



TABLE TALKS

Greater Northwest Area of
The United Methodist Church

MOVEMENT 1

The Story Begins
from the Gospel of Matthew

**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now am found
Was blind but now I see.**

The Call

When we have a problem,
Bring us to this table.
When we are hungry,
Bring us to this table.
When we have a disagreement,
Bring us to this table.
When we want to get some work done,
Bring us to this table.
When we want to worship in the Spirit of Christ,
Bring us to this table.

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!**

Introduction

**Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.**

Covenant

We gather around the table acknowledging God's unbounded grace for all. We come from different backgrounds, cultures and ethnicities and we acknowledge our differences of opinion and perspectives on many matters. Yet we gather still, knowing that Jesus calls us to break bread and share the cup no matter what, and that each of us has a place here.

And so, as we gather around the table I commit to:

- 1) Stay curious.** *I come with a willingness to learn and commit to staying at the table. When the going gets rough, I will turn to wonder, ask questions and stay engaged.*
- 2) Be kind.** *There will be statements shared at the table that will challenge my perspectives. I will be respectful in my responses and engagement, treating each one with grace and love.*
- 3) Listen with the same amount of passion with which I want to be heard.** *In the words of St. Francis, I will seek to understand more than to be understood. I also commit to share the air and not dominate.*

**The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.**

Stones

Communion Prayer

The Lord be with you
People: 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.

The Presider continues...

...And so, with all the saints gathered here and beyond,
we offer praise!

**Praise God, praise God, praise God, praise God,
Your love is strong and true!
Blessed is the One who comes to us.
Praise God, praise God, praise God!**

The Presider continues...

**Come near, O God, and touch our hearts
through bread and cup this day.
Be with us now as you were then.
We open to your way.**

The Presider continues...

**When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun!**

The Prayer of Jesus

Prayer After Receiving

For this food which sustains us for our work,
we give you praise!
For this drink which quenches our thirst for grace,
we give you honor!
For this fellowship in the midst of hardship,
we give you thanks!

Kitchen Table Conversations

Please share for 3 minutes each around the table related to these questions:

*What was it like to deal with conflict in your family of origin?
How did you learn to deal (or not) with conflict?
How are you handling conflict in a similar or different way today?*

MOVEMENT 2

The Conversation Continues

The purpose of this movement is to allow you to experience a conversation over a difficult topic with a group. This will be an experience where each of you can be a "facilitator on the side." You will all be responsible for having a safe, open and meaning-generating dialogue.

Question 1: The facilitator will provide you with a question. What is your first reaction to hearing what the topic will be? (20 minutes)

- Prayer for presence, grace, and love
- One minute of silence to explore your reaction and write thoughts in your journal.
- Begin the dialogue making sure each person is safe and fully heard.
- Use questions to deepen the conversation.
- When the chime sounds, move your dialogue into reflection.
 - What did you experience?
 - What did you discover?
 - What is happening to us, as a group?
 - What does this mean to us?

Question 2: What might happen if we could hold this conversation with our congregation? If we widened the circle, what would we hope for, be concerned about or fear? (20 minutes)

- Prayer for presence, grace, and love
- One minute of silence to explore your reaction and write thoughts in your journal.
- Continue the dialogue making sure each person is safe and fully heard.
- Use questions to deepen the conversation.
- When the chime sounds, move your dialogue into reflection.
 - What did you experience?
 - What did you discover?
 - What is happening to us, as a group?
 - What does this mean to us?

Question 3: Now imagine we could widen the circle again to include the Annual Conference and even the whole of the United Methodist Church. Consider what is happening in our Church today. **What could be the impact of expanding this to include the whole of the Methodist Church.** (20 minutes)

- Again, use the process outlined above.

Take another few minutes of silence to reflect on this experience. Write in your journal. What happened with you? What changed or moved in the group? Where were moments of comfort or discomfort? What did this experience mean to you and to the group? (3 minutes)

MOVEMENT 3

Closing

**Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease:
I shall possess, within the veil,
a life of joy and peace.**