



Celebrating that Christ is all and in all by seeking, inviting, belonging,  
serving and reverencing God's creation



## Reasons to Hug a Tree

“Trees grow older, taller, and bigger than anything else on the earth. They have been with us since the beginning of time....For those with ears to hear and eyes to see, the enormity of the gift of trees impresses itself upon us anew each day. Only God can make a tree.” –Matthew Sleeth, *Reforesting Faith: What Trees Teach Us About the Nature of God and His Love for Us*.

Trees are a vital means of storing carbon and helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. In a year, a single mature tree can absorb up to 48 pounds of carbon dioxide. Trees also clean our air, with a 60% reduction in particulates from car exhaust fumes on streets lined with trees. For every 10% increase in tree canopy, ozone is reduced by 3-7%. Trees and the water cycle are completely linked. A single mature, leafy tree can absorb up to 120 gallons of water through its roots every day, as well as capturing rainwater on the surface of its leaves. Tree roots also reduce soil erosion in the ground and slow the filtration of water into our town’s drainage networks. As well as absorbing water, trees release it as water vapor, which produces a cooling effect. The overall cooling effect of a single, mature tree is equivalent to 10 air conditioning units running for 20 hours a day. As average temperatures in the mountains continue to increase, we need the cooling effect of trees more than ever. Trees also provide a source of food and habitat to bats, birds, squirrels, insects, other plants, fungi and mosses, just to name a few. We have a deep, innate desire to be around them. Trees give us something we cannot quantify but which is essential to our happiness---Beauty.