



ANDREW PETERSON

THE  
GOD  
OF THE  
GARDEN

*Thoughts on Creation, Culture,  
and the Kingdom*



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For Art and Janis Peterson

Who impressed on me the words of the Lord, talked  
about them when they were sitting in their house,  
when they were walking by the way, when they were  
lying down and rising up. They also planted trees.



*And calling to him a child,  
he put him in the midst of them and said,  
“Truly, I say to you,  
unless you turn and become like children,  
you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

—Matthew 18:2–3 (ESV)





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## WELCOME TO THE CHAPTER HOUSE

*The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.*

—William Wordsworth

**T**his is a story about place.

It's fitting, then, that the whole of this book was written in one place, surrounded by the same walls, the same smells, the same creaks and quirks and comforts. Because of my job, I've done a lot of traveling, so most of my songs and stories were written in all manner of places: coffeehouses, church fellowship halls, green rooms, airplanes, park benches, and recording studios. I've spent much of the last twenty-five years on the move. Due to COVID-19, early 2020 had me literally and figuratively grounded in a way that allowed me—*forced* me—to work in place: slowly, rhythmically, without the frantic pace to which I had grown accustomed. I had to exercise my imagination, casting thoughts far and wide, thoughts creeping like ivy beyond the confines of this place to other places in the distant past and the distant future, traveling not on an airplane or in a tour bus but in the pages of books and the memories kept by photographs.

Several weeks into the spring lockdown, as Jamie and I drifted off to sleep, I realized that I had spent more consecutive nights in my own bed than I had in more than twenty years. I was so happy. Yes, there were financial concerns;

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yes, there was a simmering anxiety brought on by that awful virus; yes, death and tragedy seemed to be ripping the world apart at the seams; yes, there were things we wanted to do but couldn't. But I had never, since 1997 when we moved to Nashville, been home with my bride for every day of spring. I had never witnessed, from home, the way Lent blossomed into Easter. Nor had I ever been present for each heady day of high summer or its withering into the blaze of autumn. Certain birds came to the feeder at certain times. On walks to the lower pasture I came to expect the white flash of rabbits bounding into the brush in certain places. Among the many deer that passed through, one orphaned fawn hung around for weeks, brazenly grazing the patch of corn just beyond our car. I learned to spot box turtles standing frozen in the weeds and eyeing me with their severe yellow irises near the seasonal stream. The field of wildflowers lured butterflies and gold finches. The bees provided fifty pounds of honey. The pear tree produced, at last, exactly one edible pear. We got bowl after bowl of blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries, harvested on dewy mornings as the sun crested the hill. The chickens provided eggs; the raised beds provided kale and onions and cucumbers. And the cottage garden out front, with someone to tend it on a daily basis, exploded with firework displays of tulips, hyacinths, foxgloves, yarrow, coneflowers, delphiniums, catmint, Russian sage, hollyhocks, geraniums, lupines, and asters. The whole of the property seemed to enjoy being cared for by this amateur gardener tromping about. It responded favorably to me, and I to it. In short, I had never

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been so intimately connected to Place—to *this* place we call The Warren, utterly unique in all the wide world.

When we moved here about fourteen years ago, I dreamed that one day I'd find a way to build a little writing cabin. We homeschooled our kids (which really means Jamie homeschooled our kids), so it was difficult to find a quiet place in the house to write. Life was busy and money was tight, so building something was out of the question. I managed by working on books at the local coffeehouse and songs in our living room late at night after everyone else had gone to bed. Of the songs I wrote at home over the years, 99 percent of them were composed between midnight and 4:00 a.m. Then about five years ago, a friend came to visit from out of town. We gave her a tour of the property, and at the end she asked me, "But where do *you* work?" We laughed. I told her that I hoped to build a place someday, but we couldn't afford it. It was clear that her wheels were turning. A few weeks later we got a check in the mail, along with a note that read, "This is for the foundation. Get started."

