

**St. Vincent UCC Worship Service**  
**Vine & Branches Sunday April 28, 2024**  
Pastor – Rev. Susan Hanson  
Church Musician – Deb Rick



**Ringling of the Bell**  
**Welcome & Announcements**

**Prelude Music**

*Let us rise for our Call to Worship*

**\* Call To Worship:**

**Pastor:** We gather this day in the name of Christ, who now has no body on earth but ours -

**All: Ours are the only hands with which he can do his work, ours are the only feet with which he can go about the world, ours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world.**

**Pastor:** Christ has no body on earth now but ours. Let us, then, make our promise to be his hands, his feet, his compassion in the world as we say together, our Affirmation of Faith...

**Affirmation of Faith:**

**We are the people of God – his hands and heart and voices on the earth in this time and place. We are brothers and sisters in Christ - evidence of God’s continued presence in the world. We believe in our God, we believe in God’s goodness, and the power of God’s love. We believe in Christ and his presence in our lives, and that we will recognize Christ in one another. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who moves among God’s people and inspires us to bring God’s reign more fully into our world. We are the people of God and we believe that our church is part of God’s eternal plan. May all that we say and do help to fulfill God’s hopes and dreams for us and the world in which we live. Amen.**

*Now, let us sing together our first hymn.*

**\* Hymn: # 2130 “The Summons”**

**Call to Prayer:** We come to God, needing the love that God alone can give. That love empowers us to love one another and abides in us to make us more like Jesus. Christ is the vine, we are the branches – let us then turn to God to ask his help in making us stronger so that we can fulfill his purpose in the world.

**Unison Prayer: O God, we are accustomed to having our own way and thinking for ourselves – but the truth is that we still need you. Help us to understand more fully, to become reconnected to your vision for our lives, and to live in abundance the life you have given us. We need your love to become all we can be for your sake. Help us to receive that love in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

**Assurance:** God’s mercy blesses us so that we can commit ourselves anew every day to following the ways of Christ. His love gives our lives purpose – to continue doing his work until the kingdom of God reigns here as it does in heaven. In gratitude, let us sing our response ...

**Sung Response: # 2069 “All Hail King Jesus”**

**All hail King Jesus! All hail Emmanuel, King of kings, Lord of lords, bright Morning Star. And throughout eternity, I’ll sing your praises; and I’ll reign with you throughout eternity.**

**Scripture Reading:**

Liturgist: Susie Clark

**Liturgist:** We now turn our hearts and minds to the reading of God's Holy Scripture. Today's reading is found in the John's Gospel, chapter 15, verses 1-8 where Jesus talks about our relationship as Vine and Branches.

**Let us pray:** God, you sent your Son into the world that we might live through him. May we abide in his risen life so that we may bear the fruit of love for one another and know the fullness of joy. Be with us now in the midst of these scripture readings, so that they might help us to know you and follow your ways more closely. Amen.

**Reading:**

One day, Jesus was teaching among the people and he said to them, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

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.

Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers. Then those branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

**Liturgist:** Here ends the read of God's Holy Scripture. May God bless us with understanding, and may we show our understanding in the way we live our lives. Amen.

Now, let's sing our hymn, # 2171, "Make Me a Channel of your Peace"

**Hymn: # 2171 "Make Me a Channel of your Peace"**

**Message: "Where Will We Go to Follow Jesus?"**

**Blessing of the Blankets**

**Pastoral Prayer / Lord's Prayer**

**Sung Response: # 2215 "Cares Chorus"**

**I cast all my cares upon you, I lay all my burdens down at your feet, and anytime that I don't know what to do, I will cast all my cares upon you.**

**Offering Invitation:** God has blessed us in ways that we would not experience if it were not for his love and compassion for us. In gratitude, we give to his church to honor him and do his work in the world. Let us, then, present with joy our morning offering.

**Offertory**

\* **Sung Response: “Bless Thou the Gifts”**

**Bless thou the gifts our hands have brought;  
Bless thou the work our hearts have planned.  
Ours is the faith, the will, the thought;  
The rest, O God is in thy hand.**

\* **Prayer of Dedication:** Take these gifts O God, and our lives to be used for your purpose. Show us where to go and how to be branches that bear fruit for your kingdom. We pray this in Christ’s name. Amen.

\* **Hymn: # 2172 “We Are Called”**

\* **Benediction:** Jesus Christ is the vine and we are the branches that spread out into the community beyond these walls. May the love of Christ that lives within us continue to grow and bear fruit in the places in which we live and work and play. Let us go forth to love and serve God to his greater glory. Amen.

\* **Response: # 2241 “The Spirit Sends Us Forth”** (1<sup>st</sup> verse)

**The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we go in Jesus’ name  
to bring glad tidings to the poor, God’s favor to proclaim.**

\* **Postlude Music**