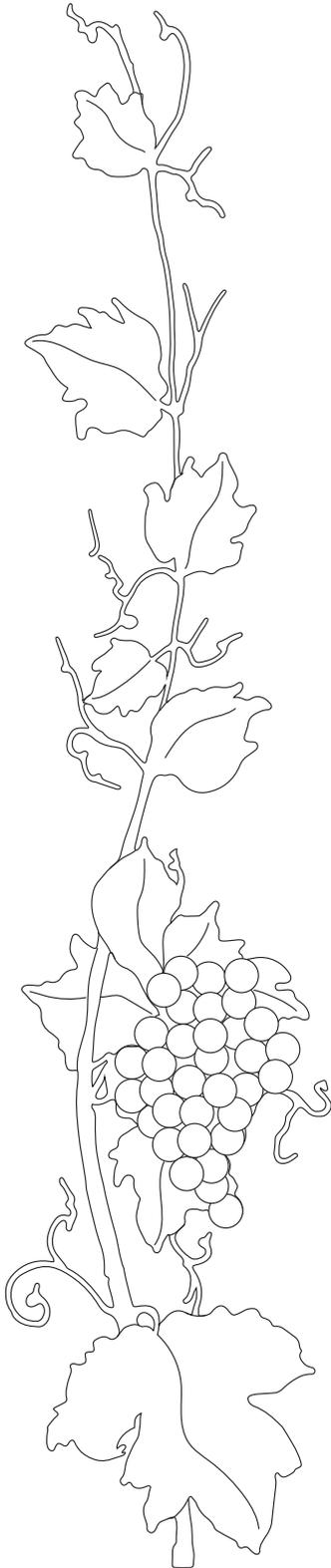


I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me.

—John 15:5 NIV



Materials Needed

Foam or cardboard to cut out a vine and branches, Velcro pieces, black marker, eye masks, waxed paper, tape, a cross and a Bible. (Teacher's note: When using a Bible, we model the importance of reading God's Word; it helps young children see that the Bible verse is true.)

Preparation Before the Lesson

1. Cut pieces of waxed paper and tape to eye masks, covering the eye holes. This works as a blindfold for young children, hindering their vision but allowing the light so they are not afraid of the dark.
2. Use large piece of foam or cardboard and make a vine. Attach receiving end of Velcro all over the vine, enough spots for each student in the class. Label the vine "Jesus." Attach to wall away from story time area.
3. Use foam or cardboard to make branches, one for each student in the class. Attach one piece of giving end of Velcro to each branch.
4. Use foam or cardboard to make grapes large enough to write on.

Opening Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for loving us and for always being with us. Help us remember You are always by our side. We want to stay connected to You! Help us tell others about Your love and forgiveness. They need to stay connected to You, too! In Your name we pray. Amen.

Read: John 15:5

Opening Activity

(Teacher note: This game is a combination of *Pin the Tail* and *Marco, Polo*.)

1. Give each student a branch. Give each student a mask. Tell them they are going to play a game with the branch, but before they play they should put on the mask.
2. Once the masks are on, the teacher stands by the vine. The classroom helpers stay with the students. (The class size will determine how many students play at a time.)
3. The teacher says, "Jesus is the Vine. You are the branches. Jesus is always with You. Come to Jesus." (The teacher should repeat this phrase until the students come to the teacher.)
4. Once the student finds the teacher, the teacher says, "You can remove your mask and find a spot on the vine for your branch."
5. Have the students sit near the display for the rest of the lesson.

Activity Review

1. Who is the Vine?
2. Who are the branches?
3. When is Jesus with you?

Message

Even though Jesus is always with us, sometimes we forget. Sometimes we don't always see Jesus or feel hHis closeness. The good news is that Jesus gave us helpers to keep us connected to Him.

- How did you find the Vine, Jesus, when you had on the masks?

Jesus gave us teachers to tell us about the Bible and remind us of Jesus' love. (Tape up a grape and write "teachers" on the grape.)

- How else does Jesus help us stay connected to Him? (parents, grandparents, the Bible, baptism, Christian friends, hymns and praise songs—as the answers are given, add them to the vine as well.)

God wants all people to be connected to Him! (Hold up the cross.)

1. Does God want all parents connected to Him?
2. Does God want all grandparents connected to Him?
3. Does God want all people who can't hear connected to Him?
4. Does God want all children connected Him?
5. Does God want all people who use a wheelchair connected to Him?
6. Does God want all people who wear glasses connected to Him?
7. Does God want all people who can't see connected to Him?
8. Does God want all our neighbors connected to Him?

