

*Nurturing Faith...  
Every Day in Every Way*

May 3, 2015

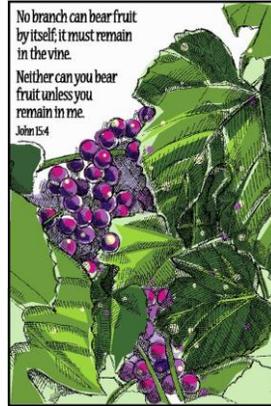
Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Acts 8:26-40**

**Psalm 22:25-31 (27)**

**1 John 4:7-21**

**John 15:1-8**



**The True Vine** Object: A lamp and an extension cord.

I am sure that you all know the song, "This Little Light of Mine." I want you to help me sing that song this morning. While we sing it, I'm going to hold this light up and let it shine all around. (Start to sing the song, but stop when you notice that the light isn't shining.) I wonder what is wrong, my light isn't shining. (Someone will probably notice that it isn't plugged in.) Oh, here's the problem, my light isn't plugged in.

Now that we are plugged in, let's try it again. (Sing) Oh, that was much better. The lamp was shining brightly, wasn't it? It's pretty hard for a light to shine when it isn't connected to the power source, isn't it? Well, actually, it isn't just hard -- it's impossible!

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus told his disciples a story to teach them the importance of staying connected to him. Of course Jesus didn't use a lamp to tell his story, because electricity hadn't even been invented yet. Instead, Jesus used an example that his disciples would understand. He used the example of a vine. You know what a vine is, don't you? It is a plant with a lot of branches growing out from it. The branches have fruit on them. If it is a grapevine, the branches should have grapes on them.

Have you ever seen a branch that has been broken off of a tree or a vine? What happens to it? That's right, it withers up and dies. Can it ever have any fruit on it again? No, it isn't any good for anything - except fire wood.

Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me, you will have much fruit, but apart from me, you can do nothing." Jesus wants us to produce a lot of fruit. Good fruit like being kind, generous, and faithful. Most of all, he wants us to love others as he has loved us.

Can we do that on our own? No way. Just as the lamp must be plugged in before its light can shine, and just as the branches must be connected to the vine before they can produce fruit, you and I must stay connected to Jesus to produce the good fruit that God expects of us.

Dear Father, help us to remember that we need to stay plugged in to Jesus if we are going to produce the kind of fruit you expect. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit. Alleluia (John 15:5)

## Word Search Puzzle

F O P Z G A R D E N E R V X R  
 I N Z G H A V A K N Y W L W S  
 R R S I C Z E G L O R Y U E O  
 E M E J Q R V J V W I K N K C  
 R Y C M E C H Y T O P U N P L  
 D O U H A Q Q M E H R H M S E  
 E B T H N I S B I P R Q O B A  
 U A R Z S K N L D B B O T X N  
 F W D A Y C Z Q M R D C W G F  
 V C I G N P T T M E O D C N N  
 W I U T A C G W N B T R U E T  
 I O N O H A H R I E X K Z I H  
 Y T R E T E U U F A X V U M O  
 V J A D X B R K H R N R M H V  
 Q N P Y S H T S O K F H R H X

