

# The Parish VISITOR



*"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV*

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298  
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

**MARCH**

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*your pastor writes*

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY



**G**reetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the readers of the Parish Visitor!

The following series of messages are from the last chapter of the last book of the Bible. These messages talk about our eternal destiny in Jesus Christ. I pray they will encourage you.

*Paradise Restored, Rev. 22:1-5, originally given on January 16th, 2022 at CPC.*

**Introduction: Paradise restored:** We come now to the last chapter of the Revelation. This is not only the last chapter of the

*Continued next page*

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
is an intentional, healing community;  
proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness  
of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.**



**WELCOME  
BACK**

**in our Sanctuary!**



In addition to the in-person worship, we continue to stream the service on Zoom for those unable to attend in-person.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at [cpchollywood.org](http://cpchollywood.org).

You can send in your prayer requests PRIOR to the service via email to [sbaroldy@gmail.com](mailto:sbaroldy@gmail.com) or text at 323-202-5078.

*“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”*

*(Revelation 22:1–2, ESV)*

book of the Revelation, it is also the last chapter of the entire bible.

It is important to note God’s written word to his people begins in a garden, and it ends in a garden. God’s word begins in Paradise and ends in Paradise restored. And that is the title of this morning’s message, “Paradise Restored.”

The word “Eden,” as in the garden of Eden, from Genesis, chapter 2, means “pleasure or delight.” This is why Eden is often associated with “paradise.” Eden was a paradise of pleasure and delight.

Let’s pause and think about this for a moment. In the beginning, God created the first humans and put them in a garden of paradise. A garden where Adam and Eve would experience pleasure and delight; with God, with each other, with their work, and with their environment.

And now, in the new creation, God has, once again, placed reborn humans; God has placed his children in Jesus Christ; in paradise. Or, more specifically, in paradise restored.

What does this tell us about our God? Why does God keep putting us in paradise? Bottom line, it is because God loves us. And, because God loves us, God wants us to live a life of delight and

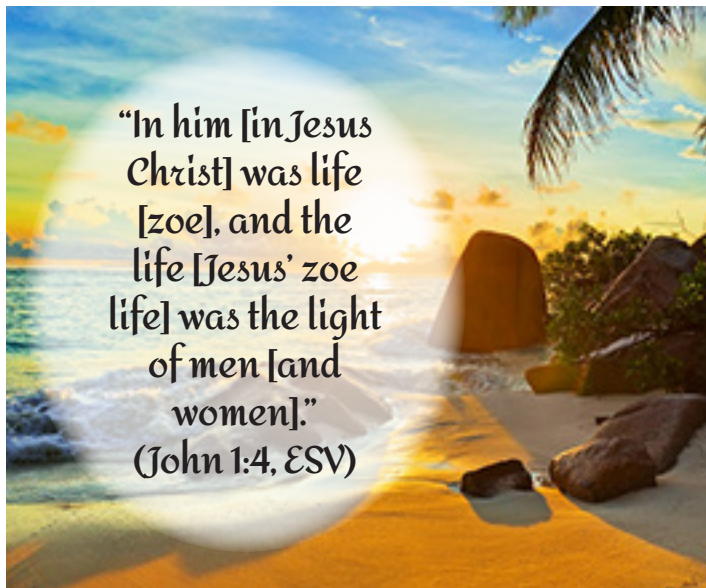
fulfillment. God wants us to live our life in constant fellowship with him because he is the source of delight and fulfillment. God always wants to bless us. God always wants us to be with him. This is God’s heart for us.

And, it’s important to note, humans did not have to work to earn a place in the first paradise. They were placed there by God, not on any merit of their own. God put them there. Once there, they simply needed to obey. And they couldn’t.

God knew they would disobey, which is why God chose us in Jesus Christ before God created us. God knew Jesus Christ would need to come to earth so we could be restored to right relationship with God. God sent Jesus to restore us, so we could once again live in paradise. Isn’t that amazing?

And, again, we don’t have to work to earn a place in paradise restored. Jesus Christ did the work to earn our place in paradise restored. Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life, and, then, gave himself as the perfect sacrifice so we could be restored.

We can’t earn our place in paradise restored. We simply need repent and accept what Jesus has already done for us. We simply need to repent, and by faith, receive Jesus Christ as Lord and



“In him [in Jesus Christ] was life [zoe], and the life [Jesus’ zoe life] was the light of men [and women].”  
(John 1:4, ESV)

The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Revelation 22:1–2, ESV)

The first thing the angel shows John is “the river of the water of life.” The word “life” here, or “zoe,” is our familiar word from the Apostle John’s writings. As a reminder, the word “zoe” does not refer to physical life, or biological life. It refers to the highest and most blessed life. It is the life that our Lord Jesus Christ has. And it is the life that our Lord Jesus gives to us.

The gospel of John 1:4 tells us, “In him [in Jesus Christ] was life [zoe], and the life [Jesus’ zoe life] was the light of men [and women].” (John 1:4, ESV) Jesus’ life in us lights the way to God’s highest and best life for us.

In paradise restored, there is a “river of the water of life [of zoe] bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city.”

