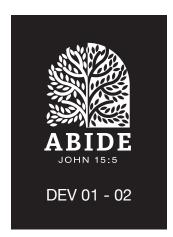


JOHN 15:5





ABIDE

August 26

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Questions: How would you describe the meaning of the word "abide?" Do you ever use that word? What might be a more trending word that means the same thing?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage John 15:1-11

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Additional Scriptures: Psalm 1, Acts 2:42-47

Summary/Law/Gospel:

We are lifeless and dead branches without being connected to the true vine. Our brokenness and wrongful actions in our lives would leave us dead and rotting if not for Jesus' power as our source of life and growth. Jesus is the true vine, we are the branches, and we bear fruit of compassion, love, mercy, and kindness (and many others) when we abide in Him. Abiding meaning living a life with Jesus – connected to His grace through reading the Bible/Word, daily praying to Jesus in gratitude for your life, being silent in nature before God, remembering God holds your identity through baptism as His daughter or son, and receiving a word of forgiveness from another Christian. This school year, Jesus will abide with you. Will you abide with Him? It's not too late. Jesus will receive you with grace.

NOTES:

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CONNECTIVITY

September 2

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: What does connecting with someone you don't know much about look like? (Ex: Connecting with new friends on campus, joining a sports team and connecting with your teammates, etc.)

Story – grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Romans 6:1-7

Summary/Law/Gospel:

This passage talks about unity and connecting (specifically verses 5 & 6) and how we are found alive in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been made new through Him, alive in Christ. This is reassuring that we can hold onto this, constantly remembering what peace Jesus can offer us when we feel stress and troubled. Through Jesus, we are given new life. This new life can be used to help others as we can connect with each other, love each other well, and offer that same type of forgiveness that Jesus gives us. What a wonderful thing to come back to as our safety!

DEV 02 - Extra Verses: Romans 6:17-18

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- 2) How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

SHARE as you GO:

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WATCH: How did you see God at work in your life this week?

WORD: What has God been teaching you in His Word?

TALK: What kind of spiritual conversations are you having with others?

SERVE: What good can we do at Concordia and beyond?





JUSTICE

September 9

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: What does it look like to have justice for others (Ex: "Old" Testament Justice vs. "New" Testament Justice)?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Romans 3:21-26

NOTES:	Summary/Law/Gospel:
	The Old Testament speaks a lot on justice and defending what is right. What does that look like paired with the love of Jesus? Through Jesus, we are able to breath easy, as he is the one that can deliver justice for all. Through his death, we are given a second chance at redemption, even when we don't feel like it. Through what Jesus gave us, we can have this new life to defend others, be there for others, all without worrying about how much love we give. We can abide in the fact that we can love others freely, because that's what Jesus did for us.
	DEV 03 — Extra Verses: Isaiah 1:17
	-
	COMMUNITY September 16
	CONNECT as you GATHER
	Opening Question: Who is someone who has always been by your side?
	Story – grow group leader provides the story.
	Connect at Concordia edu/campus-ministry

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Hebrews 10: 19-25

Summary/Law/Gospel:

Community is everything. Living this life alone, living out our calling alone, and growing closer to Jesus alone are not how we were designed. The call in these verses is to love one another and to build each other up. We are living together in hope as we look towards Jesus's return as it says in verse 25. In our theme verse for this year, Jesus is speaking to his disciples and uses the analogy that they are branches and Jesus is the vine. This applies to us as well, must be connected to Jesus to bear fruit. There is not a singular branch connected to the vine, but we all are connected. We are all called to abide in Jesus together. The great commission in Matthew 28 is not an individual calling, but it is a call for all followers of Jesus to reach all nations. Join with those around you to abide in Jesus. Following Jesus is better together.

DEV 04 — Extra Verses: John 15: 4-7

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- 2) How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

SHARE as you GO:

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WATCH: How did you see God at work in your life this week?

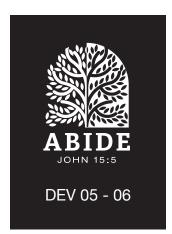
WORD: What has God been teaching you in His Word?

TALK: What kind of spiritual conversations are you having with others?

SERVE: What good can we do at Concordia and beyond?

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



PRESENCE

September 23

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Who's someone that has a strong presence when they're in the room? What does that mean or look like? Define that with the group.