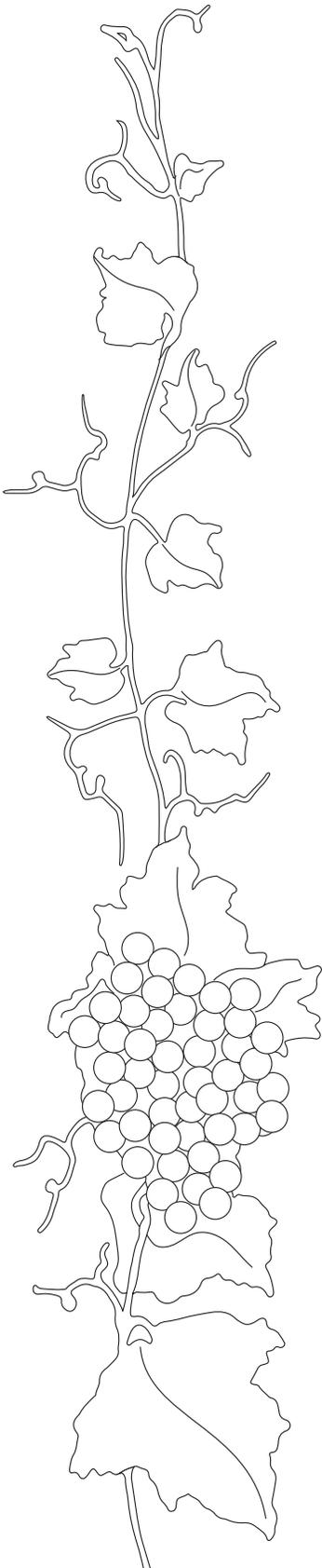
Yes, we are all part of the *Christ Connection*. We are all people of Vine, Jesus! (Point to the display.)

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for always being with us and wanting us connected to You. Thank You for people who remind us about Your love. Thank You for the Bible and for the gift of baptism. In Your name we pray. Amen.

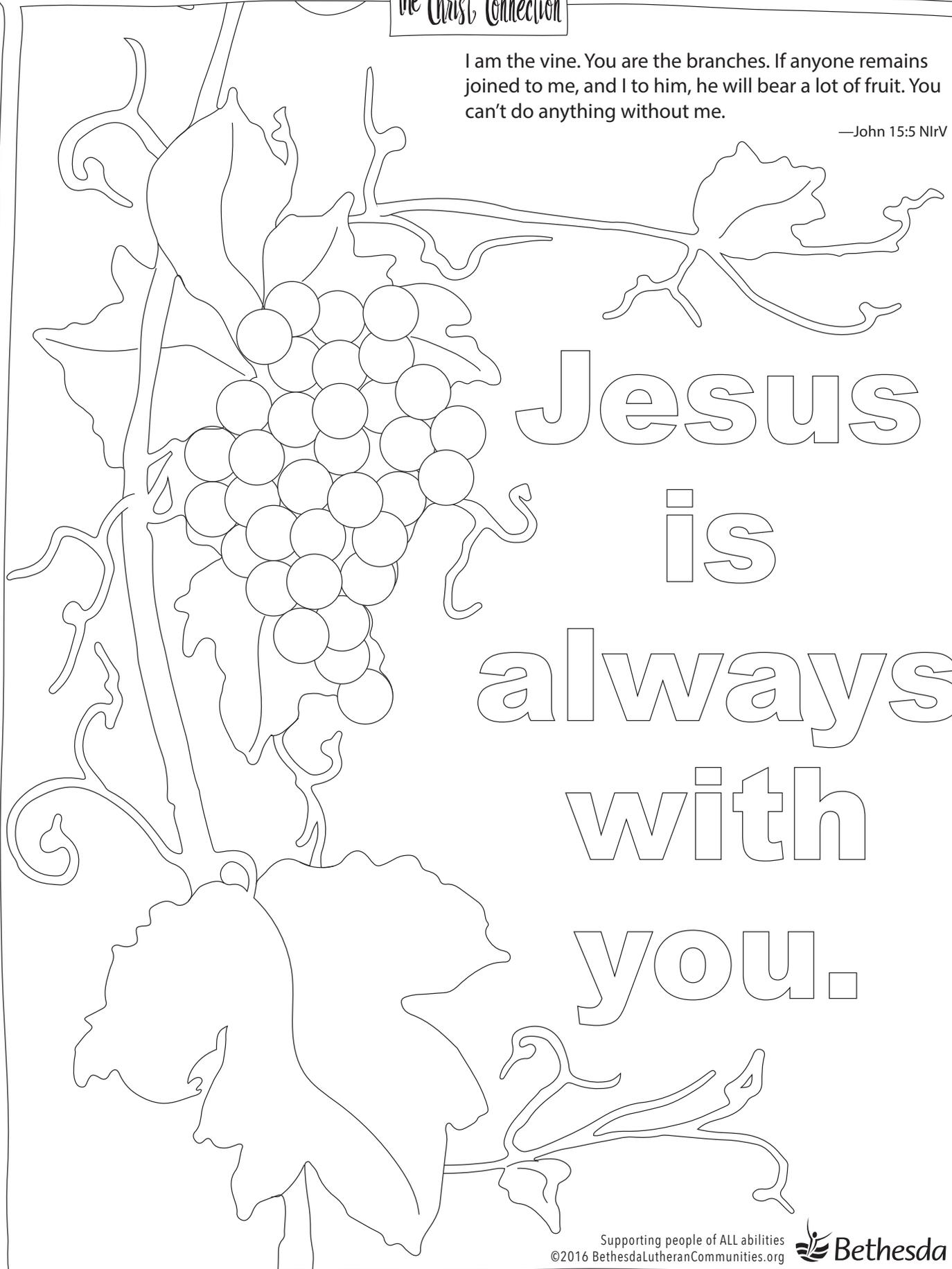
Closing Activity

See next page for coloring sheet.



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