

Let us pray together: Open our eyes to see your Spirit in our life. Open our hearts to receive the blessings you send each day. Guide us with your wisdom so that through us Christ may walk on the earth once again. Amen.

Did you notice that the Psalm we read for the call to worship contains words about fruit? **which will yield their fruit in its season.** The reading from Galatians: **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.** And fruit is mentioned in the reading from John. That reading is all about fruit – bearing fruit, not bearing fruit, being pruned to bear more fruit, needing Jesus to bear fruit, bringing glory to God by bearing fruit. You could say these are fruity readings!

What does it mean to bear fruit? In the Bible, bearing fruit refers to doing God's work in the world: service to others and good works. What does Jesus say about how to bear fruit. Jesus says to abide in him. In our reading from John, Jesus says: **Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.** The key to bearing fruit, to doing God's work in the world, to serving others, to doing good works is to welcome Christ in your life, to trust him, to have faith in him. When you do that you are abiding in him and you will bear much fruit.

One reason you will bear much fruit is because God has given us the Holy Spirit and the its gifts: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.** When you abide in Jesus, when you love him, when you trust him, when you have faith in him, then you will receive the gifts of the spirit which enable you to bear much fruit. When you have kindness, generosity, gentleness, you are able to do good works without wondering what's in in for me. You are able to give yourself to Jesus and serve just as Jesus served when he walked on this earth. You are able to follow Jesus' example for living.

And when you do you, Jesus says: **My father is gloried when you do this.** Isn't that what we pray regularly – that our actions, our very lives will bring glory to God?

Jesus says in Matthew, chapter 7 that you will be known by the fruit you bear. I believe that's true. You all know someone that has such a deep faith that he or she influences many people who see the love and caring that person expresses. That person has a deep faith, that may have been passed down from parents and grandparents. What's wonderful is to see how generously that person shares and how effortlessly it happens.

Now you know how to bear much fruit. You'll have fruit to share with others. You'll be able to give away the gifts of the spirit just by the way you live.

So listen carefully to our CPCCC Players presentation about bearing fruit and the gifts of the spirit.