



The Earth Ministries Team is confident that Binkley members and friends lament the great loss of trees and whole forest in the rapidly urbanizing area in which we live. Not only do we appreciate the natural beauty of trees and forest, we are also mindful of their benefits to humans and all other living creatures. As a reminder, here is a list of 10 benefits of trees.

- 🌍 Trees are the ‘lungs’ of the Earth and are *essential* to animal and plant life on Earth. They create the very air we breathe and filter air pollution.
- 🌍 An average size tree produces enough oxygen in one year to keep a family of four breathing.
- 🌍 Three trees planted in the right place around buildings can cut air-conditioning costs up to 50 percent.
- 🌍 Trees provide shelter and food for wildlife such as birds, squirrels, and a myriad of insects. Groves of trees provide food and cover for larger mammals, such as raccoons and deer.
- 🌍 Trees in the landscape calm and relax us, lower heart rates, and reduce stress; they make people feel good.
- 🌍 Trees are material providers such as drugs, teas, essences, pigments, wood, fiber, resin, paper, oils, honey, fruits, flowers, seeds, and much more.
- 🌍 Trees reduce urban runoff and erosion by storing water and breaking the force of rain as it falls.
- 🌍 Trees absorb sound and reduce noise pollution. (This is especially important for Binkley, since we are so close to Fordham Blvd.)
- 🌍 Trees encourage us to be out of doors more, improving our health through physical activity.
- 🌍 Trees are renewable, biodegradable and recyclable.

For all of these reasons and more, trees are important and we challenge Binkley members to engage in the following actions in February:

- 🌍 Plant a tree! Naturally occurring rainwater during our winter months will better assure a healthy start for newly planted seedlings or more mature trees.
- 🌍 We encourage everyone to participate in the Grounds/Earth Ministries tree planting ceremony on the church grounds immediately after the 11:00 service on Sunday, February 24. Look for more information in the weeks ahead.
- 🌍 Finally, we invite everyone to reread Joyce Kilmer’s famous poem, *Trees*, published in 1914:

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth’s sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.