



**Mennonite  
Church  
Canada**

**Resource Centre**

## Fruit on the Vine

# Children's Story

Year B, Easter 5

Title: Fruit on the Vine  
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Church, Winnipeg, MB  
Text: John 15:1-8  
Theme: Stay connected with God.  
Needed: A tomato plant

### Wondering questions:

- I wonder if the broken branch could have been fixed.
- I wonder what we can learn about God through tomato plants.
- I wonder if I am like a healthy tomato plant.

### Gathering Activity:

Welcome the children as they come forward for the children's story and help them settle into a comfortable position and a worshipful mood to help them know that God is very near. It may help them to imagine themselves settling onto the lap of Jesus, who loves children and stories very much. Open your Bible to John 15 and show them the superscription "Jesus the True Vine" and the sentence, "I am the true vine, and my father is the vinegrower." Ask the children if this is puzzling, and about ideas it suggests to them. Wonder if it means that Jesus also loves gardening. Today's story is about a tomato vine, and it is here to help everyone understand what Jesus meant when he said he was the true vine.

### Story:

Every spring when the weather begins to warm up, I plant some tomato plants in my back yard. The first thing I do is add some compost to the soil in my garden so the plants will have the food that they need to grow. What are some other things that plants need to grow? (water and sunlight)

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Then I dig a little hole in the ground, gently place the tomato plant into the hole, and press the dirt firmly around the plant. After the plants are in the ground, I give them some water. Then I watch and wait.

In a few days, the tomato plants look taller. It seems that, every time I look at the plants, new leaves have grown on the tender branches. By the end of the summer I am amazed at how thick and strong this thin stem (show stem on plant) or vine has become. As tomato plants grow in the garden, their branches change, too. What will you find on the ends of the branches in a few weeks that isn't there now? Yes, little yellow flowers. And, what will those flowers become? Yes, tomatoes. All through the spring and summer, the tomato stem takes the food it needs from the soil and passes it on to the branches so that they will be able to produce big, ripe, juicy tomatoes.

Last summer, my tomato plants were covered with yellow flowers when the wind began to blow. For a whole afternoon, the wind blew mightily. I was worried about what would happen to my tomato plants. Can you help me make a wind by blowing on this plant? When the storm ended, I went outside to have a look at my garden. I was glad to see that the strong stems had stayed whole and that the plants were still firmly rooted in the ground. But, when I looked a little closer, I saw that one of the branches was bent. I left the broken branch there for a few days, hoping it would straighten out again. Can you guess what happened to it? First, it got a little droopy. Then it started to turn yellow, because it was too broken to get food from the stem, and I knew that I might as well cut it off. That branch wasn't going to produce any tomatoes because it wasn't connected to the stem anymore.

Today's Bible reading says that Jesus is like the vine (just like the stem on the tomato plant) and we are like the branches. It may sound a little strange to think of Jesus being like a tomato plant stem and us being like tomato plant branches. I think the point Jesus was trying to make was that we need to stay connected, because when we stay connected to Jesus, God's love flows through us and helps us grow so we have good things to share with others, like the connected tomato branch can grow and share its tomatoes with us.

**Prayer:**

Thank you, Jesus, that your love makes us strong. Help us stay connected to your love so our spirits can keep growing and we can have good things to share with others. Amen.