

Great Thanksgiving
(Article V Racial Justice of the United Methodist Church Constitution)

Invitation:

One: All are invited to this table, because through God's goodness and love, every person is unique and beloved. Come in the fullness of who you are, because at this table we are all family. Welcome home!

Confession:

One: We confess this truth: our racism in all its forms is opposed to Your divine law and disfigures Your image in every life it touches.

All: Please, Lord, eradicate racism from our lives.

One: The racism in our lives is a destructive scourge on our global society and it has been through out our history as a church.

All: Please, Lord, eradicate racism from our lives.

One: Through our racist practices, we have: acted destructively in our communities; we have harmed others; we have been obstructed the unity of Your people and have undermined Your work of grace throughout the world.

All: Please, Lord, eradicate racism from our lives.

One: Confront in our lives every hint of racism, and heal the damage we have done to others through our acts of racial inequity, our exploitive colonialism and help us make restitution for all we have stolen through our privilege and our intentional and unintentional racial violence.

All: Please, Lord, eradicate racism from our lives.

One: Use our lives today to help You root out this racism from every facet of our society.

All: By the saving power of Jesus Christ, please make it so. Amen.

Assurance:

One: We are all God's unique and beloved children. God knows the resolution of your heart, and will empower you with divine love to accomplish it, for in the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

All: You are God's unique and beloved child. God knows the resolution of your heart and will empower you with divine love to accomplish it, for in the name of Jesus Christ you too are forgiven. We are all one in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Thanksgiving:

One: God is present in our diversity.

All: God is present in our individuality.

One: Every culture, every people, every tribe is a divine gift.

All: Every word, in every dialect, in every song is a language of the Sacred Spirit.

One: Let us join together in that one spirit filled with holy gratitude,

All: It is only right to be united in thanksgiving and praise.

One: You created us all,
forming us with Your own hands.

You looked at each of us and proclaimed that we were more than just good,
we were all amazingly good before Your eyes.
Who are we to contradict You about any of Your beloved children?
How could we dare to harm or deprive any of Your beloved children?
Yet, we have disappointed You by our neglect of our own siblings.
We are amazed that You still embrace us.
We wonder how You can still draw us near,
but Your justice is restorative and Your ways bring healing.
This is why we join with all those You call beloved to worship You.
We join in their dance as they rejoice in their liberation from our oppression.
We join in their freedom songs as they find release from our chains
because their oppression was our oppression and their chains were our own.
None of us are free until all of us are free,
and all heaven now joins with us to sing:

**All: I will sing to God
Who triumphed gloriously
'ppressor in the sea!**

**Yah, my strength and might
Became my deliverance
And truly my God. (Exodus 15:1-2a)**

One: God does give the oppressed deliverance,
and sent Jesus to show us how we can help.

At their birth Jesus was visited by
citizen and foreigners,
by the extremely poor and the very wealthy,
by outcasts from society and those with celebrity.
All were welcomed with grace.

When Jesus chose those to come and follow,
Jesus chose those from labor and from management,
from people of peace and those of violence,
from people of all genders,
turning none away, yet changing all who met them.

As we take this hand sensitizer and wash our hands:
We remember how Jesus took up the towel and basin
and washed the feet of everyone who joined them to
celebrate the Passover.
Jesus washed every disciples feet,
the twelve, and their families, their wives and children.
We too are invited to be inclusive of all in our care.

We remember that the bread Jesus took in his hands had been set aside as a memorial of their deliverance from the house of bondage, and that there were still others who were in bondage praying for deliverance. With prayers of thanksgiving to You, Jesus took this bread and broke it, sharing it with everyone, saying: "Take eat, this is my body, broken and given for you." We too are invited to be inclusive of all in our care.

We remember that the wine Jesus poured had been set aside as a memorial to the suffering of those trapped by our sins and the hardness of our hearts. With prayers of thanksgiving to You, Jesus took the cup and shared it with everyone, saying: "Drink with me, all of you, for this is the cup filled with my blood, which I pour out freely as a praise offering celebrating God's eternal covenant of grace, forgiving your sins and those of all the world." We too are invited to be inclusive of all in our care.

We want to be inclusive of all.
We want to be anti-racist
and bring Christ's healing to the world,
following the path of Christ that we
boldly proclaim to all the world:

**All: Christ died for everybody,
Christ lives for the whole world,
Christ will come again for us all.**

One: Open door none can shut,
Open heart nothing can close,
receive these gifts of bread and wine,
allow them to be for us the body and blood of Christ
accessible to all.

Open door, none can shut,
Open heart nothing can close,
receive all the privileges that are ours
allow them to become for the world a sign of Your grace,
Your church, the body and bride of Christ,
accessible to all.

Open door that none can shut,
Open heart that nothing can close,
racism must be eradicated.
Deepen our commitment as individuals and as a church
to work to eliminate racism in all its forms,
to live in ways that brings an end to racial inequality,
to dismantle the structures of colonialism,
to end white privilege and all vestiges of white supremacy.

All: Jesus, break open our hearts and allow our tears to flow for everyone we have harmed.

Holy Spirit, renew our minds that we may understand our sin and change our ways. Creator God, create us anew, that we might become perfected in Your love, that You may receive all the glory, honor, and praise from all who are set free.

Amen.

One: Now may we pray after the pattern laid down for us by Jesus, praying:

All: Liberator of the oppressed.

**Deliverer of all who are being exploited,
holy is Your cause.**

Now is the day! Now is the time, when this earth becomes like Your heaven!

Each day provide what is needed for all to live well.

**Forgive our sins including our racism,
as we forgive all those who have sinned against us.**

**Keep us from the temptation of ignoring our evil
and keep us away from all self justification.**

**For You are the deliverer of the oppressed,
the cry of the exploited, and the help of all who are abused, always. Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

All: Thank You for allowing us to be a part of this holy mystery found in Jesus Christ. Through this time together we have been changed, we have found the old ways of living passing away and have beheld something new. I new path, a deeper love, and a renewed vision for our lives. Now send us out to break down dividing walls, to give new sight to the blind, and to set prisoners free with the love of Christ. Amen.