She knew that if I just took the leap and poured the footers, I'd find a way to finish. She was right. Thanks to the help of several generous people, about a year later I completed construction on this little writing cottage called the Chapter House. I found an old \$400 piano on Craigslist and settled it in the corner, and the first day I sat down to work on a song, I bowed my head and cried with thanksgiving. In this place called Nashville there's a place called The Warren. And here at The Warren, just beyond the stone arch and the bed of tulips,



## WELCOME TO THE CHAPTER HOUSE

The better part of the Chapter House is made of trees. The ceiling, the floor, the front door, the bookshelves, the drawing table, the mantel, and the pine frame were once living trees. That means something. What also makes a house meaningful is the stories that it houses. Our bodies need a place to live, and the places we live need bodies to inhabit them. Humans were created to care for the world, and the world was created to be cared for. This story about place is framed by trees, but it isn't just about trees. Trees are the framework by which these stories were written and understood—and if not understood, then at least explored. The trunks of several of the big trees here at The Warren bear 2x4 planks which were hammered in by my children, one over another, so they could reach the upper branches. The chapters in this book are like those 2x4s, made of trees and affixed to trees in order to reach the wondrous world of the overstory, and also to get a new and enlightening glimpse of the ground.

Trees need to be still in order to grow. We need to be still in order to see that God's work in us and around us is often slow and quiet, patient and steady. It was in that stillness that I sat here in the Chapter House, watching through its windows as creation cycled through its changes, to delve into the soil of the past, to branch into the air of the present, and to strain toward the skies of the coming Kingdom.

And so it begins with a maple seed caught on a gust of wind, sailing up over the eaves of the Chapter House, past the Cumberland River, clear over the horse pastures of Kentucky, and into the wide plains of central Illinois. The seed pinwheels



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down to settle in the backyard of a small brick house where a little boy and his siblings play.

They have no idea how good they have it.

## TWO MAPLES, A DOGWOOD, AND THE THINKING TREE

*There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Appareled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.*  
—William Wordsworth

**T**wo maple trees.  
One big and one little.

That's what I remember first about my childhood in Monticello, Illinois. If you were location scouting for a film set in the quaintest, most idyllic version of small-town America, you could do a lot worse than Monticello. There was a town square with a Dairy Queen and a pizza place on the corner. We had fireflies in the summer and snow ploughs in the winter, softball games in the park and bullies on the playground. We even had tornadoes every so often, scouring miles and miles of corn fields, splintering old barns.

Our family lived in the parsonage, a humble house on the church property where the preacher lived rent-free. Looking at the little brick house from State Street, you'd see on its right a field of corn that bordered the side yard and stretched back for a few hundred yards. The cornfield border turned left and enclosed the backyard and the church building, then angled back to the road on the left, beyond the church, hemming us

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in every summer with a waving wall of green. In the backyard, between the house and the corn, stood the two maple trees: one big, and one little. I don't know if they were planted at different times, or if perhaps one lost its upper limbs in a storm, but I have a hazy memory of referring to those maples as "big" and "little."

There's a good chance I never said it out loud, but all these years and miles away, if I close my eyes and picture Monticello, the first thing I see is those two leafy trees in the foreground of a sea of tall, green corn, corn stretching away forever beneath a vibrant blue dome. Another hazy memory: climbing a wooden ladder into the shadowy boughs to marvel at four sky-blue eggs cradled in their twiggy nest. It was 1980. I was seven.

Corn. Blue sky. Two maples, one big and one little. Those four things encapsulate the greater part of my childhood memory. I never found out who planted those trees, but if I had, I'd thank them. They're as much a part of my history as that little house and the people who lived in it. There's a scene in *It's a Wonderful Life* where a drunk George Bailey crashes his car into a tree. The owner of the house yells at him and says, "My grandfather planted that tree!" It's a small moment in a big story, but I always loved it. He might as well have said, "I'm rooted to this place. I'm a part of a larger story. I care about things that last, and about things handed down. I care about what grows and gives shade, about creation, and about the broad sweep of the ages." These trees weren't mine, but I wish they had been.

From a distance of forty years, I see that little boy climbing into the maple boughs to look at the eggs and I want to hug

him. Even now, my heart swells a little and I clench my jaw to keep from crying for the sadness of what was lost, and lost so soon. Pain was sure to come, but I didn't know it yet.

