

Great Thanksgiving
(*Koinonia*)

One: Let us prepare our souls with confession:
Where we have harmed one another:

All: Holy Compassion forgive us.

One: Where we have disappointed one another:

All: Healing Balm forgive us.

One: Where we have misunderstood one another:

All: Sacred Wisdom forgive us.

One: For our stubborn pride that has held us back:

All: Divine humility forgive us.

One: For our privileged blindness:

All: Light in our darkness forgive us.

One: In Christ we are gifted with forgiveness.

All: Let us freely share this gift with one another and be free. Amen.

One: In all of our time together, God's grace has been with us.

All: We have enjoyed the richness of this grace together.

One: God has been present in our laughter.

All: God has been present in our sorrows.

One: We have never had to do this work alone.

All: This is why this time is filled with joy and thanksgiving.

One: You who are alive and ever changing,
forgive us for seeking capture You like a fly in amber.
You are always ready to do the next new thing,
even as we cherish Your wonders of the past.
You are always ready to speak to us a new word,
even as we seek to memorialize ideas long past.
You are the One who seeks to create all things new,
even as we long for the good old days,
that comfort our minds when we pretend they were so.
Give us now, new dreams to dream.
Give us now, new visions to become amazed by;
so that we might ever adore You,
so that we might be surprised once more by Your revelation,
so that we might fall down amazed by Your glory.

With quickening hearts, and hope filled expectation
we join with all the world, not just with Your saints on earth,
but with all of creation from the smallest viruses to the majestic
birds who dance upon the winds of Your Spirit.
With searching minds, and hungry explorations,
we join with that great cloud of witnesses that worship around Your throne

declaring Your great glory as Your new creations continue to unfold as we all proclaim:

**All: You are holy! You are imaginative! You are creative beyond compare!
You are loving! You are compassionate! You are merciful and You care!
We are so blessed to be called by Your name.
We are blessed that all people can claim the same!**

One: It is all because of Jesus.
It was more than his teaching about love and forgiveness.
It was when Jesus actually turned the other cheek.
It was when Jesus personally touched those others saw as untouchable.
It was when Jesus blessed the children and made the insignificant, significant!
It was when Jesus bruised, bloodied, and dying prayed words for our forgiveness,
instead of declaring holy war, that's when You changed life on earth forever.
By Jesus' declaration we were forgiven, even though we were sinners.
In fact while we were yet in our sins, Jesus chose to die instead of destroying us,
giving us eternal life, instead of eternal death.

Jesus showed us how to live.
Jesus showed us that the lowest servant was the greatest and not the least.
Jesus became that lowly servant and cared for the basic needs of those around him.
Jesus washed feet.
Jesus says it's that simple. It's that hard, to love one another.

Jesus showed us how to live when he took the Passover bread.
Bread used to remind God's people not just about past victories,
but the very present suffering of others.
Jesus took this bread, with the blessing of a grateful heart,
then broke it, and shared it with all saying:
"Take, eat, this is my body broken and given for you."
Remember it's that simple. It's that hard, to love one another.

Jesus showed us how to live when he took the cup of Passover wine.
Wine used to remind God's people not just about past victories,
but of the very present suffering of others caused by the hardness of our sinful hearts.
Jesus took this cup, with the blessing of a grateful heart,
he then shared it with all saying:
"Drink, all of you, for this is the cup of my blood,
poured out to demonstrate the reality of God's eternal covenant of grace,
guaranteeing the forgiveness of all your sins and all the sins of the world."
Remember it's that simple. It's that hard, to love one another.

It is simple to love one another.
All we have to do is follow the way of Christ
That we have found expressed in this holy mystery
that we want our lives to proclaim:

**All: The love of Christ always protects.
The love of Christ always trusts.
The love of Christ always hopes.
The love of Christ always perseveres.
The love of Christ never fails.**

One: Bond of Fellowship, Grace and Peace
infuse these gifts of bread and wine,
allowing them to become for us the body and blood of Christ.

Bond of Fellowship, Grace and Peace
infuse the essence of our lives, our very hopes and dreams,
allowing them to become for the world, Your church,
the sacrificial body and compassionate bride of Christ.

Bond of Fellowship, Grace and Peace
Be with the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church
during this time of transition.
Build upon our past.
Surprise us with Your fresh vision.
Continue to lead us all as You open up the future before us.
May we always honor the Christ who leads us.
May we always honor the Spirit who empowers us.
May we always honor the Creator who continually makes all things new.
May we perceive it. May we embrace it. May God receive all the glory from it. Amen.

Now as those who follow the leadership of Christ, 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:

**We thank you for this holy mystery and the fellowship with You we have
experienced around this table. You have spoken to our hearts. You have made us one with
You and with one another. This is a blessing we want to share. Send us out into the future.
Give us the joy to embrace it with excitement and expectation. Send us out to expand Your
table, to embrace with joy all those You have yet to send our way. May they feel welcomed
by Your presence in us, now and always. Amen.**