

Sunday, April 28, 2024 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church
Bible Study
Fifth Sunday of Easter
“We Bear Fruit”
John 15:1-8

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, have participants answer, “What images come to you when you hear the word “fruitful”?”

John 15:1-8 Context. This week’s reading is part of Jesus’ last conversation he had with his disciples the evening before he was crucified, a kind of “last will and testament” in which he shares his thoughts and prayers and final words of advice. In these verses Jesus uses the figure of the vine and the branches to describe his relationship with his disciples; the fruitfulness that Jesus talks about is the love that true disciples live out.

Read John 15:1-8

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the text?

Read John 15:1-8 again -

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Group Dialogue

- Who is “the true vine” and “vinegrower”? (John 15:1).
- What happens to branches that do not bear fruit? (John 15:2a).
- “Abide in me as I abide in you,” verse 4a, is translated in different ways. “Abide” was defined as “remain” (Common English Bible), “dwell” (AMPC Amplified Bible, Classic Edition), and “stay joined to me” (Contemporary English Version). Which translation of the word do you prefer and why?
- The Preaching Notes for April 28 say, “There is also a warning – watch out for pruning. Not because of being cut off so much as being left out. We always read this as judgment, and it is. But the real power of the image is that what is pruned misses the vitality of connection; you miss the verdant life offered; you miss out on the sustenance and strengthening and the glory of growth and life and joy. And you miss the opportunity to produce fruit.”

- What does it mean to you that we need to “watch out for pruning”?
- Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches” (John 15:5a). How might you be more fruitful in your life and your church as his branch? Are there things you can do this week to abide more in Jesus?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, end by praying the following or a similar prayer:

Gracious and loving God, we come before You as branches seeking nourishment from Jesus, our true Vine. Help us to abide in Him, so that we may bear abundant fruit that glorifies Your name. May our lives reflect Your love and grace to all around us. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.