

Great Thanksgiving
(Far More Than Meets the Eye)

Confession:

Peace, Patience, Kindness, we have been too anxious, help us respond when You encourage us to not to let our hearts be troubled nor to be afraid. Gentleness, Goodness, heart felt Joy we have not always allowed Your restorative justice to flow from our touch nor our words. Open our eyes, our arms, and our awareness of the trauma induced pain of girls, we too easily have pushed out by our ignorance to their need. Love, Peace, endless faithfulness, too often we have allowed difference to separate us, to segregate us, to alienate us, gather us together as your daughters and sons around your table of belonging and to receive Your grace. Amen.

In the silence of our hearts hear our cries for forgiveness.

From the cross Jesus forgave us.
Before we understood the pain we have caused,
Jesus forgave us.
Our lives are being made anew
and we are gifted with hope.
In the name of Jesus Christ we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Thanksgiving:

There is so much more happening than meets the eye.
You are planting seeds in our lives;
in the lives of school children;
in the lives of trafficked women and girls;
in the lives of those struggling with addiction;
in the lives of those afflicted by violence and abuse.

There is so much more happening than meets the eye.
You are pouring out living water upon our lives;
upon the lives of school children who feel they dwell in a dry and weary land;
upon the lives of those who dwell behind prison bars, battling feelings of despair;
upon the lives of those who feel parched of human understanding.

There is so much more happening than meets the eye.
You see a rich harvest in the future,
You see no child as hopeless

as You cultivate their dreams;
You see no community as worthless
as You share Your vision;
You see no reason to worry nor to be afraid,
as You spread Your enthusiasm for the future.

Even though our lives don't seem to bud,
and there does not seem to be any fruit in our life.
Even when our lives feel shriveled up,
and our lives feel barren.
Even though we feel like we have gone astray
and seem completely lost,
with even our homes sounding hollow,
We know that there is more happening than meets the eye:
Because we are assured of Your steadfast love that lasts forever.

So we sing Your praise,
but we won't do it alone.
We join our voices with sisters
and brothers throughout the world,
because of Your great faithfulness.
We join with all the choirs of heaven,
To sing of Your glory.

You alone are faithful.
You never slumber nor sleep.
Your eye is even on the sparrow.
Your love endures for ever.
Great is Your faithfulness.

You are faithful and so is Your only begotten,
Jesus Christ.
Who did and is still doing more than meets the eyes.
Jesus simply shared Your loving touch:
seeking to comfort, heal and support.
Jesus simply spread Your encouraging word:
seeking to forgive, bring peace,
and to free others from fear.
Jesus simply was Your presence, Immanuel,
God with us,
in the very midst of our shared struggles,
holding the promise of paradise.

Jesus was more than met the eye
when he met with all the disciples in an upper room.
They thought that Jesus was their master and Lord,

but Jesus showed them something more,
Jesus was the love of God,
willing to kneel before them
and care for their deepest needs.
This love can do more than meets the eye.

When Jesus took the Passover bread,
It was more than meets the eye:
It held a divine promise to every oppressed soul.
So with deep thanksgiving,
Jesus broke the bread and shared it saying:
“Take and eat with me, this bread is my body,
broken and shared with you.”
This gift can do more than meets the eye.

When Jesus took the cup of wine,
It was more than meets the eye:
It held the promise of restorative justice for all.
So with deep thanksgiving,
Jesus took the cup and shared it saying:
“Drink with me each of you,
for this is the cup of my blood,
poured out freely as expression of my faith
in the eternal covenant of grace,
promising forgiveness of all your sins,
and those of the whole world.”
This gift is more than meets the eye.

We know that eye has not perceived,
nor the ear heard what God has envisioned for us,
because it is just too expansive to fully comprehend;
but we know that we crave it with all our soul,
and so we seek to embrace it in this holy mystery
that we boldly declare:

Christ has died, but even more, we die with Christ.
Christ has risen, but even more,
we have risen to new life in Christ.
Christ will come again, but even more,
Christ comes again in us.

Unseen Miracle, Hidden Hope
infuse these gifts of bread and wine
and allow them to become for us
the body and blood of Christ.

Unseen Miracle, Hidden Hope
infuse our lives,
our struggles,
our achievements
and our dreams
allowing us to become for others,
Your church,
the body and the beloved bride of Christ.

Unseen Miracle, Hidden Hope
be with the work of the United Methodist Women
the families they touch,
the churches they inspire,
and the young women who are in need their testimony.

Accept this our worship of Christ,
our ministry with Christ,
and our hope in Christ
through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit,
to the glory and honor of our Creator God
now and in the days and years to come.
Amen.

Now as those who follow Christ
who is always more than meets the eye, let us pray:
Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer After Communion:

Thank You for blessing our lives with this holy mystery found in Jesus Christ.
In these simple elements of bread and wine,
we have been touch by the love of Christ.
We have felt his mercy
and found assurance of the salvation of our souls.
This wonder is too good to keep to ourselves.
Send us out into the world to share with others
this divine love.
So that all the world might join with us
to sing praises in Jesus Name. Amen.