

Great Thanksgiving
(Dance of Ministry)

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.

You are the One who is never alone.

You are the One who does nothing on Your own.

You are always engaged with your partners in the dance of ministry.

In Sacred Community You play with our chaos in imaginative ways.

Nothing and no one is ever wasted,

all have a sacred place and an irreplaceable part to play in your inclusive designs.

What a privilege to feel the touch of your hand as you guide us in this dance of ministry.

As you lead us, we follow to do far more than we ever dreamed possible.

Out of what seems like nothing at all, you make everything that we have seen,
and even those things not yet revealed to our understanding.

Out of what we would reject, you have called us to embrace.

What we have no time for, you call us to spend time we never knew we had.

What has seemed impossible to us, is just a glimpse of your miraculous glory.

So we join your dance of ministry: joining friend and enemy, the oppressor and the oppressed,
the neglected and the privileged, all across the earth.

We join your dance of ministry: joining with the angels and archangels, and all the saints of
heaven to praise your name and say with one voice:

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

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed are they that come in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are the one who is never alone.

You do everything in community, and Jesus is part of Your community.

Jesus aligned himself with the needs presented by the people around him.

Jesus cast out their demons, helping them feel safe.

Jesus fed the hungers of body and soul.

Jesus touched the untouchable to bring healing and hope.

Jesus talked to the shunned with compassion and feeling.

Jesus cared for the child of a woman who was a royal pain.

Jesus had dinner with Zacheaus, who was never the same.

Jesus integrated into his ministry the skills of fishermen and tax collectors;
the abilities of freedom fighters and shepherds;
the insights of farmers, and ordinary women;
and the needs of mothers and children, and people with vastly differing abilities.
Jesus even sought to include rich young rulers, military men,
and the religious who come to him only in secret.

Jesus engaged in the dance of ministry with all who would accept his invitation to dance.
With a towel and basin, Jesus knelt before each disciple
and invited them into the dance of ministry.
Some hesitated, but Jesus always encouraged them to dance.

During a community celebration
With joy Jesus took the bread, a symbol of God's solidarity with their suffering.
Inviting all who gathered: "Take and eat with me, this my body given for you."
This is worth remembering.

After the communal feast,
With joy Jesus took the cup, a symbol of God's willingness to sacrifice.
Inviting all who gathered: "Drink with me all of you, for this the offering of my blood,
poured out in testimony to my faith in God's eternal covenant of forgiveness, reconciling the
world."
This is worth remembering.

All that Jesus has done for us and for the whole community is worth remembering.
And we seek to align our lives with God's vision not only for the blessing of our lives, but the
lives of all the creatures of earth.
With our public witness we choose to integrate this mystery of faith into our lives and ministry:

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

Dream of Justice, Vision of Grace
Align and integrate these gifts of bread and wine
so that at the core of our lives they become for us the body and blood of Christ,
Redemptive community.

Dream of Justice, Vision of Grace
align and integrate our lives into your Dance of ministry
so that we might become for the world, the church, the sacrificial body and compassionate bride
of Christ, Redemptive community.

Dream of Justice, Vision of Grace
dance with us in ministry,
lead us with grace and beauty as we partner together.
Help us include more
Help us to envision more

Help us to be more of who you need and desire us to be.

For Christ, with Christ, through Christ,
In fellowship with the Holy Spirit,
Inspired, encouraged, and recreated by You Creator and lover of all.
That the dance of our ministries may bring you honor, glory and praise throughout the world,
now and always.

Amen.

Now as a unified community of faith let us pray with the one who leads us, Jesus Christ:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is 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.**