



# **CALVARY LUTHERAN** **CHURCH ELCA**

“Helping others receive grace, purpose and direction by proclaiming Christ’s love.”

17 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
Scottsbluff, NE  
(308) 632-8023  
[calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org)

**Saturday Evening Worship - 5:30 p.m.**  
**Sunday Morning Worship - 10:00 a.m.**  
**April 27 & 28, 2024**

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

**A Warm Welcome** to all as we gather as God's people to worship our Lord. We pray our worship together would strengthen your faith and desire to know and serve the One who loves us with an everlasting love as made known to us in Jesus Christ.

*(In preparation for our worship together, you are invited to take a moment of silence to offer your own prayers of worship and praise.)*

**KEY:** ELW and any page number = Worship hymnal (cranberry),  
OSB = Other Song Book (red), W&P = Worship & Praise (purple).

\* Indicates please stand if able. Congregational responses are printed in **BOLD** type.

**Prayer Before Worship:** God of surprising revelations, we thank you that when you come to your people, you speak peace and invite faith in you. Give us ears to hear your will for us, hearts that are open to your word, and eyes to see your presence in the world; in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Prelude Music

### Welcome and Announcements

#### ‡WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS‡

Welcome Hymn:

**“Christ is Risen! Alleluia!”**

**ELW #382**

**1. Christ is risen! Alleluia!  
Risen our victorious head!  
Sing his praises! Alleluia!  
Christ is risen from the dead!  
Gratefully our hearts adore him  
as his light once more appears;  
bowing down in joy before him,  
rising up from griefs and tears.**

*Refrain:* **Christ is risen! Alleluia!  
Risen our victorious head!  
Sing his praises! Alleluia!  
Christ is risen from the dead!**

2. Christ is risen! All the sadness  
of our Lenten fast is o'er;  
through the open gates of gladness  
he returns to life once more;  
death and hell before him bending  
see him rise, the victor now,  
angels on his steps attending,  
glory round his wounded brow. *Refrain*

3. Christ is risen! All the sorrow  
that last evening round him lay  
now has found a glorious morrow  
in the rising of today.  
See the grave its firstfruits giving,  
springing up from holy ground;  
Christ was dead, but now is living;  
he was lost, but he is found. *Refrain*

4. Christ is risen! Henceforth never  
death or hell shall us enthrall.  
We are Christ's, in him forever  
we have triumphed over all.  
All the doubting and dejection  
of our trembling hearts have ceased;  
hail the day of resurrection!  
Let us rise and keep the feast. *Refrain*

### **\*Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy.  
**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism,  
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning  
your voice thundered over the deep  
and water became the essence of life.  
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.

The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.  
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea  
into freedom's land.

In a desert pool the Ethiopian official  
entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection  
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,  
freeing us to live as Easter people.

We rejoice with glad hearts,  
giving all honor and praise to you,  
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

### **\*Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

### **\*Prayer of the Day**

O God,

**you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## ‡GOD'S WORD SPEAKS TO US‡

### First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

<sup>26</sup>Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.)

<sup>27</sup>So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship <sup>28</sup>and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup>Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." <sup>30</sup>So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" <sup>31</sup>He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. <sup>32</sup>Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,  
and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth.

<sup>33</sup>In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

<sup>34</sup>The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" <sup>35</sup>Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup>As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" <sup>38</sup>He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. <sup>40</sup>But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 22:25-31

<sup>25</sup>From you comes my praise in the great assembly;  
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

<sup>26</sup>**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,**

**Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;  
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

<sup>28</sup>**For dominion belongs to the LORD,  
who rules over the nations.**

<sup>29</sup>Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

<sup>30</sup>**Their descendants shall serve the LORD, whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

<sup>31</sup>They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

### **Epistle Reading: 1 John 4:7-21**

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup>God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup>Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup>There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup>The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia. Alleluia.**

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**\*Gospel: John 15:1-8**

*Response after the announcement of the gospel:*  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. <sup>2</sup>He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

*Response after the gospel reading:*  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Kids Sermon:**

**Angie Hinze**

**Sermon:**

**Pastor Kathy**

*(Silence for reflection and meditation)*

**‡WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD‡**

**\*Hymn of the Day:**

**"Thine is the Glory"**

**ELW #376  
vv. 1&3**

**1. Thine is the glory,  
risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry  
thou o'er death hast won!  
Angels in bright raiment  
rolled the stone away,  
kept the folded grave-clothes  
where thy body lay.**

