

70th ANNIVERSARY

OF WOMEN'S ORDINATION

IN THE METHODIST TRADITION



General Commission
on the Status and
Role of Women

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Liturgical Resource in Celebration of 70 Years of Women’s Ordination

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Forward

Long before any church body formally recognized their call, women shaped the life of Methodism with courage, devotion, and prophetic voice. From the earliest days of the movement, women like Sarah Crosby and Mary Bosanquet Fletcher had the courage to preach the Gospel to crowds. Bosanquet Fletcher would be the first Methodist woman to defend women's right to preach when she wrote John Wesley in 1771: *"I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher, yet some have an extraordinary call to it, and woe be to them if they obey it not."* With this rationale of "extraordinary call," John Wesley began to formally license women to preach.

While women's right to preach did not live much beyond John Wesley's lifetime, women continued to follow a call to ministry as missionaries, class leaders, and exhorters. Within larger American Methodism, Jarena Lee, Sojourner Truth, Phoebe Palmer, and Anna Howard Shaw – just to name a handful – nurtured communities of faith, preached the good news, and opened pathways for those who would follow them.

Yet the journey toward formal recognition of their ministry within the institutional Church was long and hard-won. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, women in Methodist traditions received licenses to preach, served as missionaries in distant lands, and pursued theological education—even as they encountered resistance and barriers to full clergy rights. Within The United Methodist Tradition, ordination rights were granted at different times. The earliest rights were given by the General Conferences of the Methodist Protestant, who ordained Helenor Davisson in 1866 and the United Brethren who ordained Ella Niswonger in 1889.

However, rights, once granted, can be taken away. As denominations merged, ordination of women were stripped away. When the Methodist Protestant merged with the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1939 to form The Methodist Church, their historic ordination of women was removed. The same happened when the United Brethren merged with the Evangelical Association in 1946 to create the Evangelical United Brethren. This reversal stands as a warning to us all to continue to support women in the pulpit, the pew, and the world.

A pivotal moment came in 1956, when the General Conference of The Methodist Church granted women full clergy rights, a decision that opened the doors to full ordination in ways that had been denied for generations. Maud Keister Jensen became the first woman to receive these rights in that landmark year, and in the decades that followed, women have continued to

expand their leadership in every sphere of the Church's life.

Since then, United Methodists across the globe have witnessed women breaking new ground—serving as pastors, superintendents, bishops, and leaders in every council and agency of the Church. Their ministries testify to the truth that God calls without regard to gender and equips all who respond with gifts for the work of Christ's service.

As we celebrate seventy years of women's ordination, we give thanks for the faithful witness of those who have gone before and for the many women whose ministries continue to enrich and transform the United Methodist Church today. With gratitude for the past and hope for the future, may we continue to affirm the full participation of all God's children in the life and mission of the Church, trusting that the Holy Spirit will lead us into ever greater faithfulness and inclusivity in the years ahead.

Dr. Ashley Boggan, General Secretary, General Commission on Archives and History

Opening Prayers

Prayer I

Korean

자비로우시며 정의로우신 하나님,
여성에게도 목회와 섬김의 길을 열어 주신 은총에 감사를 드립니다.
모든 성별, 모든 나이, 모든 사람에게 주신 당신의 부르심을 기억하게 하시고,
차별 없이, 침묵을 강요받지 않으며,
서로의 은사를 기쁨으로 인정하는 교회를 이루게 하소서.
함께 일하고, 함께 배우고, 함께 변화하는 공동체로
우리 모두를 새롭게 하소서.
예수 그리스도의 이름으로 기도합니다. 아멘.

English

Gracious and justice-seeking God,
we give thanks for the gift of ministry opened to women and all whom You call. Let us
remember that Your Spirit equips people of every gender, every age, and every identity, so that
no one is silenced, excluded, or diminished. Shape us into a Church that celebrates each
person's gifts with joy, equity, and shared purpose. Renew us as a community that learns
together, serves together, and transforms together. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Rev. Hyewon "Sophia" Carno, GCSRW Board Member, Associate Pastor of First United Methodist
Church (FUMC) at the Chicago Temple, Northern Illinois Annual Conference*

Prayer II

Gracious and Loving God, from the beginning you created us in your image and called us to be
people of love and peace. We remember our foremothers; their perseverance, persistence, and
patience. We remember your calling on our lives to love our neighbor, to serve all God's
creation, and to work for justice. With your wisdom and strength we are rooted in our faith so
that we may "hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering" (Hebrews 10:23) for
you, our God, are faithful. Amen.

*Rev. Stephanie Rice, Associate Pastor at Glendale First United Methodist Church,
California-Pacific Annual Conference*

Prayer III

Norwegian

Herre,

Vi takker deg for at du ser alle, at du kaller til tjeneste uavhengig av hvem vi er i andres øyne. Vi takker deg for tjenesten til alle kvinner – for deres gode forbilder – de vi lærer å kjenne i Bibelen og de vi møter på vår veg. Takk for deres villighet til å tjene deg.

