

Grace Devotion

Week of April 28, 2024

Pastor Fred Young

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"I am not sure exactly what heaven will be like, but I know that when we die and it comes time for God to judge us, (God) will not ask, 'How many good things have you done in your life?'; rather God will ask, 'How much love did you put into what you did?'"

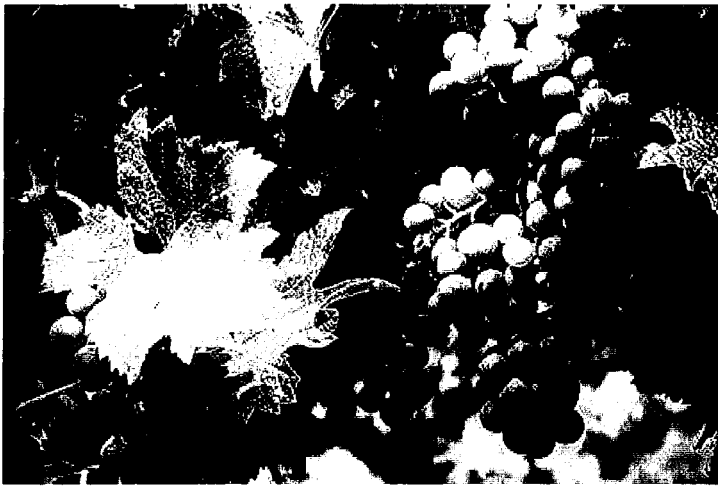
Mother Teresa

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READ: John 15:1-8

For the last few weeks, the Gospel of John has been full of metaphors to help the early followers identify the role of Christ in their lives. Last Sunday we heard about Jesus as The Good Shepherd, and within this week's gospel, the vine and branches illustrate the relationship between God and Jesus, and between Jesus and us. Perhaps we are not skilled at herding sheep or caring for the gifts of orchards and vineyards, but these images of Jesus are familiar enough for all of us to understand John's description of abiding love, the intricate designs and interdependence of these ancient analogies.

Such images inspire hope, root our faith, and give us a glimpse of the characteristics of Christ. Dependable, watchful, protective, loving, loyal, nurturing, ever reaching, showcasing the love he put into what he did. These metaphors provided much needed reassurance for the early followers and founders of the faith. They have withstood the test of time, for even today, they still speak to us.



The Gospel of John's Jesus teaches plainly, openly claiming who he is and why he has come. Love is at the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Sharing Christ's love can be hard work.

Scripture may point us to God, but our connectedness will continue only if we are willing to share our relationship with God with another. The wonderful image of the vine and branches reassures us that we are all connected to the Divine and to each other. How will you reach out?

PRAYER: Giver of life, guide us as we strive to remain connected to you and to each other, branches of one vine. Inspire us to carry your love as fruit to a hungry world. Amen.

Blessings!
Pastor Fred

April 28, 2024
10AM Worship
5th Sunday of Easter

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GATHERING MUSIC
WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS
WESTMINISTER CHIMES

PRELUDE: "The Master Hath Come" ~Mary McDonald

** SONG: "Here I Am to Worship" ~Hillsong

**CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus is the true vine and God is the vine grower.

We are the branches.

It is God's Word that makes the branches strong;

And the Word bears fruit.

The Word give rise to action;

And action proves our discipleship.

God celebrates when we act faithfully;

And we give back praise and glory, to God.

**PRAYER

Cultivating God, we come as your children to grow and learn, because you are our divine vine grower. God, we desire for you to abide within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily. As your branches, we ask you to nourish us for continued growth. May you transform our hearts and minds as we hear your Word, sing your praises, and engage in holy dialogue through prayer. May you help us to bear good fruit through the vine of Jesus. Amen.

**HYMN: "For the Beauty of the Earth" #560

**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, giver of life, We confess the times when we fail to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. God, forgive us when we ignore or we fail to see our neighbors in need. Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love from others, and shut down completely. As we confess the times when we did not tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves of your forgiveness and grace. In our failures, we have refused your invitation to grow closer to you. Bring us back to you, O God, and connect us again with each other. Amen.

MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

JOYS AND CONCERNS
PRAYER/LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

TIME FOR THE YOUNG A HEART

SCRIPTURES

1 John 4:7-21
John 15:1-8

SERMON "Tree of Life!"

**HYMN "Open Our Eyes" #381

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

A New Creed

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

****DOXOLOGY**

****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

****SONG: "This Is Amazing Grace" ~Phil Wickham**

****FINAL BLESSING**

**** A CHORAL BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE "The Strife Is O'er" ~ Giovanni de Palestrina**

Arr. Norman Johnson

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Today's Worship Elements have been adapted from the following resource:

Abiding in Love: Service Prayers for the Fifth Sunday of Easter Year B, was written by the Rev Dr. Sheila Harvey Guillaume, pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ in West Palm Beach.

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Church Financials

General pledge March 2024: \$7,960

YTD income: \$36,244.78

YTD expenses: \$52,459.98

YTD deficit: \$16,215.20

Announcements

Upcoming Events

- **APRIL: UCC ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING** (during the entire month of April)
- **Car Show: May 4th from 10am-2pm**

Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Prayer Requests Prayer Requests

- Donald Becker, friend of Jean Brady
- Wayne Boyers, Angie Boyers' uncle
- Sue Caler
- Elsie Coppersmith with medical concerns
- Cove, medical issues from a kidney transplant**
- Dennis Fausey, Gary and Deb Rickrode's brother-in-law
- Charlie Fennell, celebrating the end of chemo
- Alice Freet, Edie Cline's friend
- Barbie Gault, a friend of Amy Fawks
- Gerry, Gary and Deb Rickrode's nephew
- Paul Grote
- Tina Hagarman
- Barbara Hitchen with medical concerns
- Sue Huss, a friend of Linda Hillsinger
- Ada May Koehler, Edie Cline's friend
- Sue Little
- Sara McMinn, Janette Becker's granddaughter
- Bret Motter, Margy Wagaman's son-in-law
- Mike Mummert
- Faye Myers
- Brenda Rummel, Ron and Judy Rummel's sister-in-law
- Silvia, Martha Channel's friend diagnosed with cancer**
- Jay A. Smith, Sr., Angie Boyers' uncle
- Joanne Smith, Tom Craig's friend
- The Strevig Family after a serious car accident**
- Bentley Topper
- Braden Topper
- Gloria Werner, Faye Myers' sister-in-law
- Leah Wilhelm, Linda Hillsinger's niece
- Jake Wysocki with health issues/diabetes



Please remember to help Pastor Fred update prayer requests and keep him informed when someone is no longer in need of prayer.

New or changed addition

Leave prayer requests on the Prayer Line or Pastor Fred Young at 717-253-2214. You can also email pastoryoung.tuccgburg@gmail.com. Requests will be added weekly to the bulletin, mailings, and easel in The Gathering Place and daily to the phone line.

International Bible Lesson Word Search

on John 15:1-17

Available at InternationalBibleLessons.org

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

True

Vine

Gardner

Branch

Fruit

Prunes

Clean

Word

Remain

Apart

Nothing

Withers

Burned

Wish

Glory

Disciples

Servants

Friends

Psalm 22

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

nations king strength rule help trouble n
 ight daytime praises answer deserted far
 trust My God save