*Refrain:* **Thine is the glory,  
risen, conqu'ring Son;  
endless is the vict'ry  
thou o'er death hast won!**

**2. Lo, Jesus meets thee,  
risen from the tomb!  
Lovingly he greets thee,  
scatters fear and gloom;  
let his church with gladness  
hymns of triumph sing,  
for the Lord now liveth;  
death hath lost its sting! *Refrain***

**3. No more we doubt thee,  
glorious Prince of life;  
life is naught without thee;  
aid us in our strife;  
make us more than conqu'rors,  
through thy deathless love;  
bring us safe through Jordan  
to thy home above. *Refrain***

**\*Profession of Faith: The Apostles Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**



**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*Prayers of the Church:**

*Each petition ends with:*

God of grace....**hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude with:*

... Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

**\*Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*(You are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another)*

**Offering**

**“Be Our Love”**

**Choir**

**\*Offertory Prayer**

Risen One,

**you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. Amen.**

**‡HOLY COMMUNION‡**

*Here our Lord gives to us His own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of all our sins.*

**\*The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

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Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**\* Words of Institution**

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.** O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

## 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;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever, and ever. Amen.

## \*Invitation to Communion

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. All is ready and all are welcome.

## Distribution of Communion:

Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper with gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

All are welcome and invited to receive Holy Communion.

*(Communion will be served continuously at two stations in the front of the church.*

*APPLE JUICE and GLUTEN FREE WAFERS are available. Just ask the server.*

*Children who are not yet communicants are invited to come forward for a blessing.)*

## Distribution Music

Tahnee Hutchinson

## \*Post-Communion Blessing

## \*Post-Communion Prayer

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love.  
Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant  
mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

✠ WE DEPART TO SERVE ✠

## \*Benediction

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope  
✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

**\*Sending Hymn: "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing"**

**ELW #393  
vv. 1,4&5**

**1. A hymn of glory let us sing!  
New hymns throughout the world shall ring:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Christ, by a road before untrod,  
ascends unto the throne of God.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**4. "You see him now, ascending high  
up to the portals of the sky."**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**"Hereafter Jesus you shall see  
returning in great majesty."**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**5. O risen Christ, ascended Lord,  
all praise to you let earth accord:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**You are, while endless ages run,  
with Father and with Spirit one.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**\*Dismissal**

Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

**Postlude**

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## In Our Thoughts and Prayers†

Prayers for healing: **Don Stahla** (knee replacement surgery), **Miranda Wright** (healing from a concussion), **Lynne** (cancer & heart arrhythmia—Laurie & JP Ruzicka’s friend), **Kurt Nikont** (recovering from foot surgery), **Sheila Miller** (health issues), **Catherine Rahrs** (major medical issues—Val Rahrs’ mother), **Larry Loeks** (improved health), **Jack Day** (stroke—Lynn Margheim’s brother), **Jeremy** (test results—Deb Brown’s son), **Bert Bessey**, **Shelia Colson** (hospital recovery), **Sherrill Miller** (cancer treatment—Travis Miller family) **Butch Feil** (recovering from surgery—Guerrero family), **Leah Nikont** (recovering from surgery), **Drew Selck** (Cancer), **Joni** (stage 4 cancer), **Kathy Johnson** (health issues), **William Gibbs** (Cancer— Larry Gibbs’ brother), **Vicki Schmidt** (cancer treatment), **Patty** (cancer—Jim Dorn’s sister-in-law).

Prayers for comfort and safety: **Zeke Chilcott** (deployed—friend of Marissa Wright), **Jeffery Christeleit** (deployed—Brian & Jodi Christeleit’s son and Jim & Sheila Miller’s grandson).



Barry Bassett, 4/28; Trinita Burgner, 4/28; Matt Payne, 5/4;  
Jack Martin, 5/4; Brigitta Loseke, 5/4  
If we have missed your birthday, please let the office know. Thanks.



### YOUR GIVING ONLINE

Scan the **QR code** to the right, go to our website:  
[www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org](http://www.calvarylutheranscottsbluff.org) and click on the **Give Online**  
button OR download the **Vanco Now App** on your smartphone. It’s  
safe and secure.

### Coffee and Fellowship

We would like to invite people to stay after worship for a time of fellowship. The coffee pot will be on, but if you would like to provide treats, please sign up on the sheet outside the office.



