

## The presentation of the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence

*Pastor or leader:*

Members of the household of God, we gather today to honor a woman who has given faithful service to the church and has lead others into a deeper understanding of the faith and service to Jesus Christ.

The award we present this morning is called the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence, named for the mother of John and Charles Wesley, the founders of the Methodist movement.

Susanna married 26-year-old Samuel Wesley at age 19 and the couple had 19 children, nine of whom died in infancy.

Susanna's rectory home was burned down twice and Samuel once left her and the children for over a year because of a minor dispute.

On two occasions, Samuel spent time in jail due to his inability to pay his bills. The lack of money was a continual struggle for Susanna.

Yet, Susanna made certain her children were well educated and trained in the classics and the faith. At one point, while her husband was in London, some 250 people attended her afternoon Sunday school class.

Susanna was a remarkable woman.

The woman we honor this morning possesses many of the same characteristics of Susanna Wesley. She has a distinctive intellect, a nurturing spirit, unwavering devotion and perseverance in the faith. She has served Jesus Christ and the United Methodist Church in a manner similar to the mother of Methodism.

<Name>, would you please come forward.

<Name> on behalf of your friends and family and the entire congregation, I present you the Susanna Wesley Award of Excellence.

While the award honors you, funds raised for the award support the world-wide ministries of the General Commission on United Methodist Men, global efforts to eliminate hunger through Rise against Hunger and the Society of St. Andrew, the Upper Room Living Prayer Line and scouting ministries.

<Name> While we honor you this morning, you honor us with your love, devotion and your service. You are a woman with many spiritual gifts and we thank you for utilizing those gifts in the service of your family, your church and your community.

Let us pray:

While we have many gifts for which we are grateful, O Lord, the treasure for which we are most grateful this morning is <Name>. We thank you for providing her example of Christian service and compassion. The honor we give her this day scarcely touches the gifts she has given us. Amen.