

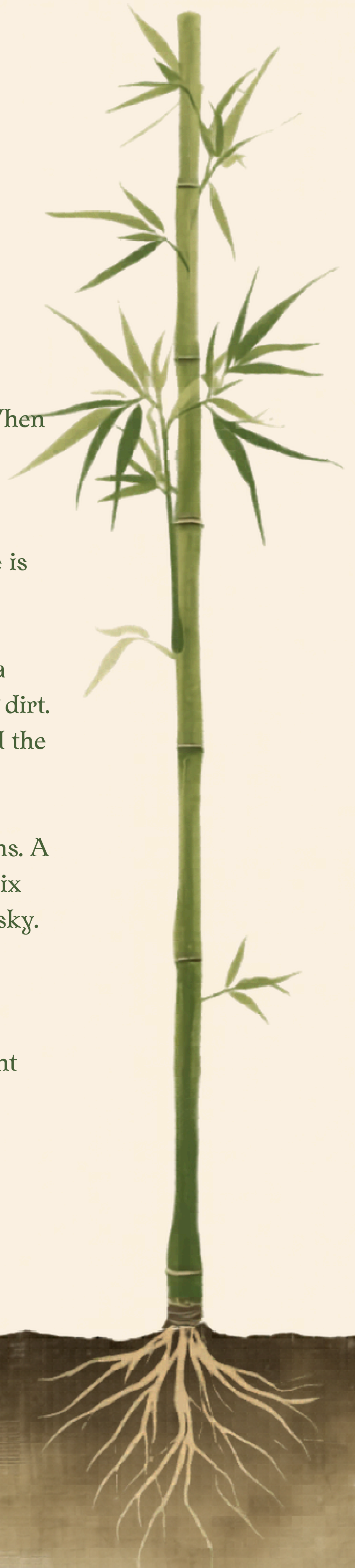
# *The Story of the* **BAMBOO** **TREE**

There is a unique tree known as the Bamboo tree. When the seed is planted, it requires constant care—daily watering, fertile soil, and a watchful eye.

However, after a full year of dedicated tending, there is no sign of life. The soil remains bare. A second year passes, and despite consistent watering, not a single green shoot appears. A third year goes by, and then a fourth. To an outsider, it looks like a barren patch of dirt. It would be easy to assume the effort was wasted and the seed was dead.

Then, in the fifth year, something miraculous happens. A tiny sprout breaks through the surface. Within just six weeks, that single sprout towers eighty feet into the sky.

The question is: Did the tree grow eighty feet in six weeks, or did it grow eighty feet in five years? The answer, of course, is five years. Had the tree not spent those silent, invisible years building a massive root system beneath the surface, it could never have supported the weight of its own rapid growth.



# FOR OUR STERLING TEACHERS, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES

As we navigate this season together as a Sterling community, it is easy to measure our worth only by what is visible—by the grades we see on a screen or the accolades we receive in public. But much of our most important work as humans happens "underground".

To point toward the source and foundation of our hope, we remember the wisdom of Proverbs 16:3: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established". This spiritual foundation is what allows us to grow deep even when the surface looks bare.

Whether you are a student working toward a goal that feels miles away, a teacher or staff member pouring your heart into your work, or a family member quietly supporting a child through a difficult transition, please know that your effort is never wasted. You are building the root system of your character. You are developing the resilience and identity that will support the person you are becoming.

As the year winds down, my door is open. If you or your child need a listening ear or a moment of prayer, I am here to support you. We strive to be a beacon of light on the path for one another.

Be patient with the process. Even when the ground looks bare, have faith that something deep and strong is taking hold.

Sincerely,  
Chaplain David Park