I recall a passive, almost mindless movement through the days, taking note of moments that strike me now as precious and undefiled, but were taken then as a matter of fact and no less wonderful because of it: a rabbit vanishing into the green shadows cast by the leafy wall of corn, sunlight warming the strawberry patch, the cat giving birth on a pile of laundry, the chattering spill of church members into the bright air of the parking lot after the service on Sunday, the muted walk to Lincoln Elementary School in the hushed world of a snowy morning. That chapter of my childhood cradled a profound innocence, which is why I now find it so baffling that I wholeheartedly invited such sin into my heart one day at school when on Book Day my friend smuggled one of his dad's magazines from home; baffling that first and second grades were spent in abject terror of being called on or even looked at; baffling that the little golden boy I was could be so easily and willingly tarnished.

What happened? Try as I might, I can find nothing in the memory-scape of Monticello to explain it. The summer days gleamed with blue and green and gold, the nights with fireflies, the winters with moonlit snow. The two maples framed the backyard and offered their shade in June, their glory in October, their stark outlines in February, their russet buds in April. They were benevolent sentinels, watching as the little boy and his siblings slipped into the corn rows, as they chased the cocker spaniel, as they sledded on the snow pile in the

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parking lot. Always present, rooted to the ground in a way that suggests permanence, the maples were yet always changing, always plunging their roots deeper, stretching their branches higher and broader, fattening their trunks by a ring per year; always swaying in the wind, sprouting, sighing, creaking, boasting in summer and blushing in autumn. I loved those maples. We think of trees as sturdy, immovable obelisks, yet they're fully alive, imbued with motion and growth. Yes, trees stand still. But they also dance. And they break.

---

In 2016 I had a concert in Champaign, Illinois, which is about twenty minutes from Monticello. The good people who promoted the show let me borrow someone's car so I could drive over and reminisce for a few hours before sound check. I was thrilled, hoping that something there would trigger a new memory. Childhood is a photo album of mostly blank pages, and I was hunting for a few Polaroids to restore to their rightful place. Maybe this is a better analogy: childhood is an art museum that's been pillaged by time, and there on the blank walls, below the faint rectangular outline where the painting used to be, hang little plaques that read, "The Source of Your Anxiety," "The Reason You're So Desperate to Be Loved," "The Day You Knew the World Was Broken," and "The Day You Knew You Were Just as Broken as the World."

We journey in pain, and the presence of pain demands an answer. When you stub your toe in the dark, you don't just hop around for a minute and then go to bed—you flip on the

light to see what hurt you. True, I wanted to recapture some of the innocent wonder of boyhood in Monticello, a season of my life I've long thought of as a sort of Eden, but there was more to the expedition than that. Maybe I had repressed the truth. I had been hurt, and I wanted to switch on the light to understand what had hurt me. Maybe there was a sinister presence even there in that Edenic little town that had marked me, shaped me, wrecked me, and I had subconsciously taken the paintings off the wall and stowed them in the basement.

I was hunting for nostalgia, yes, but here's another truth: I was afraid of what I might find.



I drove west from Champaign under a gray, featureless sky. The stubble of corn stalks in all those wide, muddy fields was all that remained of the harvest a month prior. When I exited the highway for Monticello, I turned off the GPS, determined to find my way without it. Right away, I happened upon the cemetery where my brother and I used to ride our bikes through a hilly forest of gravestones and old trees, where I always felt a thrill of intrigue among all those bones stowed among the roots. I coasted through the town square, where our family sometimes sat on a stone wall in front of the courthouse to eat Dairy Queen ice cream after church. As I drove I couldn't shake the feeling that the town held some secret to understanding my childhood a little better, but I was only getting snippets. I followed the cold, quiet streets past the elementary school, where one wintry afternoon I almost froze to death waiting for

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my brother to walk me home. He had forgotten to collect me, and I dutifully waited so long I fell asleep on a pile of snow. My parents found me after dark. A chilling memory, if you'll pardon the pun, but not a new one. I finally made my way north, past the library with the bust of the horse out front, past the train museum that commemorates Abe Lincoln's visits to the town before his presidency, then a string of unusually large Gothic Revival houses called "Millionaire's Row," to—there it was!—Monticello Christian Church, and the parsonage where we lived.

It must be different for people who stuck around, whose years of memories overlay each spot. Because we moved when I was seven, the memories are held in time, a series of vignettes frozen in amber. I floated through the tree-lined streets like a ghost, silent and attentive to every detail as an observer rather than as a participant, as if everyone else was going about their business with blinders on and I alone was able to see the town for what it was. But here's the mystery: "what it was" remained veiled even from me, like a word on the tip of my tongue, or the corner piece of a puzzle that eludes discovery.