### MAY FOOD DONATIONS REQUESTED

**FOOD PANTRY:** Oatmeal

**BACKPACKS:** Pudding Cups

Containers are located outside Fellowship Hall.

Thanks for your generosity.



### **CLCW MAY MISSION PROJECT: Sullivan Hills Camp**

This month we are asking your help in sending monetary support to Sullivan Hills Camp which serves campers each summer in Western Nebraska. The camp offers programs for grades 1-12, special needs families, confirmation and also provides a beautiful setting for retreats. Donations may be placed in the tan "Designated Giving" envelopes in the pews. Please be sure to mark on them CLCW Project on the envelope.

Thank you for your support.



SULLIVAN HILLS CAMP

### **JAM on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Our Wednesday evening youth group is for kids in kindergarten through 5th grade. We begin with dinner (pasta bar/bread/salad/dessert) at 5:30 p.m. followed by storytelling, music, crafts, games, and lots of fun until 7 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Angie at the church.



### OWLS (Older,Wiser Lutherans) LUNCHEON

**May 1<sup>st</sup> @ 12 p.m.**

We will be enjoying a pasta bar, along with bread, salad, and dessert. Our program will be Scottsbluff High School's Italian exchange student Benedeta Rossini.





## GRADUATION CELEBRATION-SUNDAY May 5<sup>th</sup>

Join us at the worship service at 10 am to honor and celebrate **Ella Foote, Theron Miller, and Mitch Moravec** as they graduate from high school. We will also celebrate college graduate, **Marissa Wright** from WNCC.

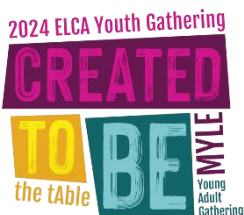
### **EPIC**

Fence Painting @ Pastor Kathy's rescheduled!  
Meet on May 4<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm at Pastor Kathy's house (3009 Dineen Ave, Scottsbluff). Wear old clothes - we will be outside painting fence! This fellowship activity is a Youth Gathering Fundraiser. Lunch will be provided. Please let Pastor Kathy know you'll be there. See you then!



### 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering Fundraiser

We would like to make a congregational list of yard/tasks that the youth could do to raise money for their trip to New Orleans. If you have work to be done, please let Christy know and we will get things arranged.



## WORSHIP LEADERS

**Pastor Kathy**

**This Sunday – April 28**

**USHERS:** Kent & Dawn Holub

**LAY READER:** Bill Huelle

**HEAD COMMUNION ASST:** Bill Huelle

**COMMUNION ASSTS:** Abby Newsom & Marissa Wright

**POWERPOINT:** Andi Dorn

**ACOLYTES:** Ryhan Buckley & Ben Moravec

**MEDIA:** Chris Jensen

**AUDIO:** Jim Dorn

**ALTAR GUILD:** Deb Brown, Vicki Howell, Tracy Steele, Shari Copsey

**ORGANIST:** Tahnee Hutchinson

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP** *Please sign up!*

**Next Sunday – May 5**

**USHERS:** Chris & Barb Jensen

**LAY READER:** Marti Wegelin

**HEAD COMMUNION ASST:** Vicki Howell

**COMMUNION ASSTS:** Deb Brown & Marlene Downer

**POWERPOINT:** Maunette Loeks-Van Patten

**ACOLYTES:** Kippen & Jacey Cochran

**MEDIA:** Jeff Van Patten

**AUDIO:** Jack Martin

**ALTAR GUILD:** Abby Newsom, Maunette Loeks-Van Patten, Barb Jensen, Nannie Walsh

**PIANIST:** Tahnee Hutchinson

**COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP** *Please sign up!*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sunday, April 28**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship

11:30 a.m. – Council Workshop @ Runza

**Tuesday, April 30**

1 p.m. – Quilting

**Wednesday, May 1**

12 p.m. – OWLs Luncheon

5:30 p.m. – JAM

5:30 p.m. – Social Ministry

5:45 p.m. – Confirmation

7p.m. – Choir Practice

**Saturday, May 4**

5:30 p.m. – Worship

**Sunday, May 5**

**Graduation Celebration Sunday**

10 a.m. – Worship

11 a.m. – Coffee & Fellowship



APRIL 28, 2024  
FIFTH SUNDAY  
OF EASTER



*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)

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



### 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)



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