

Great Thanksgiving
(You Are the Word)

Confession:

**All: Silence our hearts, for we talk too much and listen too little.
Silence our thoughts, for we keep thinking of how to have our own way.
Silence our actions, for we keep going through the motions and are not living.
Open our eyes, to the needs of others that we have not seen.
Open our ears to the cries of those whose needs are greater than our own.
Open our hands to reach out to embrace the untouchable.
Quicken our imaginations, because we have become uncreative.
Quicken our spirits, because we have become numb to Your shocking presence.
Quicken our joy,
because we have forgotten how to dance with You in the cool of the day. Amen.**

One: Only the word of truth sets us free. Christ hears your true confession and opens the door to new life. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God for this life changing grace. Amen.

Thanksgiving:

One: We are not alone.

All: We are encompassed within the Holy Trinity.

One: All it takes is one Word.

All: By that One Word all was created, the observed and the unobserved.

One: It is this Word that dwells among us that fills us with joy.

All: It is at the sound of this Word that fills our hearts with endless praise.

One: In the beginning You were the Word.
You spoke forth creation.
You spoke forth the breath of life.
You spoke forth a universe of amazing diversity,
where everyone had its place,
where everyone was seen as very good,
where everyone was viewed as a divine gift to the world.
We rejoice in that Word.

You have been translated into many languages.
You have been understood by many cultures.
You have been articulated for every age and need.
Awesome changes are created when we listen for Your Word.
Fantastic adaptations evolve when we are open to Your Word.
Your Word is spoken and all things become new.
We rejoice in Your Word spoken to our hearts.
Your Word frightens us because it calls forth change.
Your Word calls us to repentance, to change direction,
to venture into worlds we have never seen before.

So we humbly kneel before You as we behold Your new creation,
in us, in Your church, and in the world around us.
Out of our mouths springs forth praise,
because we know that it will be beyond our feeble imaginations,
more than we ever dreamed of.
We are not alone. Others also join in our praise.
The whole earth sings Your praise, at the power of Your Word.
The heavens themselves declare Your glory with us:

**All: You are amazing You are creative. You are imaginative.
You are innovative. You dream wonderful dreams. You inspire
spectacular visions. There is no greater power than Your Word,
and You are the Word for us today.**

One: When the world needed a word from You, You spoke and dwelt among us.
Immanuel, God with us.
Jesus was that Word.
That Word was love.
Jesus was Your loving word spoken to the hearts of the poor to give hope.
Jesus was Your loving word spoken to those burdened by political oppression.
Jesus was Your loving word spoken to those who were told they were unforgivable,
unlovable,
and incurable.
Jesus was Your loving word spoken to those told that they did not belong,
were not important,
or were beyond the touch of a compassionate God.

Jesus was the Word,
to all who thought they were too important,
to all who thought they were better than others,
so Jesus spoke God's truth to power
by getting up, stripping down, and kneeling.
The Word became the loving servant,
turning none away.
Jesus invites us to understand this Word.

Jesus was the Word,
spoken with prayer as he took the sacred bread,
bread that spoke of freedom to the oppressed.
Breaking it, and sharing it with everyone, the Word was:
"Take, eat, this is my body broken and shared with you."
Jesus invites us to understand this Word.

Jesus was the Word,
spoken with prayer as he took the sacred cup,
the cup that spoke to the cost of the sins of humanity.

Sharing this cup with everyone, the Word says:
“Drink with me as we share this cup of my blood,
poured out as testimony to the eternal Covenant of God,
guaranteeing the forgiveness of your sins and the sins of the whole world.”
Jesus invites us to understand this Word.

We know that there is a word from the Lord for us.
We want to understand this Word.
This is why we struggle to embrace this holy mystery of our faith
that we now declare:

**All: In Christ we have died a death like his.
In Christ we have experienced new life like his.
Christ shall come again, and we know that we shall be like him.**

One: Creative Inspiration, Compassionate Word
whisper Your truth to these gifts of bread and wine.
Open our hearts to see that they are truly
the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Creative Inspiration, Compassionate Word
whisper Your truth to the gift of our authentic selves.
Open hearts so they might see Your church
the living body and beloved bride of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Creative Inspiration, Compassionate Word
speak You Word to Bethel United Methodist Church.
Speak a word that brings them to their knees.
Speak a word that opens their hearts.
Speak a word that changes their lives.
So that the Word they seek, does not come into their hearts in vain.

**All: Receive our worship of Christ,
our service to Christ,
our exploration with Christ through the in filling of the Holy Spirit,
to the glory of our Great Creator, to the full filling of Their vision
for us, for the Church, and for the world around us, now and always. Amen.**

One: Now in response to the Word given to us, let us pray with Christ as he taught, saying:

**All: 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:

All: Thank you for blessing us with this holy mystery in Jesus Christ. We have received Your Word and it has spoken Your truth deep in our hearts. We have been transformed by this experience. Now send us out into Your world to share this Word of grace and inclusion with others. You have given us much to contemplate, and much to praise You for, now and always. Amen.