

Great Thanksgiving
(Bridges)

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.

We thank You for the call You have placed upon our lives
as You seek to build bridges between Your church and every part of society.
We know that the divisions experienced in our church and nation break Your heart
and that You are busy tearing down every dividing wall
and finding ways to span every divide.
Your love has provided a sure foundation.
Your creativity is able to imagine fresh ways to make connections.
You are aware of the sacrifice that will be necessary to rebuild trust between factions.
Thank You for using us to build understanding.
Thank You for using us to deliver Your acts of compassion.
May You receive all the gratitude and praise from those of us here on earth,
as well as from the host of heaven as we join together as one voice to worship Your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed are all who come in Your name.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are most holy and Jesus is Your presence among us building bridges:
between young and old,
between insiders and outsiders,
between the wealthy and the exploited,
between women and men.
We are all becoming one in Christ Jesus.

To build a bridge between themselves and others,
Jesus showed his surpassing greatness by becoming the servant of all.
Taking a basin and towel to wash the feet of others.
By loving others we are invited build bridges too.

To build a bridge between themselves and others,
Jesus took the ritual bread of Passover,
the bread used to remind the people of the plight of others.
Jesus broke this bread with prayers of thanksgiving, sharing it with everyone, saying:

“Take and eat. This is my body broken and given for you.”
By loving others we are invited to build bridges too.

To build a bridge between themselves and others,
Jesus took the ritual cup of Passover,
the wine used to remind the people of the price of hardened hearts.
Jesus took the ritual cup with prayers of thanksgiving, sharing it with everyone, saying:
“Drink with me, everyone, from this the cup of my blood,
poured out as a libation honoring God’s eternal covenant of grace,
a promise to you and to all that your sins are forgiven.”
By loving others we are invited to build bridges too.

We do want to build bridges through Jesus Christ.
We want to mend the breach and help connect lives,
just like Jesus.
So with this declaration of faith in the mystery of Christ we wholeheartedly proclaim:

**Christ has died,
Christ has risen,
Christ will come again!**

Unity Planner, Division Spanner,
pour Yourself upon these gifts of bread and wine
allow them to be for all who partake the body and blood of Christ
a celebration of our one Lord, one faith, one hope and one baptism.

Unity Planner, Division Spanner,
pour Yourself upon the gift of our lives:
our brokenness and our divisions, our hopes and dreams,
and allow them to become for others the church,
the sacrificial body and the faithful bride of Christ,
a celebration of our one Lord, one faith, one hope and one baptism.

Unity Planner, Division Spanner,
bless the order of Deacon in the United Methodist Church.
Use their ministries as You work to heal division,
and do the work of reconciliation in the world.
Use their lives to build bridges that bring hope to the lives of those struggling
and encouragement to those who are working to make this world a better place for all.

With hope,
With joy,
With a renewed vision,
We join our lives with yours, O Christ.
We are filled with the Holy Spirit and

inspired by the Creator of all good things.
To You, Blessed Trinity be all glory, honor and praise,
now and always. Amen.

Now as those ready to build bridges with Christ, let us pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it was in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**