true  
vine  
father  
gardener

branch  
bear  
fruit  
prunes

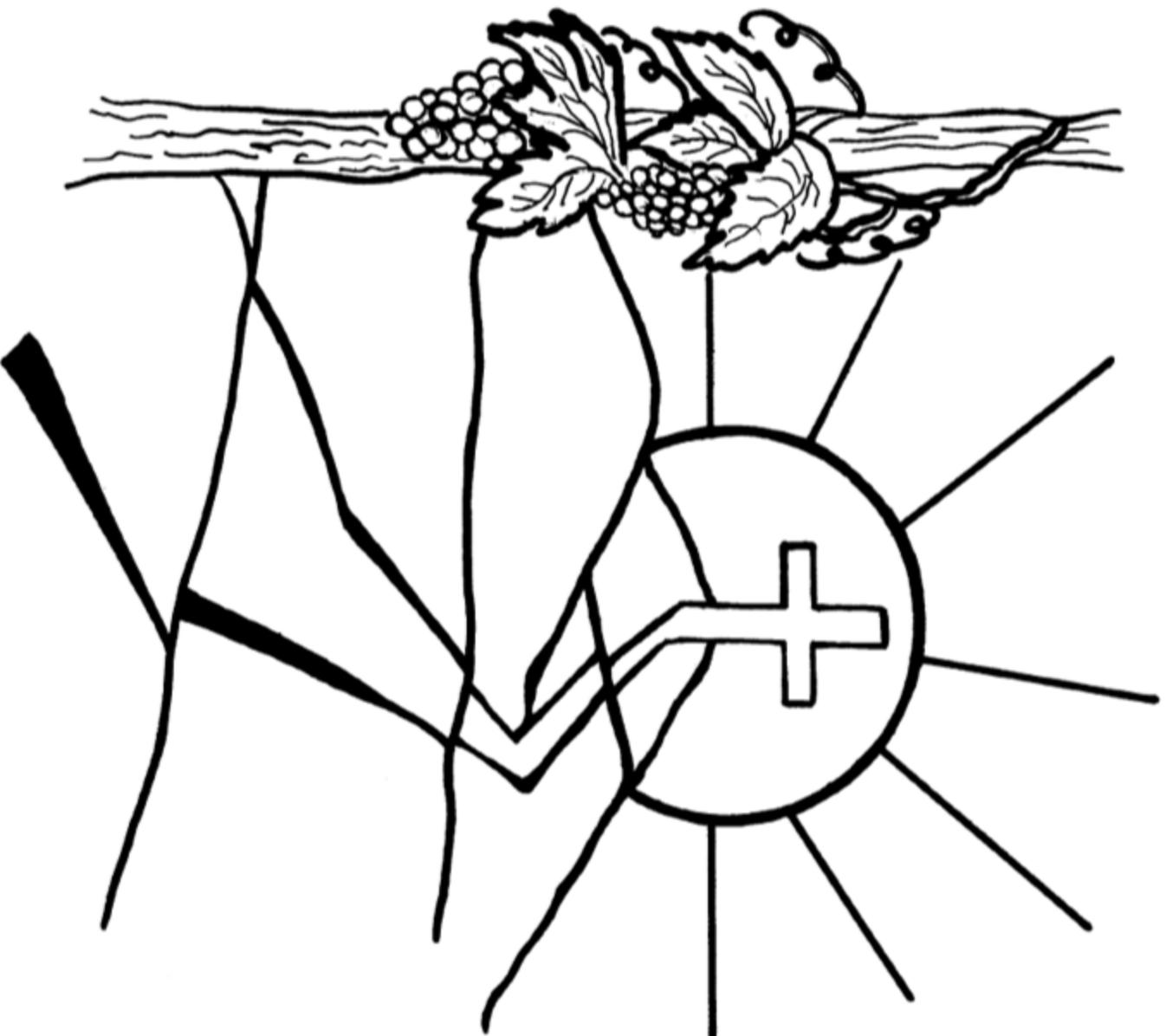
clean  
remain  
withers  
thrown

fire  
burned  
words  
glory

**LEAVES AND GRAPES:** Give the children a piece of construction paper and let them draw the trunk and bare branches of a tree using a brown marker. They can then dip their hands into green finger paint to create the leaves of the tree. After the hand prints are dry, they can dip the tips of their fingers in blue finger paint to create clusters of grapes. When all is finished, write, JESUS IS THE TRUE VINE AND WE ARE THE BRANCHES at the base of the tree.

**A BUNCH OF GRAPES:** Print out a coloring page of a bunch of grapes. ([click here](#)) Let the children color the leaf and stem. Give the children pieces of purple crepe paper cut in strips about six inches long. The children will roll the pieces of crepe paper into balls and glue them onto the coloring page where the grapes are. When the glue is dry, turn the sheet to landscape orientation and write "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."  
John 15:5 (NIV)



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