This is going to sound strange, but when I was a boy, alone in the backyard or the bedroom, I remember whispering to myself, with a shiver of wonder, "I am *me*." I was a Self. Among all the cogs and pistons of the universe, this one little bolt at least was sentient and self-aware, able to form thoughts and to isolate himself as a separate, cognizant being with agency. Of all the things I could choose to think about, whether Tonka trucks, or hide and seek, or the color of the clouds, I

occasionally stopped whatever I was doing and willed myself to dwell on my own personhood as a member of the universe. “I . . . am . . . *me*,” I would think, and then shiver all over. My brain would crackle. I was particular. Who I was was a Who. Not just a What. And I was a Who who could think about being a Who. And that grown-up Who was now ghosting his way down the streets of Monticello in December, unable to put his finger on the What he was meant to discover.

I parked the car in the gravelly church parking lot, climbed out into the cold prairie wind and looked around. The corn field was gone, replaced by a small development of houses and an expansion of the church property. I spotted a stand of crab apple trees in front of the church, and suddenly remembered eating their bitter fruit after a Sunday night service.

Ah! A new memory, at last. And a good one, at that.

I walked toward the back of the house and looked for my two maples. But there were now several trees, and it was winter, which made it hard to tell which were mine. A couple of them looked equal in size, both rather large, and I wondered if I had invented the part about one being smaller. They were also entirely in the wrong place, which made me wonder if they were the original trees at all. Maples grow up to two feet per year, so one would think that forty years would have been enough for them to dominate the view.

If I had to choose a favorite tree, I suppose it would be the maple, not only because it's attached to my earliest memory of trees, but because there's something inherently pleasing about a maple. In a platonic sense, they are to me the Form of Tree. When a kid draws a tree—a brown trunk with a green,



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cloudy blob above it—I always assume it’s a maple. Not only are they proportionally pleasing, they blaze in autumn, and the crunch of those orange and brown leaves on the lawn conjures images of pumpkins, bonfires, and kids like me in Luke Skywalker outfits on Halloween. A maple can be otherworldly when there’s still some incandescent green at the center of the fiery canopy—all the better when viewed from below, on a crisp, cloudless day. An old maple showing off in October is evidence of the delight of God. All that, and they give you syrup, too.

When we moved to The Warren in the summer of 2008, Jamie and I were giddy about the autumnal colors at the turning of the next season. But, alas, nothing much happened. We have a lot of hackberries, whose leaves usually just shrivel and blacken, and most of the other trees on the property are eastern red cedars. They’re pretty enough, I suppose, and provide a welcome patch of dark green in the dreary winter, but at the time we weren’t interested in the stoutness of dark, wintery green; we wanted the ephemeral glory of autumn. That first October at The Warren, I traipsed through the brushy woods, looking for any sign of that Illinois color, and discovered to my delight a single small sugar maple on our property, glowing bashfully among a crush of privet. It was just a little taller than I was. Sugar maples are native to this part of Tennessee, but the invasive brush (looking at you, privet and bush honeysuckle) has choked them out. How did this one lucky seed manage to helicopter down to find purchase, germinate, and then fight its way up and out in defiance of the brush? I soon took my vengeful chainsaw to the privet and cleared a space around the

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maple, giving its branches room to breathe. That was thirteen years ago, and now it's at least twenty feet tall. The trunk is still only about four inches in diameter, so it'll be twenty more years before I can tap it and slurp up its sap on my pancakes. I'll be sixty-six. I'm happy to wait.

There's an old Chinese proverb that says, "The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago; the second-best time is now." I've walked through maple groves in Vermont with envy in my heart because it takes generations to get maples that big. Every tree up there, it seemed, was tapped and hung with a bucket to catch the watery sap. If I can keep my chainsaw going, maybe I'll live to see the maples return to The Warren.



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But these backyard maples in Monticello didn't seem all that old. I looked around again, feeling both disappointed and confused. What *did* I remember? There was the spot where the strawberry patch used to be; I saw where a hutch once housed our pet bunny, Henry, whom I found dead one morning; that's where the dirt pile used to be, where I played with my toy John Deere tractor. But none of the *things* were there. Just empty spaces. Other than the house, everything I remembered was either in the wrong place or was gone—including the corn—and, sadly, the jury was out regarding the big and little maples. I couldn't be sure if they were the same trees. It was a little depressing, to be honest.

