

# *The Great Thanksgiving*

*(Discipleship Ministries, the United Methodist Church)*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up in thankfulness for what has been.**

But what has been is not what shall be. We must look to the Kingdom that will be.

**In the midst of our endings, we will also celebrate new beginnings.**

And so we are thankful this morning, Creator God. You continue to renew us day after day by your love. When one chapter of your people's story ends...

**you are always here: speaking a new creation into being, calling a new prophet into preaching, bringing a new vibrancy and continuation to the journey begun.**

As in the days of Moses and Joshua, Deborah and Gideon, Naomi and Ruth, Elijah and Elisha - through each generation and appointment time you have been present and at work during transitions. We are thankful, great God, for the doors you take us through. You comfort us in the closing of yesterdays and you guide us in the opening of tomorrows. And so, we your people praise your name joining the voices that have sung from ancient times and the voices of today and tomorrow that rise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!**

We are thankful this bright day for Jesus Christ, our Savior. He came to walk side by side with us in our journeys. He called us away from the everyday to spend time with the Holy. He taught us to find the Holy within the everyday. Each time we think that life has perished,

**He is always here: offering living water of hope to those with tears, giving forgiveness to those burdened by mistakes, and loving the lost onto a faith path of purpose.**

Jesus called disciples - Peter, James and John, Mary, Martha, the Samaritan woman at the well. He calls us still to be a part of the Body of Christ, renewed within his baptism, death, and resurrection.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Christ took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup and again gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

This is the great mystery: that through Jesus Christ, God brings new relationships out of old, that in giving ourselves away we truly find ourselves in union with Christ. In Christ every goodbye leads one day to an eternal hello. Christ is with us in life, in death, and in life after death. This is the great mystery:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Guiding Spirit this evening nightfall and turn it again into the sunrise of day.

**Be here we pray! Renew us in the midst of change!**

Pour out your gifts on the Body of Christ.

**Pour out on us!**

Pour out on the Pauls and the Pricillas of our day.

**Pour out on us!**

Pour out on the Susanna and John Wesleys.

**Pour out on us!**

Pour out on the sons and daughters who you are calling and sending this day!

**Pour out on us!**

Pour out on these gifts of bread and wine, that we may know your body and blood are always here: refreshing, renewing, reviving our hearts and minds and bodies! This we ask in the name of the Relational God, Three-in-One and One-in-Three, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

**Amen.**

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