Tree of Life: Spiritual Meanings of Trees for Watershed Restoration
WATER & TREES in the Bible

That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. Psalm 1:3

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. Psalm 104:10-13

They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; it’s leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:8
TREES in the Bible

The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. 

Gen. 1:12

Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen. 2:9

...be rooted and grounded in love.

Ephes. 3:17

... 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.

Rev. 22:1-2
Meanings of TREES

IMMORTALITY

WISDOM

STRENGTH

BEAUTY

ETERNAL LIFE

FUTURE

"..be rooted and grounded in love"
~ Ephes. 3:17
Why Plant Trees?

Benefits for whole ecosystem/ harmony in Creation
Contributes to: health & healing the web of life

• Watershed stewardship
• Restore habitat for wildlife
• Filter pollution, prevent runoff, improve water quality
• Prevent soil erosion
• Reduce carbon footprint
Changing the Landscape Paradigm: Mowed to Natural Use
Conventional Lawns

- Monoculture- usually one or two grass species
- Little wildlife value – creates a “food desert”
- Shallow root systems= less water uptake in storms
- High maintenance!
It’s not just the types of plants in our landscapes that are starving our birds, it is the amount of plants we use in suburbia. We have usurped so much of the natural world that we now need to build functioning ecosystems at home; this is especially important in an era of climate change.
How many caterpillars does it take to feed a nest of chickadees?
- 500 a day!

Only native trees host native insects.

Planting native trees heals the web of Life ~ God’s Creation.
REDUCING CLIMATE CHANGE with TREES

• One hundred trees remove 53 tons of carbon dioxide and 430 pounds of other air pollutants per year.

• Research from the Center for Chesapeake Communities
  – In Baltimore, trees remove close to 5 million pounds of nitrogen dioxide annually —equal to removing 183,000 cars from the road and saving over $26 million in associated health care costs each year.
Story

Workshop at Geneva Presbyterian Church:

*Loved the Web of Life activity*---*great!*
Story

Workshop at Temple Emanuel

Rabbi Rhoda Silverman:

The workshop was a wonderful addition to our Tu Beshvat programming and will serve as good reflection piece come May when we get to the actual planting.
SONG: Trees of the Field

We shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace, the mountains and the hills will break forth before you. We’ll go out with joy and be led forth in peace, and the trees will clap their hands.

The trees of the field will clap their hands 3x
And we’ll go out with joy.