Then another new memory rose to the surface: the skeleton of a cat underneath a sewer grate in the front yard. My brother and I had found it lying there in the shadows one summer day, and it was like unearthing a tyrannosaurus rex. I remember wondering how it died, how long it had been there, whether it had been someone's pet. I think we touched it. I cast a surly glance at the maples which had so disappointed me, thrust my cold hands into my coat pockets, and walked back to the street, following the sidewalk south, looking for the grate. I knew the skeleton would be long gone, but maybe the grate would jog a new memory. Alas, there was no grate. Not even anything grate-like. But I was confounded, because I could still picture it in my head. How was it that I could so vividly recall something that simply wasn't there at all? Was my memory so untrustworthy? A sewer grate isn't the kind of thing that disappears. I didn't know what to think.

"Think."

## TWO MAPLES, A DOGWOOD, AND THE THINKING TREE

The word jogged another memory. *The Thinking Tree*. All at once, I saw our family in my mind's eye: all six Petersons, sitting quietly in a circle, our backs against a massive tree trunk. I was squirmy, playing with a blade of grass. I tried to remember more, but that was it. That, and the fact that we called it "The Thinking Tree."

Directly across the street from our house and the church was Forest Preserve Park, a lovely wooded expanse with pavilions and picnic tables and, off to the side, a few softball fields. Softball fields! Another memory: one evening the tornado sirens sounded, filling the stormy gray sky with malice. The multitude of tall corn hissed a warning in the gusty wind. The softball players all ran for cover, and one of them ended up in our house, dripping wet and out of breath in his uniform. We all hunkered in the bathroom, waiting for the storm to pass. I can't remember if there was a tornado, but I remember that he was a stranger who needed shelter, and my parents had welcomed him in.

Somewhere between those softball fields and our house stood the Thinking Tree. I had the faintest memory of feeling excited whenever my parents would announce a visit. Did we actually go there to just think? I gave up on the search for the dead-cat-sewer-grate and crossed State Street to the park. I found a fat, old oak that was big enough to have been the Thinking Tree, as I remembered it. But a quick glance around told me there were several contenders. Oh, how I wished I had known exactly which tree it was. I sat and leaned against the trunk for a little while, shivering in the cold air and the warm memories. It was a good feeling, but I wish I could have been certain. And I still didn't know what we did there as a family.

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I texted my dad in Florida and asked him about it.

*I don't remember exactly what kind of tree it was, but it was a large one that provided great shade. It was across the street on the south side of the park. I used to retreat to it for some quiet time to ponder and pray. We would sometimes go there to read or share stories. I think of it often and go there in my mind. Your mom enjoyed going to have quiet time. We didn't have a suitable tree on the church property so we adopted that one. I recall that sometimes you wanted to go by yourself and we would caution you about being careful crossing State Street.*

At last, there it was.

Not a new memory, necessarily, but new information. A corner piece of the puzzle. On the wall of the art museum of childhood I smiled as I hung a picture of the Thinking Tree next to the plaque that read, "Why I Feel Close to God When I'm Alone in the Woods."

Because my mom and dad modeled it for me.



I stood up and made my way back to the street, intending to cross to my car and move on. I needed to get back for sound check. But I glanced to my right and spotted a for sale sign in front of a creepy-looking house. The windows were dark. Empty bottles and broken furniture were heaped in the side yard, which was overgrown with dead, brown, winter weeds. With a little work, it could be a charming place, and for about three seconds I daydreamed of buying it and moving back to Monticello to live out our retirement years. It was a pleasant, fleeting thought, and when I snapped back to the present I couldn't shake the feeling that the place just looked spooky. I walked over and stood in front of the abandoned house, working hard to remember anything—*anything*—about it, or the people who had lived there. With mounting dread I began to suspect that I had been in the house before. After all, he was our nearest neighbor. Or she. Or they.

Was there some dark secret here? Had I wandered over to the thinking tree one summer day, and then been lured inside—

No.

I couldn't go there. But why would I have no memory of this place, of these people? In a small town like Monticello, my parents would certainly have known their neighbors. I peeked through the front window and saw no furniture, no sign of life. No one lived there anymore. With a furtive look around, I slipped to the back of the house and fought my way through the tall weeds, looking, looking for something that would dislodge a memory and explain my unease. I'm not exaggerating when I say that I was terrified of remembering some

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traumatic event, and my pulse quickened as I fought back tears. Back in the mental art museum I tried not to imagine a plaque that read, “This Is Why I’m So Screwed Up.”

