

*I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me.*

—John 15:5 NIV

### Materials Needed

- JENGA style game(s) for your group
- Small bags of fruit snacks for the winners

### Lesson Truth

I know that our Savior, Jesus, persistently hangs on to us. Jesus eagerly keeps us all connected to Him. This gives us hope and comfort.

### Opening Prayer

Dear God, You have welcomed each of us into Your family as Your children. Help us grow in our faith and have a better understanding of our relationship with You. Show us how You walk with us, and help us focus on You and Your Word today. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### Opening Activity

Set up the games for the group; break into teams if needed.

#### Read John 15:5

Discuss the section *He will bear a lot of fruit*, defining fruit as gifts, talents and good things that show Jesus' love for everyone.

Take turns identifying examples of *fruit* that show Christ active in our lives. (examples: singing in the choir, shoveling snow for a neighbor, praying with a friend)

As an example is stated, play the game. One wooden piece/turn= one example of *fruit*.

The person or team with the most wooden pieces collected before toppling the tower wins the game.

Give out the fruit snacks as a prize.

### Opening Thoughts

No matter what we do in life, Christ holds on to us tightly and never lets go. Christ is the Vine! We just played a game; let's take a moment to talk about the experience.

- What is the strategy of winning this game?
- How did you decide which piece to move and which to leave alone?



If the group was broken into different smaller groups for the game, talk about some of the *fruit* your group mentioned.

- When is it easy to share *fruit*?
- When is it hard to share *fruit*?
- Does Jesus gift everyone with *fruit*?

Jesus Christ is the One who moves within us and helps us share these actions of faith and love called *fruit*. He reminds us you can't do anything without Him. At times Christ may be moving us to where we must go and serve; at other times Christ has us stay right where we are and serve those around us. Either way, Jesus gifts all of His children with *fruit*, regardless of our abilities.

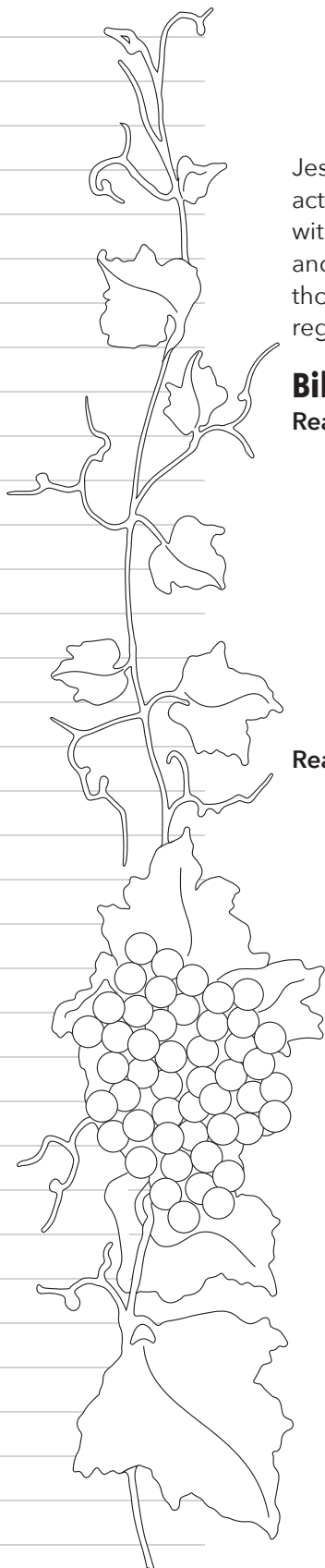
### **Bible Time**

#### **Read Luke 5:1-3**

- Where does this story take place?
- Why did Jesus go out into the boat?
- Who owned the boat Jesus taught from?

#### **Read Luke 5:4-7**

- Jesus is connected to Simon. What does He tell him to do?
- Simon feels the connection. What does Simon say?
- Simon feels the connection. What does Simon do?
- Jesus is connected to Simon through faith. Even though Simon had already tried fishing all day and failed, he did what Jesus told him to do. Simon understood what it means to have faith in Jesus. Can you think of a time you understood what it means to have faith in Jesus?
- Who gives you your faith, you or the Holy Spirit?
- Do you think everyone can have faith? Why or why not?
- Do you think people with disabilities can have faith?



## Read Luke 5:8-11

Jesus' miracle helps us all understand Jesus' power and it helps us understand that He is God.

- What does Simon Peter do when he realizes who Jesus is?
- What does Simon Peter call Jesus?
- Why do you think Simon Peter tells Jesus to get away from him?
- What does Jesus say to Simon Peter?
- What did Simon Peter, James and John do?

## Read Matthew 16:16-18

In this passage, Simon Peter states his understanding of who Jesus is. He feels Jesus' connection to him. Jesus then calls Simon Peter "rock" and tells him he will help start the Church.

- What *fruit* has Jesus given to Simon Peter?

## Read Philippians 2:13

- Think about who you are right now. Think about what you believe. Can you name *fruit* Jesus has given to you?
- Look around at the people in this group today. Do you see *fruit* in others in this group? If so, what *fruit* do you see in them?

At Bethesda Lutheran Communities we believe Jesus connects with people of all abilities. Some of the ways Jesus connects to us is through the free gifts of baptism, the Bible and the Lord's Supper. These gifts are for all people. All people need to understand the *Christ Connection*.

- Are there people with disabilities you know who need to know Jesus?
- How can you help them see the *Christ Connection*?

## The Blessing

(Leader: Provide a blessing for each person. With your hand over their head say, "Jesus will never let you go. You can't do anything without Him. Go and bear good fruit. Amen.")

