

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE



### “Connected to the Vine”

By Pastor Rick Rostek, Immanuel Lutheran Church

The flowers are in full bloom already here in Norton. Tulips, irises, peonies, and roses are all showing off their beautiful God-given colors. So long as the flowers remain attached to the plant, their beauty will remain throughout their prescribed season. But cut off a flower and within hours it will begin to wilt for lack of nourishment. In short order, it will dry up and die.

Jesus says, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). In fact, Jesus says that any branch that does not bear fruit will be cut off and thrown into the fire and burned (John 15:6). We cannot bear fruit apart from Jesus. That’s because Jesus is the only way to come into a relationship with the heavenly Father.

Sin separated us from God such that we had no access to Him. Yet out of His great love for His creation, God sent His Son Jesus to do what we could not: bring forgiveness for our sins.

Jesus accomplished this by dying on the cross. He then rose from the dead showing that He had defeated death. All who believe in Him have forgiveness and everlasting life. This is what it means to be connected to the vine of

Jesus.

We remain connected to that vine by hearing His word regularly, whether that be in worship, Bible study, Sunday School, or personal devotions. When we hear of God’s love for us in Christ Jesus and

all the more put our faith in Him, we are branches that flourish, and we can produce fruit to the glory of God.

We bear fruit by showing God’s love to our neighbor. Perhaps it’s a family in need, a person with medical bills, or someone who’s lonely and could use a friend. We who are connected to the vine of Christ can show love by helping out where possible. We can also bear fruit by sharing the hope we have in Jesus Christ, so that others can be connected to the vine by faith in Jesus.

Maybe you are feeling a bit disconnected from the vine. You haven’t been in church lately or your Bible is collecting dust on the shelf. Maybe you don’t know Jesus at all. It’s not too late. Jesus still bids you to come and hear His word and to hear what He has done for you. He can connect you to the vine. Seek out His word, and you will soon feel His love flowing through you. Then you, too, can bear fruit to the glory of God the Father.



# Mom

A mom plays many roles with little rehearsal. With her babies she is life itself, the softness of her loving arms only a heartbeat away. With young children she’s a queen, providing shelter, ready to erase the pain of hurt feelings or a skinned knee. During the teen years, mom sometimes feels like the enemy; a few years later she’s the world’s greatest counselor again. Finally, when we launch a life of our own, mom is there to be our guide as we begin jobs and raise our own families. Life comes full circle. Give thanks to God today for your mom!

Weekly Scripture Reading						
Ezekiel 1:1-28	Ezekiel 2:1-10	Ezekiel 3:1-28	Ezekiel 34:1-31	Ezekiel 36:1-15	Ezekiel 36:16-38	Ezekiel 37:1-38
Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society						
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6	1	2	9	3	7	4	5	8
5	4	7	6	1	8	2	9	3
8	9	3	2	4	5	6	1	7
2	3	4	5	9	1	7	8	6
9	7	8	4	6	2	1	3	5
1	6	5	8	7	3	9	2	4
3	5	6	7	2	9	8	4	1
7	8	9	1	5	4	3	6	2
4	2	1	3	8	6	5	7	9

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### I've Got a Code

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5/6/2012