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Story – grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Psalm 139:1-10

NOTES:	Summary/Law/Gospel:
	This Psalm is of David, explaining what the presence of the Lord has done for him. The Lord's presence is very seen by David, very heard and described here as he explains how he can't escape the Lord anywhere he goes. This may be a scary thought for David, as he feels that he can't escape the Lord's eyes. This is also a reassuring fact, as the Lord watches over us at all moments of the day. The Lord watched out for Jesus in the tomb and gave him new life three days after His death. The Lord can guide us through any season, as he did with David. This lets us rest easy, knowing that the Lord is watching over us and protecting us each step of life that we take. DEV 05 — Extra Verses: Matthew 18:20



CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Are you uncomfortable with silence? Why or why not?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Psalm 4:1-8

Summary/Law/Gospel:

This Psalm is of David, as it is a prayer asking God to hear him. Think for a second; When's the last time you went quiet to listen to God? Peering at verse four, it shows us that going silent to listen to the Lord's instructions can be helpful to us in times of uncertainty or unknowing. We can abide in that silence, knowing that the Lord is watching over us each step of the way. Through him, we can abide confidently without knowing all of the answers that we're seeking. Thankfully, these verses are something we can pray to God when we feel uncertain or uneasy, especially during the academic year. God's promise of love and light are something we can rest easy on.

DEV 06 - Extra Verses: Psalm 62:5

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- 2) How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

SHARE as you GO:

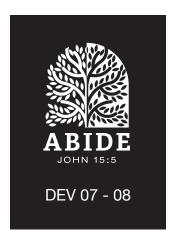
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WATCH: How did you see God at work in your life this week?

WORD: What has God been teaching you in His Word?

TALK: What kind of spiritual conversations are you having with others?

SERVE: What good can we do at Concordia and beyond?



BOLDNESS

October 7

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: When is a time you were too bold? When is a time you haven't been bold enough?

²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Acts 4:23-31

NOTES:	reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one. [b]'[c]
	²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.
	²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."
	³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.
	Summary/Law/Gospel:
	After Peter and John had been released from jail for preaching the Gospel they pray for boldness to go and preach the gospel again! That is pretty bold! In verse 31, the Spirit fills them, and they preach boldly. The Holy Spirit is a gift to those who believe in Jesus, who enables us to be bold! Like Peter and John, we often feel compelled by the spirit to pray for that person, go and have that spiritual conversation, or to tell that person the gospel. Let your life be led by the Holy Spirit. It is a little scary and your heart may start to race but listen to the Holy Spirit and go for it!! Pray to be a little bit bolder today!
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CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Have you heard of someone use the term "calling"? In what context?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: 2 Timothy 1:8-12

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. ¹¹ And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. ¹² That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

Summary/Law/Gospel:

In verse 9, it mentions how we are called to a holy life, because of everything that Jesus has done for us. That leads to the questions: How is that holy life lived out? What does living a holy life really look like? Paul's answer was because of the gospel he has been given the job of a herald, and apostle, and a teacher. We all have callings on our lives and a calling is what we do in response to the gospel. Callings are what the Lord has in store for you to build his kingdom. There are many callings, but God has a some chosen directly for you! How will YOU respond to His gospel?

DEV 07 — Extra Verses: Romans 8:5-11 DEV 08 — Extra Verses: Romans 12:4-8

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- **2)** How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

SHARE as you GO:

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WORD: What has God been teaching you in His Word?

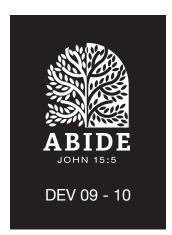
TALK: What kind of spiritual conversations are you having with others?

SERVE: What good can we do at Concordia and beyond?



⁸ So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

⁹ He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.



SACRIFICE

October 21

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Who has ever sacrificed anything for you? Family? Friends?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Read Ruth 1:1-17

Focus on v. 16-17

NOTES:	¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."
	Summary/Law/Gospel:
	I can't imagine a better line to describe the Love we are called to have for one another (read verses 16-17). Ruth had every opportunity to go and have a free reset on her life after her husband, father-in-law, and brother-in-law had died if she stayed with Naomi, life was going to get a lot harder. Ruth sacrificed her "get out of jail free card" to be with Naomi. Ruth demonstrated what love truly is. Love is sacrifice. The love that was clearly demonstrated on the cross when Jesus sacrificed everything for you and for me. He sacrificed everything because he loves you. DEV 09 — Extra Verses: John 13:34

FOLLOWERSHIP

October 28

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: How would you describe a follower? What are the characteristics of a good leader?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Philippians 3:7-21

Summary/Law/Gospel:

In this passage Paul is writing to the church of Philippians explaining how we should follow Christ in all circumstances even in our sufferings. Paul is writing this letter from prison and in the first part of this section he explains that everything he thought was a gain in life is now a loss for the sake of Christ. He explains that when we truly devote our life to Christ and follow him, we gain so much more than what we had living in our past life. In verses 17-21 he tells the Philippians that they should follow in his example of being a Christ follower. Throughout the Bible there's so many examples of what a Christ follower looks like, Paul is just one of them, but he shows us a great example that even in our suffering, hard times, and good times we should lose the world to gain the ultimate gift that Christ has given us and that is eternity with the father. Following Jesus may look different for every Christian as we each walk our own path with Jesus.

