


APRIL 28, 2024  
FIFTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER



APRIL 28, 2024  
HYMN OF THE WEEK   
*Like the Murmur of the  
Dove's Song*



*Jesus abides with us like a vine to its branches.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 15:1-8	Jesus the true vine
Monday	Acts 8:26-40	Phillip and the eunuch
Tuesday	1 John 4:7-21	God is love
Wednesday	Ephesians 3:14-19	Christ's love for us
Thursday	Psalms 91	Assurance of God's protection
Friday	Exodus 34:6-7	God of steadfast love and faithfulness
Saturday	Psalms 22:25-31	A vow of thanksgiving
Sunday	John 15:9-17	Love one another

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.*

John 15:5 (NRSV)

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Loving God, we thank you for your steadfast love that remains with us forever and guides us into the future through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

#### Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for feeding us with this food and for nurturing our lives with your presence through the true vine, Christ our Lord, who gives us life. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May God's love lead you to love others. (1 John 4:19)

### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When is a time you have felt lost or alone?
- How does knowing of God's love through Jesus help you when you feel anxious or lost?

### DEVOTIONS

Read: John 15:1-8.

This is the last of Jesus' "I am" statements. Earlier in the Gospel of John he said "I am the bread of life," "I am the light of the world," "I am the gate," "I am the good shepherd," "I am the resurrection and the life," and "I am the way, the truth, and the life." These self-descriptive statements are all introduced with the words, "I am," that is reminiscent of the name for God in the Old Testament. "Yahweh," is translated as "I am who I am." In John, Jesus is presented as one with God without any uncertainty. The final "I am" statement is important because it comes during Jesus' lengthy message to his eleven disciples before his crucifixion (John 14 through 17). Jesus makes it clear that he will not abandon them. He will abide with them. The identity and ministry of the disciples will endure and be full of life because they are intimately part of Jesus, like branches given life by the vine.

Discuss: When the future is uncertain and you feel anxious, lost, or alone, what do you do and how can you be reminded that Jesus abides with you always?

Pray: **Almighty God, give us confidence in your presence and abide with us in our life's journey through Jesus Christ, the true vine who feeds us with your love and strength. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you encourage and help those who feel lost or alone?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

God sent his only Son, Jesus Christ into the world to teach us about love. 1 John 4:12 tells us that "No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us." It is this love that we are to show to others. Draw the outline of a body with a heart inside. Write God inside the heart. Then write words inside the body that describe how we can show God's love to one another.

Pray: **Loving God, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Amen.** (1 John 4:7)