This river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, through the middle of the street of the city. So, the river of the water of life flows from the throne of the God of life. Life flows from life. That’s the image here.

This imagery tells us there is a continuous flow of this highest and best life from the throne of God and the Lamb. This life is available to all who are in the holy city. This life is accessible to all

Savior. That is the way to paradise restored.

Now, we will notice parallels between the two paradises. In the first paradise, in Genesis, chapter 2, we have two trees, a river, and the manifest presence of God. In paradise restored, in Revelation, chapter 22, we also have two trees, a river and the manifest presence of God.

What is absent from paradise restored is also significant. Unlike the first paradise, in paradise restored, there is no serpent. The serpent, also known as the devil, has been cast into the lake of fire, never to deceive God’s people again.

Also, there is no tree of the knowledge of good and evil in paradise restored. There is no need for this tree because there is no evil in paradise restored, and there will never be evil in paradise restored. That is one of the things I most look forward to.

So, with this background, let’s look at paradise restored. Today we will focus on Rev. 22:1-2.

**The River of Life:** Let’s begin by rereading Rev. 22:1-2. Rev. 22:1-2 says, “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month.

who dwell in the New Jerusalem. The river of the water of life is there for our continuous renewal and refreshment.

Psalm 46:4 tells us, "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High." (Psalm 46:4, ESV)

Again, this river in paradise restored is a source of joy and gladness. It makes glad those who live in the city of God. All I can say is, "Let's go swimming!"

I don't want to just drink from the river. I want to swim in the river. How about you? In the new creation, I want all the life and joy and gladness I can get.



Can you imagine what it will be like having free and continuous access to the river of the water of life. When we need inspiration, when we need strength, when we want to top up our joy, we can go to the river and dive in. Imagine!

Of course, now, we have the Holy Spirit, who releases rivers of living water in us. Today, the Holy Spirit gives us inspiration, strength and joy. Yet, in the new creation, in addition to the Holy Spirit, we will have a physical river of the water of life to enjoy. Again, the idea here is life and more life.

*God put the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the first garden so humans would have a choice.*

**The Tree of Life:** Continuing on, verse two says, "also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Not only do we have the river of the water of life in Paradise restored, we have the tree of life. And not just one tree of life, but two trees of life. Did you notice that? There is a tree of life on either side of the river.

Now some commentators believe the two trees speak of a collective of trees. In other words, there is a grove of trees of life. Yet, I believe the symbolism of two trees is important. As I said before, there is no tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead, there are two trees of life. So, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil has been replaced by another tree of life.

God put the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the first garden so humans would have a choice. Adam and Eve had permission to eat from the tree of life. This choice yielded life in all its forms.

On the other hand, they were forbidden from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If they ate from this tree, their choice to disobey meant death.

So, God gave them free will to choose life, or to choose death. For those in the new creation, the choice has already been made. Those in the new creation chose life in Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus, in Rev. 2:7, says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers [or the one who remains faithful to Jesus Christ until the end] I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'" (Revelation 2:7, ESV)

Adam and Eve disobeyed in the first garden. And because of their disobedience, they were kicked out of the garden and their way to the tree of life was blocked.

For those who are faithful to Jesus Christ to the end, the Lord Jesus grants us the right to once again eat of the tree of life. What an encouragement to remain faithful! What a wonderful example of God's grace!

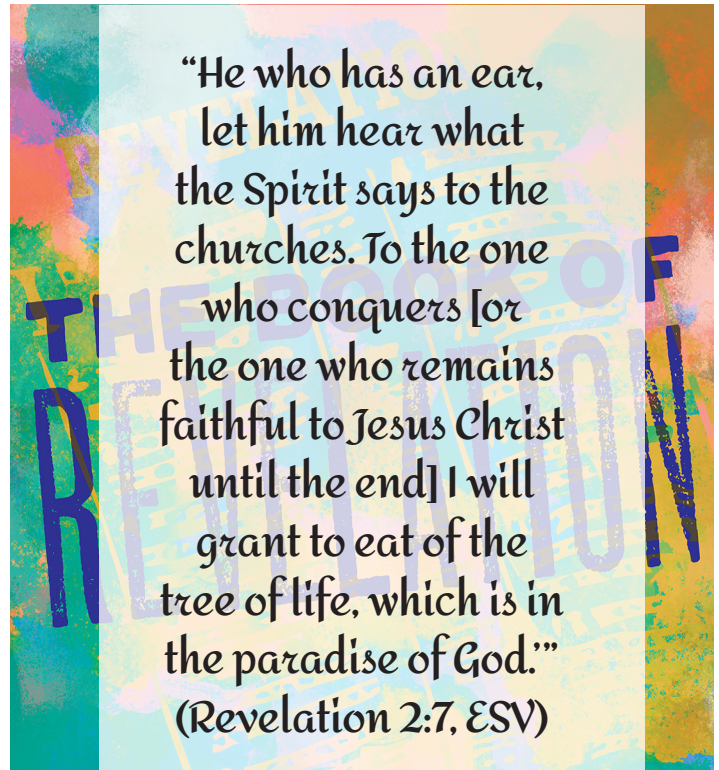
So, in Paradise restored, there are, at least, two trees of life. The trees of life will yield fruit each month. With twelve kinds of fruit, there will always be variety.