Vi ber om at du fortsatt kaller kvinner til tjeneste, må du gi dem du kaller styrke til å si ja til kallet, gå ut i tjeneste for deg, og gjøre verden litt bedre for menneskene de møter, så de kan møte deg som sin Herre og Frelser.

La oss alle fortsatt oppdage din storhet, kjærlighet, omsorg og omtanke i ditt ord og gå ut i hverdagen å leve ditt budskap, være håpet for et annet menneske. I ditt navn vi ber. Amen

English

Lord,

We thank you that you see everyone, that you call people to service regardless of who we are in the eyes of others.

We thank you for the ministry of all women—for their good examples—those we come to know in the Bible and those we meet along our way.

Thank you for their willingness to serve you.

We pray that you will continue to call women into service. Grant those whom you call the strength to say yes to the calling, to go out in service to you, and to make the world a little better for the people they meet, so that they may come to know you as their Lord and Savior.

Help us all to continue discovering your greatness, love, care, and compassion in your Word, and to go out into our daily lives to live your message, to be hope for another person.

In your name we pray. Amen.

Rev. Helen Byholt Lovelace, GCSRW Board Member, Norway Annual Conference

Prayer IV

God of transforming love,

From the seasons and tides we learn that you delight in change. In the color and movement of butterflies and children we discover that change is encoded into creation, into our bodies.

Radiant One, your heart calls us to change.

Giver of life, guide our moving, our becoming, our unfolding,

As we grow and bloom into our fullness, full of grace, driven by joy, bursting with love, into the mystery of our making and into the image of Christ,

The One who leads us into transformation, of our bodies, our hearts, our world. Amen!

*Rev. Andromeda Woodworth, Pastor of Neighborhood Church ATL,
North Georgia Annual Conference*

Calls to Worship

Call to Worship I

Leader: Hesaketvmese (Giver of Breath- Muscogee Creek), Chihowa (God - Choctaw), we come to this space to honor and recognize who you are in our lives.

Response: Help us to see and feel your presence as we hear your call to fulfill our duties as your Disciples. As we gather, unite our hearts in purpose so that our actions reflect your love in every step of our journey.

Leader: We acknowledge the lands we walk upon and the waters that give us life each day.

Response: Help us to be good stewards over the lands, waters, and those you entrust us with.

Leader: We carry the words of wisdom and inspirations of our ancestors who shared your message of grace, love and hope.

Response: Let us lead with compassion, offering hope to those we serve in our homes, churches and communities. May our stories of Jesus inspire others to seek and worship you.

Leader: We thank you for the changing of the seasons to remind us that in our walk of life there will be changes we too will go through as women, as daughters and as mothers.

Response: Support us during our trials, whisper words of comfort and assurance, so we may know that all will be well. Let us hold tightly to your everlasting love, drawing strength from your presence.

Leader: As we give life and breath to our homes, nurture our relationships and guide the next generation – whether as mothers, mentors, or caregivers – we commit ourselves to supporting and uplifting those who will come after us. United in purpose, we pledge to foster growth, wisdom, and hope for the future.

Response: Together, we will nurture the seeds of tomorrow, guiding future generations.

Leader: We will live fully in our identity, culture, and traditions, for these are the gifts that shape who we are. You have given us the breath of life, and we honor that gift by embracing all that makes us unique.

Response: You have breathed life into us and taught us to walk with purpose – serving others with empathy, kindness, and courage. Help us to carry this spirit into every moment, so our journey may inspire healing in our communities.

Leader: There will be those who walk in your light and those who walk in darkness. We can connect to both because of the wisdom and guidance you have supplied us.

Response: As Moses carried your staff of strength & wisdom to lead your children, we will lean upon our ancestor's teachings for your strength and wisdom to be a beacon for us and generations to come.

Leader: We will carry your words of life through every breath, every deed, and every thought.

Response: We will discipline ourselves so our studies and prayers are aligned with you, Our Creator.

All: Together, we carry your spirit— guiding and uplifting those who have lost their way, so that each may discover their path of hope, for this is the calling we embrace.

*Rev. Sunrise Ross, New Hope Indian UMC, Oklahoma Missionary Indian Conference (OIMC) and
Rev. Kim McKinney, Kullichito UMC, OIMC*

Call to Worship II

Inspired by the Songs of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) and Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10)

Leader: Today we remember the songs of faithful and courageous women, like Mary and Hannah. These are songs of praise, courage, and hope.

People: We raise our voices with them to praise God's goodness. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: "Our souls praise the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior."

People: God has been kind to the humble and the faithful. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: "Our hearts rejoice in the Lord; our God gives us strength."