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- 2) How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

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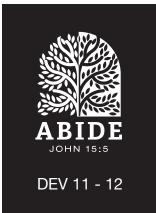
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LOVING OTHERS

November 4

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Who is the G.O.A.T.? (MJ? Phelps? Shakespear? Einstein? Pastor Jake? Others?)

Story – grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Matthew 22:36-40

NOTES:	Summary/Law/Gospel:
NOTES	In this passage, Jesus says the GCOAT (greatest commandment of all time) is to Love God and to Love Others. English doesn't capture the true meaning of this word. When Jesus says "Love" he does not mean the same as when I say "I love cookie cake". The word used here is the Greek word "agape." Agape means a sacrificial Love; a love without bounds; an unconditional love. The love that he has for us on the cross. This is the love we are called to have for all.
	DEV 11 — Extra Verses: 1 John 4:19
	Three Key Consistent Questions:
	What is Jesus teaching you?
	2) How can you apply this to your life?
	3) How can we support you?

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WORTHINESS

November 11

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: When you think about the grandeur and awesomeness of God, do you feel worthy to be in His presence?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: Matthew 10:26-31

Summary/Law/Gospel:

If God is so grand and powerful, why would people be considered of any worth to Him, especially if all we do is mess up and fall down? Despite our shortcomings, God thinks we are really something special. He used the blueprints of Himself to create us perfectly and exactly how He intended. Matthew says that everything about us will be made known, meaning that God knows us so deeply that nothing is hidden from Him. The Holy Spirit breathed our soul into being so that nothing will ever be able to destroy it. We are valuable because our soul is worth more than Satan could ever pay. Matthew goes on to say that even the very hairs on our head are numbered. God took time to count all the hairs on our heads, to memorize the smallest details of our lives. He cares so deeply about us that He sent His Son to die to make sure that we can never be separated from Him again. God invading our heart, mind, and soul is the only thing that makes us worthy.

DEV 12 — Extra Verses: 1 Peter 2:9-10

SHARE as you GO:

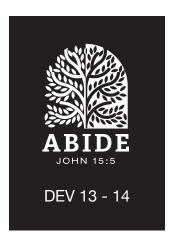
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RELIANCE

November 18

CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: Where's a situation where you had to rely on someone or something? Was it easy for you, or a challenge?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: 2nd Corinthians 1:6-11

NOTES: Key Market State State

Summary/Law/Gospel:

Relying on someone for support can be difficult. Thankfully, when we abide in Jesus, he already knows what we need. He knows the inner workings of our intentions and our hearts, so when we come to abide in him, he is prepared for all of our struggles and worries. Relying on Jesus doesn't have to be hard, because it's not a burden when we come to him seeking support. That's what he's there for! Through relying on Jesus, we have a shoulder to lean on when situations or circumstances become too difficult for us to handle. Jesus is there for you every step of the way.



CONNECT as you GATHER

Opening Question: What are some reasons that people should not be joyful? Are they valid reasons?

Story - grow group leader provides the story.

ENGAGE as you GROW

Scripture Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Summary/Law/Gospel:

Happiness is defined as being dependent on others and your circumstances for your wellbeing, but joy is something beyond simply being happy. Joy is the internal assurance that all is well with your soul. 1 Peter tells us not only why we should be joyful, but also how to have joy in this world. Christ has given us a daily renewal, a burning expectation of His coming, and a guaranteed, eternal inheritance. This is why we have joy, why we know that all is well with our soul. How do we have joy? Love Him and believe in Him. Then you will be filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for your soul is being saved. Jesus even had joy as He went to the cross for you and for me. Wow, the power of joy is real!

DEV 14 — Extra Verses: James 1:2-12

Three Key Consistent Questions:

- 1) What is Jesus teaching you?
- 2) How can you apply this to your life?
- 3) How can we support you?

SHARE as you GO:

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