



## Meditation for the Fifth Sunday of Easter May 2, 2021

*Abide in me as I abide in you.* [John 15.4]

I'm not sure there is any other passage where Jesus teaches so tenderly and powerfully that faith is grounded in longing and trust. The word *abide* promises constancy in the midst of change and steadiness in the midst of turmoil. With this word, Jesus invites us to that still center where God's whisper will drown out the cacophony of competing fears and promises.

Tom Ehrich explains the word's meaning clearly:

*As John intended it, "abide" means stay, remain, inhabit (especially as a guest), be in constant relationship. It doesn't mean put down roots, but stay the night while traveling, or stay for a time while serving. The word "sojourn" comes to mind.*

[*On the Journey* morningwalkmedia.com, April 28, 2021]

Perhaps *abiding* is a paradox: It is both ongoing and temporary, a rest that brings peace precisely because it is preparation for future action. Furthermore, we abide *together*. Jesus' invitation assures us that not only will we never be separated from the divine life that sustains us, but we will share that life in our relationships with each other. A peace that will be found only in God's presence, will be available to us through abiding with other human beings.

The hymn by Henry Francis Lyte expresses faith's longing and trust with particular poignancy. (It is found in our 1982 Hymnal #662)

*Abide with me: fast falls the eventide; /the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee, / Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*I need thy presence every passing hour. / What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be? / Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.*