People: We rejoice in the victory God gives us when we live by faith and trust. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: As the people of God, you are called to serve in the "Imago Dei".

People: Called to protect life, uphold its sacredness, and serve with courage and compassion. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: Like Mary and Hannah, you are called to boldly speak the truth and firmly stand against systems, norms and structures that cause harm and are unjust.

People: O God, give us prophetic voices to declare your justice and righteousness. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: You, like Mary and Hannah, are called to participate in God's mission of setting people and all of creation free from violence, oppression, and injustices.

People: Give us the power to be instruments of Your liberating grace. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: You are called to do sacred tasks for peace, justice, and equality, just like Mary and Hannah.

People: God, let your kin-dom come on earth as it is in heaven. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: Like Mary and Hannah, you are sent to sing out hope and freedom, proclaiming liberation for the people, the land and all of creation.

People: May our witness lead us on, and may our hope endure. (sound of chime/bell)

Leader: And we will keep singing with our words, our faith, and our witness.

People: Until all of life that God has promised is fulfilled and shared. (sound of chime/bell)

Jennifer Ferariza-Meneses, GCSRW Board Member, Executive Secretary, Board of Women's Work, Philippines Regional Conference of The United Methodist Church

Affirmation of Faith

Leader: Despite the witness of Scripture and early Church tradition, we know that too often we have failed to recognize the Divinity of Christ in women.

Therefore, today, let us as the Church affirm:

**All: We believe God, our Divine Creator, is mothering us,
cradling us in infinite grace and love.**

We believe, like Eve, we are partners with humanity and creation.

We believe, like Deborah, we are gifted with Holy Wisdom as we seek God's guidance.

We believe, like Tamar, we are much more than the worst things done to us.

We believe, like Esther, we are called to step out in faith, taking risks for the good of others.

We believe, like Ruth, we are meant to love others selflessly.

We believe, like Mary, we can bring to life Divine hope for the world.

We believe, like the woman caught in adultery, we are forgiven.

We believe, like Martha and Mary, we are invited to be disciples of Jesus.

**We believe, like Mary Magdalene, we are called to proclaim the Good News of resurrection,
no matter how unbelievable.**

We believe, like Lydia, we are gifted with resources meant to be generously shared.

**We see the Divine's goodness, courage, faithfulness, and resilience reflected in women
throughout Scripture and in our world today.**

We believe we are called to follow their lead.

Amen.

Rev. Stephanie York Arnold, General Secretary,

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

Prayers of the People

Prayer I

But the midwives Shiphrah and the other Puah, feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. (Ex 1: 17)

Holy God of Resistant Life,

Like your servants Shiphrah and Puah, we are called to usher in life in our communities, in our congregations, and in our world, not because it is a role assigned to us by gender but rather because we are committed to following the example of Jesus, who came that we may have life and have it more abundantly.

Help your people, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to resist evil, oppression, and all the systems that continually try to rob Your beloved creation of the joy of life, and may we be brave to choose to obey you rather than any earthly power that destroys the dignity of all humanity.

It is in the life-giving name of Jesus that we pray,
Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Lydia E. Muñoz, Executive Director, El Plan for Hispanic Latine Ministry of the UMC,
A Ministry Partner of GCORR*

Prayer II

French

Prière pastorale pour les femmes, inspirée de Prov. 14,1b ; 18,22

Off. : Seigneur, souviens-toi des femmes du monde entier. Donne-leur la force de te servir efficacement, afin qu'elles soient une source de bonheur pour tous, pour ta gloire. Seigneur, tu as donné à tous la mission d'aller et de faire de toutes les nations tes disciples. Les pasteures ont, elles aussi, leur part dans cette mission. Par cette prière, nous venons implorer ta présence dans la vie de toutes les pasteures qui ont consacré leur vie à te servir.

All. : Seigneur, écoute-nous et exauce-nous.

Off. : Nous prions particulièrement pour les femmes appelées à assumer de grandes responsabilités dans notre Église Méthodiste-Unie : les présidentes des agences, les ministres, celles qui sont appelées à servir comme Evêques, Surintendantes ou Pasteures, et celles qui exercent d'autres responsabilités dans l'Église. Donne-leur, Seigneur, la sagesse de

bâtir l'amour et la paix dans notre Église Méthodiste-Unie et dans la société, d'y établir ton Royaume sur la terre, afin qu'il y ait de la place pour tous, quelles que soient nos différences.

All. : Seigneur, écoute notre prière.

Off. : Nous prions pour toutes les femmes travailleuses, exerçant un métier quelconque, et pour les femmes ménagères. Seigneur, fais en sorte qu'elles apportent le bonheur et la joie de vivre dans leurs environnements respectifs.

All. : Seigneur, écoute notre prière.