But I couldn’t stop hunting.

Then, deep in the weeds of the backyard, I saw several pairs of fence posts set about twenty yards apart, with rusty wires stretched between them. Weeds and bramble choked the ground beneath the wire. Something had been cultivated here. The wind picked up and I heard a slight metallic rattle. A glint caught my eye, and I pushed apart the weeds. A wire marker was stuck in the ground, and attached to it was a little metal label, embossed with letters, like a dog tag.

## PAEONIA DAURICA

The wind persisted, as did the rattle. I found another label, then another:

## PAEONIA PARNASSICA CALIFORNIA PEONY

Peonies. Rows and rows of them. The people who lived there bred flowers.

I texted my mom about it.

*That was Mr. and Mrs. Scott Barnes who raised peonies and day lilies on their little farm. It was beautiful in the spring.*

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Just like that, the dread dissipated, and the sun broke through. They were good neighbors who labored to grow beautiful things, and evidently I would walk over with my family in the spring to see the lovely array of blooms. I have six peony plants in my cottage garden now, and I've always loved them. Time the tidewater sweeps us forward and backward, brightening the man's days with longings he didn't know the source of, and whispering to the little boy that one day he would grow his own glories.

Who knows if I wandered over to the field of blossoms after a long silence at the Thinking Tree? Did kindly Mr. Barnes wave at me in the spring sunshine, clippers in hand, like an archetypal gardener? There may have been a snake in the garden, yes, but it was still a garden. I was so focused on the serpent, I had missed a million bright petals. I experienced a cool splash of relief and stood up straight in what had once been a field of peony blooms the size of softballs and the color of cupcake icing. This house, it turned out, hadn't wounded me. It had given me beauty. I kept one of the labels. It was in my pocket at sound check that day, and whenever I touched it I thought, *There's pain in memory, but there's beauty, too. Going back and digging deep may unearth bones, or it may unearth treasure. Don't be afraid.*

I had gone searching for a corpse, and found a flower.

It was time to go. I walked back across State Street to the car, and noticed in the front yard of the parsonage a lovely, sweeping, dormant dogwood. I made a video call to my dad to show him where I was, and he said, "Hey, I planted that tree!" I walked over and touched it. It sent currents buzzing



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through my fingertips to my brain, pulsing with time and the slow growth of things and quiet evidences that what we do sometimes lasts longer than we realize.

I hope our property in Nashville is still in the family when my grandchildren are old, and I hope they'll be protective of the trees I planted here, on the off-chance that some George Bailey gets inebriated and smashes into one. I hope the grandchildren climb to inspect the robin's eggs. I hope they have nicknames for the maples. They won't know me, but they'll know I loved trees, and maybe they too will feel the thrum of time when on a cool autumn day they touch a tree that I lovingly put in the ground many years ago. My dad never owned that parsonage in Illinois, but that tree is his. Standing there in the Illinois cold that day, I felt like it was mine, too.

This book is in many ways a memoir, but it's also an attempt to wake up the reader to the glory of God shining through his creation.

One of the first commands to Adam and Eve was to “work and keep” the garden. Award-winning author and songwriter Andrew Peterson, being as honest as possible, shares a story of childhood, grief, redemption, and peace, by walking through a forest of memories: “I trust that by telling my story, you’ll encounter yours. Hopefully, like me, you’ll see that the God of the Garden is and has always been present, working and keeping what he loves.”

Sometimes he plants, sometimes he prunes, but in his goodness he intends to reap a harvest of righteousness.

## ANDREW PETERSON

is an award-winning singer-songwriter and author. In 2008, driven by a desire to cultivate a strong Christian arts community, Andrew founded a ministry called The Rabbit Room, which led to a yearly conference, countless concerts and symposiums, and Rabbit Room Press, which has published thirty books to date.

He and Jamie have been married for twenty-six years, with three grown children and two brand new daughters-in-law—all of whom have planted memories deep in the soil of their acreage in Nashville. In his spare time, Andrew keeps bees, builds stone walls, gardens, draws, and waxes poetic about footpaths.

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