

## THE TWO TREES OF CHRISTMAS

As you walk into church this Yuletide Season you will see two beautifully decorated trees in the chancel. In the olden days these trees were decorated with apples and roses to teach sin and grace. The tree on the left is called the "Tree of Sin," the tree on the right the "Tree of Grace."

The "Tree of Sin" reminds us of the beginning of sin. God said to Adam, "Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the Tree of Knowledge, of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16). When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the "forbidden" fruit, they corrupted the whole human race in sin and brought forth the judgement of God. "By one man sin entered into the world, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

There is a red streamer on the tree to remind us all of Isaiah's words, "Though your sins be as scarlet" (Isaiah 1:17). Red apples represent the "forbidden fruit," not because the Bible says these were apples, but because they are in season.

The tree on the right is called the "Tree of Grace and Life." It is decorated with white satin roses because Jesus is the "Rose of Sharon" spoken of by Isaiah in chapter 35:1-2. Grace and life come by Jesus Christ, "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17). The white streamers on the "Tree of Life" suggests the rest of Isaiah's statement, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow" (Isaiah 1:17).

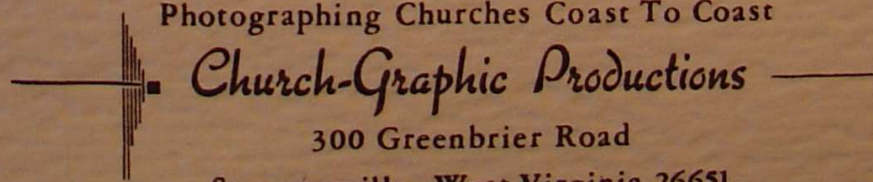
The white lights represent the light of the Gospel. The green trees symbolize everlasting life. There are 33 apples and 33 roses symbolizing the 33 years of our Savior's life to redeem us.



*Christmas at First Lutheran Church*

*May God, Who loved the world so much  
That He gave His only Son,  
Grant you a year of Christmas Days  
With a Blessing in each one.*

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