English

Pastoral Prayer for Women inspired by Prov. 14:1b; 18:22*

Lord, remember the women throughout the world. Grant them the strength to serve you faithfully and make them a source of blessing and joy for all, to the glory of your name.

Lord, you have given to all the mission to go forth and make disciples of all nations; your women pastors also share in this sacred calling.

Through this prayer, we implore your holy presence in the lives of all women pastors who have dedicated themselves to your service. Lord, in your mercy

All: hear our prayers.

We pray especially for the women who are called to assume positions of great responsibility in our United Methodist Church: the Presidents of our agencies, the Ministers, those whom you have called to serve as Bishops, Superintendents, or Pastors, and all who bear Leadership within the Church.

Grant unto them, O Lord, the wisdom to nurture love and peace within our United Methodist Church and throughout society. Establish your kingdom upon the earth, that there may be room for all, regardless of our differences. Lord, in your mercy

All: hear our prayers.

We pray for all women, working in any profession or calling, Lord. Ensure that they receive dignity, meaning, and joy in their labors. Lord, in your mercy

All: hear our prayers.

Angel Tshindj, GCSRW Board Member, Staff at Pension Office in Charge of Social Welfare for Retired Pastors and Widows in South Congo and Zambia Episcopal Area, President of Women Adulte Mont NEBO, Church Administrative Council, South Congo Annual Conference

Prayer III

Leader: Deliver us, O God, from the sins that best us in our time.

From cowardice and anxiety,

From impatience and discouragement,

From lack of trust when night surrounds us.

Response: Deliver us, O God; and make strong our faith.

Leader: From want of kindness and of charity,

From evil thoughts and conversation,

From the fires of suspicion, ill will, and hate,

Response: Deliver us, O God; and increase our love.

Leader: From prejudice and false sentiment,

From arrogance about our race, our country or our class,

From the blasphemy of bitterness toward our fellow creatures made in Thine own image,

Response: Deliver us, O God; and deepen our humility.

Leader: From compromise through love or ease of comfort,

From insincerity in thought or word or work,

From loving ourselves more than we have loved Thy Kingdom,

Response: Deliver us, O God; and enlarge our devotion to Thee.

All: In the name of the Strong Deliverer, our Lord Christ, we pray. Amen.

Dr. Georgia Harkness (1943); The Glory of God: Poems and Prayers for Devotional Use,

"Deliver Us, O God"

Offertory Prayers

Prayer I

Gracious and everlasting God, from whom every good and perfect gift descends, we give you thanks for the faithful witness of women who, in every generation, have answered your call with courage, wisdom, and holy obedience.

As we offer these gifts of bread and wine, of tithes and offerings, of lives and labors, receive them as signs of our gratitude and instruments of your grace. Bless the ministries of women and all whom you have called, that your church may be strengthened, your justice proclaimed, and your love made known in every place.

Use what we bring, O Lord, for the healing of the world, the lifting of the oppressed, and the building of your kingdom, until that day when all your children rejoice together in the fullness of your promise. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Rev. Kelli Hitchman-Craig, Director of Leadership Development and Community Engagement,
GCSRW, Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference*

Prayer II

Most Holy Lord, we come before you this day to offer our humble thanks. We are grateful for your call on the lives of women through the ages, for those who have laid their souls bare to you and your will. Without them, our lives would lack a sense of richness beyond compare.

Receive these tithes and offerings, transforming them into the nourishment we need to carry on, the strength that we need to move mountains, and the peace that we need to continue making disciples of all women and all people.

Bless these gifts and multiply them for your usefulness. Extend them far beyond where we think that they will reach, for you know the true impact of that which is freely given. All these things we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Rev. Katrena King, Director of Monitoring and Resource Development, GCSRW,
Louisiana Annual Conference*

Prayers of Confession & Assurance of Pardon

Confession I

Leader: God of every generation, you have called women to speak, teach, shepherd, prophesy, and serve your world.

Too often though, your Church has closed its pulpits, silenced its daughters, and questioned the anointing you placed on their lives.

All: We confess that we have inherited, and at times participated, in systems that diminish the voices of women, disregard their Leadership, and deny their God-given gifts. We have mistaken patriarchy for holiness, and tradition for truth. Forgive us, O God.

Leader: We name the pain of erasure and acknowledge the sermons that we're never preached, the calls to witness that were never answered, the wisdom that was never heard, and the flavor of your grace that was never celebrated because women were told to wait, or be quiet, or go elsewhere.

All: We repent for every way we have dishonored your image by limiting who can lead in your name. We repent for our complicity in silencing the prophets you have sent in skirts, collars, heels, robes, and lipstick. We turn toward your justice with open hands and humbled hearts.

Leader: Let us in the silence of our hearts, confess our sins to God (moment of silent confession).

Leader: Hear the good news: The same God who called Miriam to sing, Deborah to judge, Mary to bear the Incarnation, and the women at the tomb to preach resurrection, is the God who forgives, restores, and sends us still.

All:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

In the Spirit, we are empowered.

In the Church, we rise together.

Leader: Thanks be to God for seventy years of ordained women and for the Holy Spirit who refuses to be silenced.

All: Amen.

Rev. Dr. Andrea Byer-Thomas, COSROW Chairperson, Florida Annual Conference

Confession II (for women)

Holy One, whose breath moves through every woman you have called, we come with honesty about the wounds we have carried and the wounds we have caused.

We confess that, at times, we have been shaped by systems that pit women against one another, reward competition over collaboration, and teach scarcity instead of shared abundance. Some of us have absorbed these patterns, and in our own fear or insecurity, we have placed stumbling blocks in the paths of other women.

We name the moments when we doubted another woman's calling, withheld support or questioned her Leadership. We name the times when we echoed patriarchal messages rather than disrupting them, when we protected our own positions and participated in nepotism and other forms of divisiveness, instead of widening the table for someone else or other models of womanhood.

We grieve the harm done through our silence, gatekeeping, envy, and the unspoken belief that only a few of us could rise.

Forgive us, O God.

Heal the fractures among us.

Reform our hearts and renew our minds so that the ministries of your daughters may flourish without constraint.

(Silent reflection)

Hear the good news:

The God who called Tamar to truth,

Rahab to courage,

Ruth to loyalty,



Bathsheba to wisdom,
and Mary to bear the Christ,
is the same God who restores, reconciles, and redirects.

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

In the Spirit, we are freed from rivalries that diminish us.

**In community, we rise again, committed to shaping a future
where every woman's ministry is honored, supported, and strengthened.**

Thanks be to God!

Amen.

Rev. Dr. Andrea Byer-Thomas, COSROW Chairperson, Florida Annual Conference

Great Thanksgivings

Great Thanksgiving I

German

Gott sei mit euch.

Und auch mit dir.

Erhebt eure Herzen.

Wir erheben sie zu Gott.

Lasst uns Gott Dank sagen.

Es ist würdig und recht, Lob und Dank darzubringen.

Es ist würdig und gut und es macht Freude, dir immer und überall Dank zu sagen, du schöpferischer Gott. Du hast das Universum gemacht und die Erde in ihrer Schönheit, Vielfalt und Verletzlichkeit geschaffen. Du hast Millionen von Arten geformt. Wir Menschen sind Teil deiner Schöpfung, und wir alle sind als dein Bild gemacht. Wir, die Menschen aus vielen Ethnien und Kulturen, unterschiedlichen Geschlechts, mit vielen Sprachen und Traditionen, wir sind deine geliebten Kinder und dazu da, in Gemeinschaft mit dir, miteinander und mit der ganzen Schöpfung zu leben.

Darum preisen wir dich, Gott, der du viele Namen trägst, mit der ganzen Schöpfung, mit deinem Volk hier auf Erden und allen himmlischen Heerscharen:

Heilig, heilig, heilig,

bist du Gott und prächtig.

Himmel und Erde sind erfüllt von deiner Herrlichkeit.

Hosianna in der Höhe.

Heilig ist der, der da kommt im Namen des Herrn.

Hosianna in der Höhe.

Heilig bist du, Gott, und gepriesen sei dein Sohn Jesus Christus. Er brachte den Armen die gute Nachricht, heilte Kranke, segnete Kinder, teilte sein Leben mit Johanna, Petrus, Maria Madgalena, Andreas, Susanna, Johannes, Martha, Lazarus, Maria und vielen anderen. Mit seinem Leben, seinem Tod und seiner Auferstehung schuf er eine geliebte und liebende Gemeinschaft und inspirierte uns, für Gerechtigkeit für die Menschheit und die ganze Schöpfung einzutreten. Wir erinnern uns an Jesus und begeben uns in Gedanken wieder und wieder dahin, wo Jesus im Kreis seiner Vertrauten die letzte Mahlzeit vor seinem Tod am Kreuz einnahm. Der Tisch war gedeckt. Der Raum war erfüllt mit Lachen und Weinen, mit Hoffen und Bangen.

Jesus nahm das Brot, dankte, brach es, gab es denen, die mit ihm waren und sagte: „Das ist mein Leib, den ich für euch dahingebe. Nehmt und esst. Tut dies zu meinem Gedächtnis.“

Nach dem Essen nahm er den Becher mit Wein, dankte, und gab ihn den Seinen und sagte: „Das ist mein Kelch des neuen Bundes, der für euch und für viele zu eurem Heil gegeben ist. Trinkt dies und erinnert euch an mich.“

Und so geben wir uns dir mit Dank und Anbetung hin, Gott, indem wir uns an deine großen Taten in Christus Jesus erinnern. Wir tun dies in Einheit mit Christus, der sich für uns hingab, und verkünden das Geheimnis des Glaubens:

Christus ist gestorben, Christus ist auferstanden, Christus wird wiederkommen.

Gieße deinen Heiligen Geist über uns aus, die wir hier versammelt sind, und über diese Gaben, damit das Brot uns zum Brot des Lebens und der Kelch uns zum Kelch des Heils wird.

Begeistere uns, damit wir uns in deine neue Schöpfung hineinversetzen und daran mitwirken, Jünger und Jüngerinnen zu formen, die die Welt verändern. Befähige uns, Hass und Feindschaft zu überwinden, indem wir kühn lieben, Gerechtigkeit wiederherzustellen, indem wir freudig dienen, und Christus nachzuahmen, indem wir mutig vorgehen. Heile uns, damit wir, deine Kirche, als dein Werkzeug heilend, aufbauend und Frieden stiftend tätig sind. So erwarten wir dein Reich, damit es auf Erden wie im Himmel komme.

Im Heiligen Geist mach uns eins mit Christus, eins miteinander und eins im Dienst für die Welt, bis Christus kommt und wir an seinem himmlischen Festmahl teilnehmen.

Durch deinen Sohn, Jesus Christus, im Heiligen Geist sei dir, unser väterlicher und mütterlicher Gott, Ruhm und Ehre jetzt und allezeit.

English

The Lord be with you.

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.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, creating God. You made the universe and the earth in all its beauty, diversity and vulnerability. You created millions of species. We human beings are part of your creation, and each of us is made in your image. We, people of many ethnicities, cultures, genders, languages, traditions, we are all your beloved children, called to mirror your beauty in communion with Godself, with one another and with all creation.

And so, with all creation, with all your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise you, God of many names:

**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.**

Holy are you, God, and blessed is your son Jesus Christ. He proclaimed good news to the poor, healed the sick, blessed the children, shared his life with Joanna, Peter, Mary Magdalene, Andrew, Suzanna, John, Martha, Lazarus, Mary and many others. Through his life, death and resurrection, he created beloved and loving community and inspired us to strive for justice for humankind and all creation. Remembering Jesus, we reimagine time and again his last meal with his confidants before he died on the cross. The table was set. The room was filled with laughter and tears, with hope and anxiety.

Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to those who were with him, saying, "This is my body, which I give for you. Take and eat. Do this to remember me."

After supper, he took a cup of wine, blessed it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my cup of the new covenant, given for you and for many for your salvation. Drink this and remember me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Christ Jesus, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body of Christ, so that we may be for the world the body of Christ.

Inspire us to imagine your new creation and to embody it as we go and form disciples for the transformation of the world. Enable us to overcome hate and hostility by loving boldly, to restore justice by serving joyfully, and to follow Christ by leading courageously. Heal us, so that we, your church, serve as your instruments of healing, restoration and peace, as we anticipate your kin-dom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, our Parent, now and forever.

*Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, Council of Bishops Co-Ecumenical Officer,
2012-2014 President of the Council of Bishops,
German Regional Conference*

Great Thanksgiving II

The Lord be with you

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.

It is right and our sacred duty to give thanks to you God Almighty, for you created humanity, and blessed us with a variety of gifts, and ordered us to “dress and keep” the Creation. In time, we finally recognized the equality of women that you intended from the beginning, especially within the movement formed by John Wesley affirmed what you had intended– the ordination and full inclusion of women. We thank you God that the people called “Methodists” moved forward into this prevenient reality – the Leadership of women.

Through the years you have called women to be partners in the redemption and sanctification of your people...Eve, Sarah, Deborah, Hannah, Ruth, Rahab, Mary of Nazareth, and Mary of Magdala, who was the first Apostle sent with the message: “Go and tell my brethren that I go before them into Galilee...”



Jesus still goes ahead of us, preparing the way for women to continue to carry the mantle of Leadership into the kin-dom, in this new age. Our work in the name of your Son Jesus Christ is set out before us as we continue in the pattern set by Anna Howard Shaw, Maude Jensen, Sallie Crenshaw, Marjorie Swank Matthews, Leontine T.C. Kelly, Sharon Brown Christopher, Minerva G. Carcaño, Violet Fisher, Rosemarie Wenner , and all of the women before us and among us.

As we gather to celebrate the ordination of women in your Church, we give praise and thanks to you, gracious and merciful God for the journey, and the vision yet to be realized. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**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**

Blessed is the One anointed, and blessed are they who follow in his footsteps. When Jesus lived among us, he often gathered his disciples, including women, and broke bread, sharing in fellowship and friendship.

Even as he was betrayed by one of his friends, on that night he took bread, broke it and shared it among them, saying, “This is my body which is broken and given for you and for the whole world. Do this in remembrance of me...”

When supper was over, he took the Cup, gave thanks and shared it with them saying, “This is the cup of the new covenant, my blood shed for you and the sins of the whole world. As often as you drink it, remember me...”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup.* Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. Send your Spirit amongst us now. Bless these gifts and anoint us all who share this meal; send us out to spread your word of Love and Blessing to all the people. May we become one in purpose and one in mission.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus

Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

The Rev. Dr. Laurel Scott, Wakefield Grace UMC, New York Annual Conference

Benedictions

Benediction I (Numbers 6:24-26 NRSVUE)

For the past 70 years, God has blessed and kept ordained women as they answered calls to ministry doing the work of the Lord. Likewise, may God bless you and keep you.

God has been gracious to women ordained in ministry for the last 70 years. Even in the darkest times, God's face has shined down upon them. Likewise, may God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

For 70 years, through times of turbulence and uncertainty, God has turned God's face towards ordained women and has given them a sense of peace. Likewise, may God's face turn toward you and give you peace.

Go forth in the name of the Creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit! Amen!

*Deaconess Celeste Eubanks, Director, Candler Center for Christian Leadership,
Candler School of Theology – Emory University*

Benediction II (Responsive)

Minister: May the God who calls beyond customs and constraint bless you.

People: We receive God's blessing.

Minister: May Christ, born of Mary's womb, who strengthens the lowly and heals the broken, go before you.

People: We follow Christ's way.

Minister: May the Spirit, who anoints prophets, pastors, and all who speak justice, dwell richly within you.

People: We go in the Spirit's power.

All: We go forth with courage, with praise, and with faith that dares— to love, to lead, and to transform the world, in the name of the Triune God. Amen.

Benediction III (Tagalog)

Hango sa Lucas 1:46-55

Humayo kayo taglay ang pagpapala at makapangyarihang hininga ng Diyos na ating Manlilikha;

Humayo kayo taglay ang banayad na pag-ibig ni Hesus, nagmula sa sinapupunan ni Maria at isinakatuparan ang awit ng kanyang ina- nagbigay lakas sa mga api, nagpagaling sa mga maysakit at nakipisan sa mga aba;

Humayo kayo sa gabay ng Espiritu Santo ang ating katuwang at kasama, ang apoy ng katarungan na tutulong sa ating ibagsak ang mga palalo na nasa mga luklukan, itaas ang mga nasa abang kalagayan at tulungang pasaganahin ang buhay ng mga kapus-palad;

Tulad ng awit ni Maria --

Humayo kayo taglay ang kanyang tapang, papuri at nagpupumiglas na pananampalataya! Amen.

English

Inspired by Luke 1:46-55

Go forth, bearing the blessing and power of God, our Creator;

Go forth, bearing the gentle love of Jesus, born of Mary's womb, who fulfilled his mother's song—strengthening the oppressed, healing the sick, and dwelling among the lowly;

Go forth, guided by the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Companion—the fire of justice who helps us cast down the mighty from their thrones, lift up those in humble estate, and bring abundance to the lives of the poor.

Like the song of Mary—

Go forth, bearing her courage, her praise, and her liberating faith!

Benediction IV (Tagalog)

Humayo kayo nang may pagkilalang ang danas ng inyong katawan ang pinakaunang dalangin at liturhiyang inyong inialay,

Nawa'y ang hanging humihinga sa inyong dibdib ay ang siya ring Espiritung umihip sa ibabaw ng kawalan,

At nawa'y ang inyong mga tinig, na hinabi ng hirap at ng mga awit, Ay maging tambuling magwawaksi sa katahimikan ng mga napapanatag sa mga nakasanayang karahasan.

English

Go forth remembering that the lived experience of your body is the very first prayer and liturgy you ever offered;

May the breath that moves within your chest be the same Spirit that swept over the void,

And may your voices, woven from struggle and song, be the clarion call that shatters the silence of those grown comfortable with accustomed violence.

Benediction V (Tagalog)

Humayo ka taglay ang karunungan ng sinapupunan—

Ang banal na kakayahang pasanin ang bigat ng mga bagay na hindi pa isinisilang,

Ang maghirap at magtiis sa hatinggabi ng pagluluksa ng mundo,

At umire hanggang sa ang liwanag ng katarungan ay sumilay.

Nawa’y ang iyong mga kamay, na ngayon ay itinalaga,

Ay manatiling magaspang dahil sa paggawa ng may pag-ibig, at manatiling malambot dahil sa langis ng awa.

Nawa’y maging matulin ang iyong mga paa patungo sa mga nasa laylayan ng lipunan,

At ang iyong gulugod ay maging mistulang haligi ng bawat tahanang iyong tutuluyan,

Isang sandigan para sa mga pagod na sasandig sa iyong kalakasan.

English

Go forth carrying the wisdom of the womb—

That holy capacity to bear the weight of things not yet born,

To endure and labor through the midnight of the world’s mourning,

And to push until the light of justice dawns.

May your hands, now consecrated,

Remain calloused by the labor of love, and remain softened by the oil of mercy.

May your feet be swift toward those at the fringes of society,
And may your spine be like the pillar of every home you dwell in,
A sanctuary for the weary who will lean upon your strength.

*Rev. Carleen Nomorosa, Ordained Deacon, Quezon City Philippines Annual Conference East; Field
Education Officer, Union Theological Seminary - Philippines*

Benediction VI

May the God who called Miriam to sing, Deborah to lead, Mary to bear the Christ, and women in every age to preach, teach, and shepherd, strengthen you in every good work and word.

May Christ, who welcomed women as disciples, entrusted them with the first proclamation of the resurrection, and anointed them for ministry, go before you in courage, beside you in compassion, and within you in holy fire.

May the Holy Spirit, who pours out gifts without distinction and calls whom she will, empower you to serve with wisdom, justice, and joy, until all are welcomed and all are free.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Companion, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

For Use in Services of Commissioning and Ordination

Short Recognition

Placement: After the *Proclamation of the Word* or immediately before the *Recognition of Orders*

Leader: Today the Church pauses to recognize the seventieth anniversary of women being granted full clergy rights in the Methodist tradition.

In 1956, the Church affirmed that God's call to ordained ministry is not limited by gender, but is grounded in baptism, giftedness, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

We give thanks for the women who answered that call with courage, for those who persevered through resistance and inequity, and for those who continue to serve the church with faithfulness and joy.

People: Thanks be to God.

Litany of Thanksgiving and Repentance

Placement: Immediately before the *Recognition of Orders*

Leader: Holy God, seventy years ago, your Church took a step toward faithfulness by granting women full clergy rights.

People: We give thanks for the movement of your Spirit.

Leader: We thank you for women who discerned and answered a call before recognition was granted, and for those who trusted your voice when the path was uncertain.

People: We honor their courage and faith.

Leader: We confess that equality in word has not always meant equality in practice; that barriers, bias, and silence have persisted in your church.

People: Forgive us and renew us for faithful witness.

Leader: For the gifts women bring to licensed and ordained ministry — preaching and teaching, leadership and care —

People: We rejoice in your grace at work among us.

Leader: For those discerning a call today, and for the church still being formed by your Spirit,

People: Lead us in justice, humility, and hope.

All: Amen.

Blessing of Witness

Placement: After the *Recognition of Orders* or before the *Sending Forth*

Leader: Gracious and Eternal God,

We celebrate the gift of these newly licensed, commissioned, or ordained clergy, whose call and commitment to set-apart ministry is affirmed in our midst. We also celebrate this significant year in the life of the United Methodist Church for its historic witness to the diversity of callings and gifts of faithful leaders in our midst.

For the women who have been able to serve as elders in full connection for 70 years after the 1956 General Conference approved legislation included women in all provisions of the Discipline that refer to ordained ministry,

People: Thank you, Lord.

Leader: For the women whose unique call aligned with the Order of Deacons established 30 years ago,

People: Thank you, Lord.

Leader: For the women who serve communities with faithfulness, flexibility, and deep love as Local Pastors and Associate Members,

People: Thank you, Lord.

Leader: Strengthen all whom you have called to ministry.

Make us ever mindful of the ways you continue leading the church into newer expressions of leadership in the years to come. And continue to shape your church into a faithful sign of your reconciling love for the world.

People: Amen.

*Rev. Meg Lassiat, Executive Director of Ministry, General Board of Higher Education & Ministry &
Rev. Amie Stewart, Senior Manager of Conference Relations,
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry*

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In compiling this, we are especially mindful of all the women who have come before us: the pioneers, troublemakers, visionaries, and those who refused to take “no” for an answer. We are grateful for the women who boldly followed God’s call long before others recognized its worth or legitimacy. It is only because of *their* work that we are where we are today. And of course, there is one group who we owe a great debt of gratitude to— the ones who advocated, organized, prayed for, and supported the ministries of women... the lay women of the Methodist tradition. We thank you.

Lastly, it has been a great joy to work with other agencies of the UMC to bring this resource to life! To The General Board of Global Ministries, who has always championed the missions of and for women, thank you. The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women would not exist without the work of GBGM’s Women’s Division. Additionally, for their friendship and collaboration, we want to thank United Women in Faith.

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In 70 years we have come a long way! As we celebrate this occasion, we also want to acknowledge that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the ordination of deacons. Thank you for living into your callings! In these years much has changed, but the fire and faithfulness of United Methodist women in ministry has not. We cherish all that has been, and look forward with hope for all that will be.