

Service of Holy Communion
(Word, Service, Compassion, Justice)
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Invitation:

One: Deacons, you are invited to this table not only to receive its grace, but to share it with your words, your service, your compassion and as an act of restorative justice. Come and share in this rich bounty of divine love.

Confession:

All: We know that we do not deserve the honor of being at your table. We come humbled by your gracious invitation. We are aware that no one can claim a right to serve at your table. It is a gift of purest grace to share in this ministry with you. We are not even worthy of assisting in cleaning up the crumbs after this service. It is you who have called us to speak the words of grace, to provide this service even to our enemies, to be a tangible expression of your compassion poured out upon all, to live out before the world your restoring and healing justice expressed so perfectly in this holy meal. Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus! Amen.

Words of Assurance:

One: Only God is good. Only Christ is worthy. Only the Holy Spirit is pure. But by the gift of God you are forgiven of all your sins, for Christ has taken away the sins of the world.

All: Only God is good. Only Christ is worthy. Only the Holy Spirit is pure. But by the gift of God you are forgiven of all your sins, for Christ has taken away the sins of the world. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving:

One: God has called you and equipt you.

All: We are all one in Christ Jesus.

One: God hears the cries of the needy and the oppressed.

All: Hear we are, send us.

One: We are so grateful that God choose to use our lives.

All: We dance for joy as we roll up our sleeves to serve.

One: We rejoice in your call upon our lives.

At times we cannot believe that you choose to call us.

For all of our lives, we have heard tales of ministry from those who have gone before us.

We have read their stories from our Bibles.

We have heard their stories from our Christian tradition.

Our reason has revealed to us the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our world.

We have experienced you working through our live as you seek to transform our world.

Our hearts are stirred and filled with joy.

We are surrounded by a host of witnesses, earthly and heavenly.

All: Help us declare your words of grace boldly.

**Empower us to serve others graciously.
Break our hearts with your compassion for the souls of others.
Use our lives to bring your transforming justice to all.**

One: We can only do this with Christ strengthening us.
Christ is our example and his spirit is our guide.
Christ was not just talk, he was the word made flesh through love.
Jesus came not to be served but to serve, becoming a willing slave to us all for our salvation.

Christ's compassion was given freely to the stranger,
to children,
to the excluded, the shunned, and the despised.
Jesus showed compassion to his enemies,
to those who beat him, tortured him, and eventually lynched him.
Christ's justice was not punitive, nor vindictive, but forgiving.
It was a justice that brought life in all of its abundance to every soul.

On that last night when others were arguing for their own greatness,
Jesus left his honors and got down on his knees.
Christ became a servant to his betrayer.
Christ was determined to serve the one who would deny their friendship three times.
Jesus served those who would stand with him, as well as those who would flee into the night.

This is how Christ calls us to serve.

On that last night, Jesus celebrated the Passover.
With thanksgiving Jesus took the bread set aside to remember God's compassion on Israel.

Breaking the bread, Jesus gave it to all saying:
"Take and share, all of you, for this is my body, broken and given for you."
This is how Christ calls us to serve.

On that last night, Jesus celebrated the Passover.
With thanksgiving Jesus took the wine set aside to remember
the justice God provided Israel.
Pouring the wine, Jesus gave it to all saying:
"Take and share, all of you, for this is the cup of my blood,
poured out for you, in celebration of God's eternal covenant of grace,
guaranteeing not only the forgiveness of all of your sins,
but the sins of all the world."
This is how Christ calls us to serve.

Christ calls us to live lives of word, service, compassion and justice
expressed in this faith that we boldly declare:
All: Christ died for all.

**Christ arose for all.
Christ will come again for us all.**

One: Broken and Fiery Heart,
pour out your grace upon these gifts of bread and wine,
enabling them to become for us the body and blood of Christ,
strangely warming our souls.

Broken and Fiery Heart,
pour out your grace upon us,
our gifts and our graces,
our success and our failure,
enabling them to become for the world, your church,
the living body and true bride of Christ,
strangely warming their souls.

Broken and Fiery Heart,
pour out your grace upon this gathering of deacons of the Mountain Sky Conference.
Reignite your fire in their souls,
Energize your calling upon their lives,
Widen the territory of their mission in the world.

**All: Hear our prayer as we pray in Jesus name,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
for the glory of the creator and the maker of us all,
that they may receive all worship and honor, now and always. Amen.**

One: Now let us pray as Jesus instructed us:

**All: Divine Compassion and Justice, holy are all your ways.
Use us to serve all the creatures of earth, as you do from heaven.
Give to us all we needs so we have plenty to share.
Forgive us when we fail you just as we forgive all who have failed us.
Keep us from going astray, but lead us it the way that is helpful to others.
For you call us to be joyful, peaceful and kind, always. Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

**All: Thank you for the honor of sharing with you in this holy mystery found in Christ.
It has warmed our hearts and renewed our call. Now send us out as your disciples
to share your word faithfully, to be in service to every creature, to be your source of
compassion to all who are struggling, and stand with you as you work your creative
restorative justice in the world. Amen.**