What we eat becomes a part of us. So, will each different kind of fruit reveal a different aspect of life with God? Or release a different aspect of God's life in us? I don't know, yet I look forward to finding out.

And finally, we are told, "The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations [or peoples]." Now, this is interesting. The healing spoken of here is not physical healing. In the new creation, there is no more curse and no more death. People will not need to be healed physically.

The root of the word translated "healing" here means "caring or attention." (Zodhiates, Key Word Study Bible). So, I believe the leaves here are for the "caring" of relationships.

An important aspect of life is our relationships. I believe the leaves of these trees symbolize all our relationships will be healed. All of our relationships



will be life giving. The words we speak to one another will all be life giving. What a change that will be! This will bring amazing relational and emotional healing. Amen!

God's heart for us is life: God's heart for us is to have the highest and best life for which we were created. These first two verses, in Revelation, chapter 22, are overflowing with this life.

We have the God of life on his throne. We the river of the water of life flowing from the throne through the middle of the city. And we have trees of life on both sides of the river.

God's desire for us is life. Abundant life; eternal life; a life full of joy, and delight, and pleasure and fulfillment. This is our destiny in Jesus Christ. Yet, today, just like in the first garden, each person must choose. We must choose life or death. Life in Jesus Christ, or death without him. Amen!

See you next month,  
Pastor Steve

*“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1Cor. 12:26-27)*

## PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

**Praise and thanksgiving:** Los Angeles County is now in the Covid green zone. What a joy to have our beloved sisters and brothers able to return to the church campus. Praise GOD for all those who had Covid and have returned to health. God provided for Joan a wonderful conservator who is thorough and kind. Brian’s and Denise’s medical numbers have improved. For the continued protection of the church property from physical damage and the provision for repairs. Huge congratulations to Tom and Noreen for 51 years of marriage! We thank GOD for them.

**For those who are grieving:** Grieving is a long process. Let’s keep remembering Hazel McElfresh who lost her daughter, Dee. For strength and wisdom to be both grandmother and mother to her 16-year-old orphaned grandson, Christian. Stella Kenner lost her son. The Rev. Bob Whitaker lost his wife. Maria Cardenas lost her longtime dog companion, Marley. Tom Chinen has lost his brother.

**For those who need physical healing:** Tom Chinen has a pinched nerve in his neck and shoulder. Surgery is scheduled March. Yuri lives with extreme chronic



pain. Ron Jung renewed strength and encouragement, increased appetite, and improved kidney function.

**For those who are home bound or in a care facility:** Joan Janecek, Ron Jung, Barbara Kashiwagi, Kimi Fujitani, Karen Koranye, Frank Morimoto, Janet Nozaki, Jean Sakai, Irene Mayeda caring for her mother Harumi, Esther Ingram caring for her husband Charles.

**General:** For our Russian and Ukrainian brothers and sisters in Christ to have strength and courage to persevere in their witness of the hope

we have in Jesus Christ. For a deeper and more intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ for us all.

**Our Missionaries:** The Kostov family pastor in Vidin, Bulgaria. The Zebley family pastor in Tokyo, Japan. The Rice’s in Sudan, the Mason’s in Japan. Please pray for financial supply, favor with the community, spiritual and physical protection, and renewed strength for the ministry.

**For Church leadership:** Pastor Ernesto and Juana Salguero, and our sister church Faro De Luz. Pastor Steve and Simone Baroldy and our Christ Presbyterian Church community.

### *How can we pray for you?*

If you have prayer requests, you can send them via email or text PRIOR to our service each Sunday.

My email is sbaroldy@gmail.com.  
You can text me at 323-202-5078.





Lent is a 40-day season marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

The key event of Lent include Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

At the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, many Christians get a cross on their foreheads from the ashes during a church service. The ashes symbolize grief and the acceptance of our sinful state.

Maundy Thursday is recognized as the day before Jesus is crucified. It is believed to be the day Jesus celebrated Passover with his disciples and most notably, washed their feet as a display of humility and love.

Good Friday is the day we remember the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the cross. It is part of God's plan for our salvation. God's good plan to redeem us from sin included the suffering of Jesus.

Easter Sunday is the most important day in Christian history. Three days after his death, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus rose again, conquering the grace and death. Through Jesus, we have the opportunity to have eternal forgiveness for our sins, relationship with God, and eternity in heaven. *Source: Crosswalk*



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## FINANCIAL REPORT

FEBRUARY  
2022



	FEB. 2022	YTD
Receipts	\$ 8,935	\$ 19,864
Disbursements	\$ 10,976	\$ 30,749
Increase (Deficit)	(\$ 2,041)	(\$ 10,886)

## Gifts & Offering



*We are grateful for your continued generosity in supporting our ministry.*

*Please consider sending a gift or donation to:*

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
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# CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD



**SUNDAYS at 11:00 A.M.  
IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM**

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