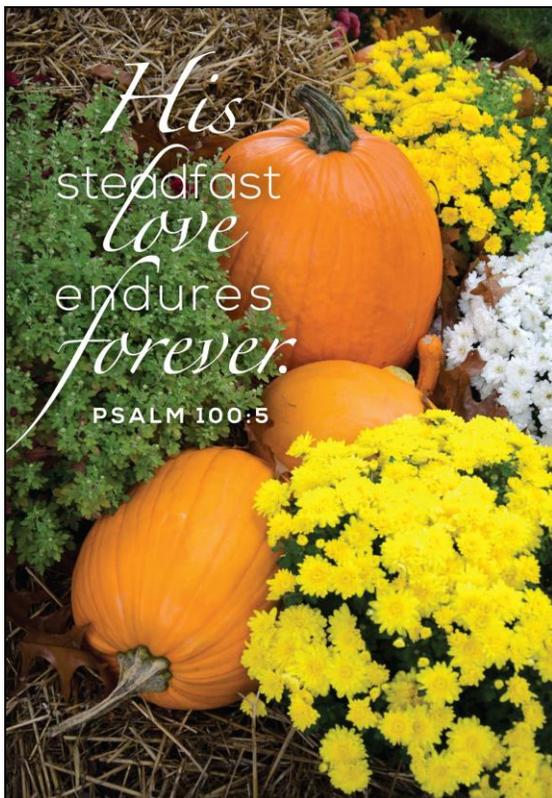
### Financial Update

(Through August 2022)

*“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want...”*

|                | Actual    | Budget    |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Income</b>  | \$126,707 | \$157,030 |
| <b>Expense</b> | \$154,168 | \$157,030 |

Windsor Chapel has sent \$19,205 to our missionary partners this year. That is 15% of your giving!



## Saturday, October 29

Please join us on Saturday, October 29, from 7:00 – 8:30 pm, in the Windsor Chapel picnic grove for our annual Harvest Party. We’ll have a roaring campfire for warming ourselves from the chill of the crisp autumn evening.

You may wish to bring a folding chair for relaxing next to the warmth and comfort of a crackling bonfire while listening to a suspenseful campfire story. Please consider inviting a friend or neighbor to share in the warmth of fellowship. Everyone is welcome!

**But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

## Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in  
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

### Christian Opportunism

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

This quote by Winston Churchill, while spoken in a secular context, provides Christian believers with an invitation and perhaps a challenge to consider how we view the world. In today's rushed, stressed, and competitive world, it is all too easy to become overwhelmed with the tasks of daily living and to become crushed by events beyond those daily tasks. This is a world where even those born with optimistic personalities struggle. But if we move beyond secular thought and innate personalities, we find that Christ has something amazing to say to us about our world view.

*These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)*

These words of Christ, spoken just before Jesus was arrested and crucified and quoted by the Apostle John, offer His disciples—then and now—with a worldview for those who have a faith relationship with Him. Jesus does not mince words. As fallen people in this fallen world, we will encounter tribulation. It can be and often is exhausting and excruciating. But Jesus is beyond the fallen world even as He resides in us via the Holy Spirit. He is not the eternal optimist; rather, He is the eternal Redeemer, who, as a manifestation of who He is, uses every difficulty as an opportunity for His good work of redemption and blessing.

We see Jesus the opportunist throughout His ministry as recorded in the Gospels. Wherever He goes, He encounters difficulty, misery, and suffering: the ill, the blind, the lame, the poor, the

marginalized, the oppressed, the dying, and even the dead. And each encounter is an opportunity to reveal and extend the grace of God through the work of the Holy Spirit who had descended upon Him at His baptism. Jesus never denies or minimizes the suffering or blames the sufferer. Nor does He ignore it. Instead, Jesus takes each unique encounter as an opportunity to display God's gracious and merciful heart.

As we follow Christ as our Model as well as our Lord and Savior, we would do well to remember that the same Holy Spirit who indwelt Christ now abides in us. As difficult as it is to fathom, we have the power of Christ who has overcome the world by His death and resurrection. We can take courage and view struggles—our own and of others—as opportunities for God's good work in us and through us.

*These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (John 15:11)*

The world is full of tribulation. But Jesus has overcome the world! And while the culmination of His victory will not be complete until the end of time, Jesus is offering us both peace and joy in the here and now. It is a wonderfully complete package: as we depend upon the indwelling Holy Spirit for the wisdom and power to exercise our faith relationship with Christ, we are better able to look for His work in and through us as we walk in this difficult world; the Holy Spirit then grows the fruit of peace and joy in our hearts; and we are encouraged to continue our dependence. This is true as we deal with our own struggles and as we encounter those whom the Lord puts in our path. The peace and joy that come from Christ as we negotiate both the small inconveniences and the more daunting tribulations are gifts from the Lord that we should not take lightly.

May we encourage one another as we pursue Christ together.

*Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557) or [cynthialbills@gmail.com](mailto:cynthialbills@gmail.com) to continue the dialogue...*

## Creation Reveals its Creator

By Janet Berrill

*“For since the creation of the world, God’s invisible qualities, His eternal power and nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made so men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)*

I know there are a lot of opinions about the creation of the world. Let me make my opinion clear from the start. I believe God created the world and that there was a worldwide flood. I do not believe in evolution, neither God directed nor random. And I believe that the earth, plants and animals, and the heavenly sky all point to God as their Creator. I also believe that the Bible is true and that at some point in the past there was a flood that covered the whole earth.

My husband, Larry, and I just got back from a two-week vacation where we visited five national parks. I love visiting the national parks and seeing nature as God created it. The parks we visited were in the eastern region of the United States. Although they were enjoyable, they are not as spectacular as some of the parks that are in the west, in my opinion. However, one park we visited, Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, was very impressive but in a much different way than the parks that showcase nature above ground.

At the national parks, I like going to the ranger talks for they provide information about the park that I otherwise would not know. However, these talks are often laden with statements about a world that slowly evolved into existence. This is what the rangers have been taught, so this is what they believe and tell others. But I see things very differently than they do. For example, at Mammoth Cave, there is a vertical shaft that is 105 feet deep called Bottomless Pit. The ranger explained that



water slowly dripped through the ground above and carved out the large shaft over millions of years. The shaft was largely circular and was open on one side and the sides of the shaft were smooth. I looked at the shaft and thought it looked like it was formed by a water eddy. To me, the shaft was evidence of a flood. The picture with this article (taken from the internet) is of the top of the shaft. How do you think it was formed?

The ranger and I both looked at the same formation and came to completely different conclusions about how it got there. Of course, since neither of us was there when the shaft was formed, both of us are only speculating.

A person’s worldview paints how they see and interpret everything in the world. I believe the Bible is true. I believe God created the world. I believe there was a worldwide flood. I see evidence of this in the world around me. Others believe there is no god and the world was created in a big bang and life slowly evolved to what it is today. With this worldview a person will interpret what he or she sees so that it is consistent with what he or she believes. But we can’t both be right, one of us has a faulty worldview and is believing a lie.

I started this article with Romans 1:20. Creation reveals its Creator. We will all face that Creator one day. On that day, those who in this life choose to deny God will be without excuse for God has made Himself plain through His creation.

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

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