

**A Message from Jeanette Schaffer, Director**  
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**November 2018**

*"...whoever drinks of the water that I (Jesus) will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." John 4:14*

With all the rain we have had lately it is hard not to think about water. I love the rain, but this time around it seems to have brought me some rough challenges. My roof has sprung several leaks, and the cost of repairs is out of my budget. But even worse, it has caused my horse to slip on the muddy ground, fall and hurt herself. So, I ponder the question, 'how can something so good bring so much bad?'. Rain is amazing, it quenches the thirst of the ground watering trees and vegetation and refills our aquifers so that we may have water to use at our disposal. It cleanses the air we breathe. It is so satisfying to go outside after a good rain and take a deep gulp of air. How refreshing!

The ancient land of the Israelis was a desert land, and fresh water was hard to come by. People recognized it as a precious resource, and regularly were confronted with how important it was to sustain life. Other than the occasional aqueduct or running stream, plumbing was not an option. They couldn't go to the kitchen sink and turn the faucet on as we can, we are so blessed! Most people from that era had to rely on wells to draw water from, and that was not an easy task. It took a lot of work and effort to obtain water for daily use. So, when Jesus compared Himself to a spring of fresh water, it struck a deep nerve with the people in that place and time. They understood Him to say that He would be an abundant source of life-giving sustenance.

The fact that water can be so vital for life and yet so life threatening (typhoons, raging waters, etc.), is one of the innumerable things in creation that reflect the many facets of God. Yes, God is tender and breathes life into us and is compassionate beyond comprehension. Yet He is ferocious and should be feared as well. In John, Chapter 2, Jesus went into the temple and was angry that His Father's house had been turned into a place of merchandise. He was furious! He, the very embodiment of love, was extremely angry and you did not want to be in His path at that moment. And there were many instances in the Old Testament where Almighty God, a God of mercy and love, wiped out large numbers of people that were trying to destroy and kill His people.

What I am trying to convey here is that even when something is very, very good, we need to regard it with respect and recognize that it can bring harm. I appreciate water so much, but I recognize its ability to destroy. I appreciate God with my whole heart, but I recognize He is to be lifted up and not treated casually. He is a great God with great strength, and He deserves more respect than we tend to give Him on a daily basis. Let's not just love Him; I pray we can actively respect Him as well. I believe that would allow us deeper intimacy with Him.

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