

UCC 100th Anniversary Year...1925-2025
Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you!

Present your heart to God.

We open our hearts to God's presence!

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Creator God, we praise you for the goodness you have sown in the world. From the beginning of time, you have planted love in your Creation, in all of our relations: the rocks and trees, the skies and seas, the birds, the fish, the plants and the animals, and the people. We are in awe and wonder of all that you have done. But you didn't stop there! Not only did you sow the seeds of love, you also tended the ground in which they grew. Among the people, you raised up leaders who nurtured people through your dream. You anointed prophets and judges to hold out your dream and sought to pull the invasive weeds from our hearts. Yet we often left our gardens untended, forgetting your original call and hope. All that was created you intended and called to bear the fruit of life. In remembrance of this original call, our hearts cry out to you.

*O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space,
All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace. Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
creation sings your praise. And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always!*
MV 203

Despite your tender care, we still didn't get your dream, so in the fullness of time, you revealed yourself in the person of Jesus, who came into the garden of your world to grow among us. Jesus showed us what truly good fruit looked like, and he did something that no other had done before. He loved so widely and fully that his life force spread out like the sun's rays, nourishing life in all he touched. Even though a bountiful harvest was freely given to all, the parasites of fear and power rose in us, impeding our flourishing in your love.

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus sat at the table with his followers and friends. Celebrating the gifts of God's love and freedom, they shared a meal together. As they ate, he took the bread of freedom and life, gave thanks to God, and gave it to his disciples, saying: 'Take this bread and eat. This is my body which is given to you. Whenever you eat, remember me.'

And after supper, he took the cup of blessing, gave thanks to God,
And gave it to each of his disciples in turn, saying to them:
'Take this and drink. This is my life which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of all.
Whenever you drink, remember me.'

In this simple meal, we see the full blossom of Jesus' life, lived boldly and given freely. Nothing could stop his sharing of himself. Not even death could prevent love's fruit.
And so, we proclaim the mystery of our faith, singing:

Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again!
Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again! MV 204

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer VU p.910

**Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory is yours, God most holy,
now and forever.**

*Amen, amen, O Holy One! Hosanna and Amen! Amen, amen,
O Holy One, Hosanna and Amen* MV 205

When we share the bread together, we remember that Jesus was strongest and most powerful in his weakness and in his most vulnerable moments. This loaf is the bread of life (*Bread is broken.*)

When we fill this cup, we remember the common cup and the abundant blessings that have been entrusted to us. This is the cup of blessings. (*Juice is poured.*)

The gifts of God for the People of God.
Thanks be to God.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

Communion elements of bread cubes and rice crackers are shared today with tongs; juice is served in separate glasses. Please make your way to one of the serving stations at the front of the sanctuary, by way of a centre aisle. Receive the elements—stay for as long as you wish and then return to your seat by an outside aisle.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, thank you for all the ways you nourish and replenish our lives! For time spent with others at this table, for the life and teachings of your Son, and for your hope that grows daily in our hearts—thank you! Today and always, may we follow in the Way of Jesus, sowing seeds of grace—in deep, bold, and daring ways so that all Creation might be nourished by your love. All of this we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen!