

Great Thanksgiving
(*Still Relevant*)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You are the Ongoing Revelation.

You are so much more than we picture You.

You are ever expanding expansions of love.

Your knowledge dwarfs ours.

Your abilities are beyond our known limitations.

Yet You claim that our contributions are always relevant.

You have made us integral parts of every loving act You accomplish.

Your words of encouragement pass through our lips.

Your comforting touch is expressed through our fingertips.

When You observe the struggles of life, You send us, so You can share the burden.

You continue to invite us into Your circle.

You continue, generation after generation to greet us with joy as we enter Your fellowship.

You weave us together into one supportive community,

turning our faith, hope and love into action around the world.

Your inspiration makes of life still relevant.

Your continuing nurture of our souls keeps our lives still relevant.

The blossoming of rich opportunities of service keep us still relevant.

And we are thankful.

Dwell in these the praises of Your faithful,

even as we join the chorus of others who love You all over the earth,

and with the heavenly host as they proclaim forever with us:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed are they who come in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We are in awe of Your holiness, and we are inspired by Jesus, who never seemed relevant at all:

Born like too many children to fathers who doubted they want them;

Born like too many children into poverty;

Born to a brave woman Mary, who believed that her precious child was still relevant.

You sent Jesus to teach,

but the religious leaders and doctors of the Law did not view his teaching as relevant.

They did not believe that inclusion of outsiders, the unclean, women and children was relevant.

They did not believe that women, the working poor, and political dissidents were relevant

disciples.

They did not believe the miracles Jesus performed were relevant enough to excuse his blasphemy.

But Jesus only did and said what You, O God saw as relevant, and still see as relevance today.

We remember that showing hospitality is still relevant as we wash our hands.

The early church believed it was still relevant

that Jesus left a place of honor,

and to do woman's work by washing the feet of those gathered for Passover.

They believed that Jesus' invitation was still relevant for future generations,

to love others as Christ had loved them.

We remember that giving is still as relevant

as when Jesus took the Passover bread,

breaking it with thanksgiving,

explaining as it was shared:

“Take and eat, this bread is my body given for you.”

We remember that letting endless violence end with us is still as relevant

as when Jesus took the cup of Passover wine,

lifting it up with thanksgiving,

explaining as it was shared:

“Drink with me, all of you, for this is the cup of my blood,

poured out to celebrate God's eternal covenant of forgiveness,

with you and all.”

What Jesus did and said is still relevant to our lives,

and to the way we choose to live our lives in relation to others.

Our seeking to provide others with a creative, supportive fellowship,

and our quest to find ways to expand our concepts of mission even as we participate in this holy

mystery that we proclaim again by faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Holy Spirit

allow these gifts of bread and wine to still be relevant to our lives

by transforming them into the body and blood of Jesus Christ

whom we choose to follow.

Holy Spirit,

allow the gift of our lives to still be relevant to the lives of others

by transforming them into Your church, the body and beloved of Jesus Christ

that all may have the opportunity to follow.

Holy Spirit,
empower, inspire, enthuse, rejuvenate, recreate, and make relevant
these Your United Methodist Women.
Make their passion deep.
Keep their vision clear.
Open their hearts to the still relevant needs of women and children around the world.
Give them a voice for the voiceless and a generosity towards those who cry out to You in need.

So that everyone will rejoice in You, God our Savior:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always.

Amen.

Now with renewed relevance let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

**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:

Lord, You have given us a new relevance through this Holy Mystery.
Allow us the privilege to love others with the same love You have shown us in Jesus Christ.
Help us so live our lives that others too might have their deepest needs met in Christ and find
themselves empowered by the wonders of Your love. Amen.