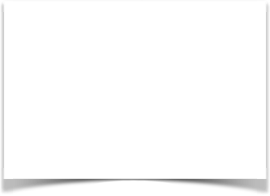
**TABLE TALKS**



*Greater Northwest Area*

*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.**

**The Lord has promised good to me,**

**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 a 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.*



**his word my hope secures;**

**he will my shield and portion be**

**as long as life endures.**

**Stones**

**Love Feast**

**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 Facilitator 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 Facilitator 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!**

**Silent Prayer**

**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.

o What did you experience?

o What did you discover?

o What is happening to us, as a group?

o 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.

o What did you experience?

o What did you discover?

o What is happening to us, as a group?

o 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**

**Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,**

**and mortal life shall cease:**

**I shall possess, within the veil,**

**a life of joy and peace.**