



UNITED METHODISTS

OF GREATER NEW JERSEY

Graceful Conversations – Worship Guide

Opening Worship

Welcome

Call to Worship

O God, you are the gathering one

Who calls us into community with each other to love and work, to support and heal.

You are the gathering one

Who calls us into community with all people; to bring justice and hope, freedom and truth.

You are the gathering one

Who calls us into community with the whole creation; to live in harmony, to cherish and renew.

Let us worship the God who makes us one.

Opening Song

Welcome (Worship and Song #3152)

Call to Reconciliation, Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Pardon -

LITURGIST: We will walk together for a while, but we have also crossed to the other side of the road. We will talk of sharing a feast, but there have been invitations which we were unwilling to extend. We will dream of a new heaven and a new earth, but we have also loved and coveted the ways and days of old. Therefore, as we gather together, let us empty ourselves of all which burdens us and welcome the One who holds our future. Please join me as we pray,

Steadfast God, we confess that we are so busy putting up walls between ourselves and others, we cannot see the home you are building for all of us. We spend so much time noting the differences between us and others, while you are embracing everyone as your child. We run to welcome those who look, talk, and act like us, and you throw open your doors to the stranger, the alien, in our midst.

Forgive us, Holy God. By your grace, help us to see the household you are building for all people: there are no plastic protectors on the furniture; there are no rooms that are off-limits; and even the smallest child is welcome to sit at the big peoples' Table and be fed by your grace. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our peace, our hope, our Lord, our Savior.

(Silent Prayers may be offered)



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LITURGIST: Do you remember? At one time, you were without Christ; you were the stranger, the outsider, the alien. But now, in Christ, you have been brought home, living in God's household of hope and peace.

God's covenant with us is everlasting; God's steadfast love is forever; God's forgiveness makes all of us new and whole. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Centering Song

In Christ, there is no East or West (UMH #548)

Message

Anointing

Invite two persons from each table to pass to the altar; one to pick up the item to be used as talking piece (facilitators) and another one to bring the candle from the table, to lit with Christ candle in the altar and bring back to the table. Then, people would be invited to anoint each other as a sign of the covenant to holy conferencing.

Closing Song

Somos Uno en Cristo (TFWS 2229) – English and Spanish

Gathering Time, After Lunch

Song – Amazing Grace v. 1, 2, 3, 6

Prayers of the People

LITURGIST: Let us pray for the Church and for the world. After a moment of silent prayer and reflection, our unison response will be, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

LITURGIST: Creator God, you made us in your own image. Look with compassion on the whole human family, and give us compassion for the whole human family. Let us pray to the Lord:

(Silent prayer)

Lord, hear our prayer.

LITURGIST: Redeemer God, we pray for our churches. Fill them with truth and grace. Where they are in need, provide for them. Let us pray to the Lord:

(Silent prayer)

Lord, hear our prayer.



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LITURGIST: Sustainer God, Giver of Life, we are created to become whole in You. Awaken in each of us your compassion and love. For the transformation of every human heart, let us pray to the Lord:

(Silent prayer)

Lord, hear our prayer.

LITURGIST: Almighty God, You sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself. May your Spirit awaken in every community a hunger and thirst for unity in You. Let us pray to the Lord:

(Silent prayer)

Lord, hear our prayer.

Closing Worship

Song – I Need You to Survive

Communion

Closing prayer (unison)-

Loving God, we have heard your call to live as one body. We thank you for your Son, the head of the body. We praise you for your Spirit, who works to make us one.

Now as we leave to worship you in our work, fellowship, and leisure, we pray for the grace to live together in harmony. We pray for imagination to find ways to strengthen our unity in Christ.

We also pray for courage to carry out these commitments in a spirit of joy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Sending Hymn

They'll Know We are Christians by Our Love

Blessing