

Great Thanksgiving
(*Nonviolence*)

Receive God's shalom.

We desire it with all our hearts.

Share God's shalom.

We will share it freely with all we meet.

To love God we must love our enemies.

We shall pray to be Your blessing and to meet their need.

You are love.

You reconcile and create a peace that is beyond our human understanding.

You are the One who breaks down every dividing wall between us.

You invite us to live as Your children and to embrace all as family.

You view our existence as one single human body,

that is fearfully and wondrously made.

Each of us an essential part of the one whole.

You lead us along the path of nonviolence.

We cannot take vengeance in Your Name.

We are instructed to not return evil with evil,
but only to bless and not curse.

How we treat others, is our authentic worship of You.

What we say in anger to our enemy is the praise You hear from our lips.

Our response to those who have harmed us is our true thanksgiving for all You have done for us.

Forgive us for the times You did not find love in our hearts.

Forgive us for the times our behavior did not bring You joy.

Forgive us for the times our response to others did not show forth Your peace for all.

Forgive us for the times You were disappointed by our impatience.

Forgive us for the times You did not find kindness in our reactions to others.

Forgive us for the times when our desires were not full of Your goodness.

Forgive us for the times we were unfaithful to Your gospel of forgiveness and mercy.

Forgive us for the times our answers have not overflowed with Your gentleness.

Forgive us for the times we did not show the self-control that You have come to expect from all your children.

We kneel before You, with every creature under heaven, both friend and foe to beg for your mercy:

We do not come to this Your table,

believing for one second in our own worthiness,

but believing fully in the generosity of Your divine mercies.

We do not have the right to even clean up under Your table,

but again in Your mercy You invite us to serve before You.

We beg to be extended the honor of entering into this holy communion with You,

with our enemy, with those with whom we disagree, with those who have wounded us and caused us pain; so that we might learn to love and live as You desire; that we might become more like Jesus in every way.

You want us to live lives of love and non-violence and Jesus showed us the way. Your holy army sang of “Peace on earth and good will” on the night of Christ’s birth, they did not come to destroy those sent by King Herod to take the life of the blessed babe. The focus of Christ was the healing of the sick, the feeding of the hungry, and the deliverance of those oppressed by evil. When people attempted to kill him, Jesus did not retaliate. Jesus did not harm, nor did Jesus call down fire like his disciples asked. Jesus showed us that You love people, all people, every person, even those no one else thought they should.

Jesus taught that Your blessing rested upon the peacemakers. Jesus taught us to turn the other cheek and to put away our swords, warning that who live by the sword will die by those same swords. Jesus showed us how to respond to violence: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

The way of peace to Christ was the way of a joyful servant. As we wash our hands we remember how Jesus, left honor and pride behind, to knee with towel and basin to wash the feet of all. You invite us to remember and love just as we have seen You love through Jesus.

The way of peace to Christ was the way of grateful sacrifice. This was demonstrated as Jesus took the bread recalling the struggle of those in bondage, with an expression of gratitude, breaking the bread and offering it to everyone: “Take and eat, this is my body given for you.” You invite us to remember and love just as we have seen You love through Jesus.

The way of peace to Christ was the way of patient trust. This was demonstrated as Jesus took the cup that recalled recurring cycles of violence, with an expression of gratitude, offering the cup to everyone: “Drink with me, each of you, this is the cup of my blood poured out as an offering, a testimony to the validity of God’s eternal promise of forgiveness to you and to the whole world.” You invite us to remember and love just as we have seen You love through Jesus. We do remember and we want to love like Jesus. We want to live like Jesus and show mercy like Jesus. We want to live lives that are redemptive and for You to transform the world with our lives.

This is why we embrace this Holy Mystery that we choose to proclaim with our words and our lives:

**In Christ we have died.
Through Christ we have risen to new life.
With our lives Christ comes again in glory.**

Dependable Calm, Promised Peace
Reveal in these gifts of bread and wine
to our lives the body and blood of Christ
the Prince of Peace.

Dependable Calm, Promised Peace
Reveal in the gift of our lives
to the world around us, Your true church,
the life giving body and redeemed bride of Christ
the Prince of Peace.

Dependable Calm, Unknown Peace
heal those who are filled with terror,
those who are wounded and feel the need to strike back.
Help them to relax into the assurance of Your care,
the depth of Your understanding, and Your hope guaranteed.
Take away our violent ways and redirect them with Your grace
provided through this Your sacrifice for us in Jesus Christ.

We seek the way of Peace found in Jesus.
We seek the truth of Peace revealed in the Holy Spirit.
We seek the way of Peace created in Your Divine Imagination, Almighty God,
as it was in the beginning, as it ever will and shall be Your peace without end. Amen.

Now as our pledge of peace let us pray as Christ, saying: