

Great Thanksgiving  
*(Seeking the Next Margin)*

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.**

Thank You for starting with our own hearts.

Thank You for loving us just as we are.

Thank You for Your patience and Your mercy upon our souls.

We praise You for moving our hearts to seek with You the next margin.

Thank You for loving those around us, just where they are.

Thank You for being patient and merciful to those dear to our lives.

We praise You for moving our hearts to seek with You the next margin.

Thank You for loving those so different from us, just where they are.

Thank You for being patient and merciful to those who are so strange to us.

We praise You for moving our hearts to seek with You the next margin.

Thank You for loving those we fear,

who we do not see,

those who make us angry, just where they are.

Thank You for being patient and merciful to those we misunderstand,  
have sought to avoid,

We praise You for moving our hearts to seek with You the next margin.

There are no limits to Your grace.

There are no barriers that You will not cross.

There are no walls You will not tear down.

There is nothing that You will not transcend to bring salvation to all the world.

Every voice is welcome to join Your hallelujah choir.

Every instrument has a place in Your symphony of praise.

Every creature is encouraged to sing their hearts out to declare Your praise.

All are invited to join with us, in heaven and on earth to proclaim in Your unending praise,  
as we say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the  
highest.**

You are the most holy, and Jesus continues to expand the margins of sacred space.

Jesus was sent to the children of Israel, but that was only the beginning.  
Jesus expanded the margins of Your grace to include publicans and sinners to the amazement of the holy.  
Jesus expanded the margins of Your grace to include the unclean and the demon possessed to the shock of the holy.  
Jesus expanded the margins of Your grace to include Samaritans and gentiles.  
In Christ's eyes there just wasn't any real difference between insiders and outsiders, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, even our gender was no barrier to full inclusion.  
Jesus wanted all to experience life in all of its abundance, not just the chosen few.

As our teacher and Lord,  
Jesus pushed the margins of acceptability.  
Choosing to humble himself,  
and with a towel and basin stooped to wash feet.  
Remember to seek for the next margin to cross.

Taking the bread of Passover,  
a reminder that there are still those struggling at the margins of life,  
Jesus gave thanks, and broke it:  
"Take and eat, this is my body given for you."  
Remember to seek for the next margin to cross.

Taking the last cup of Passover wine,  
a reminder that there are still those seeking hope at the margins of life,  
Jesus gave thanks, and shared it:  
"Drink with me all of you, this cup of my blood  
poured out to demonstrate the power of God's eternal covenant of grace,  
that forgives not only your sins, but even those stranded at the margins of life."  
Remember to seek for the next margin to cross.

We want to be like Jesus, always ready to cross the line for the sake of others.  
We want to be like Jesus, always ready to expand the territory of God's favor.  
We want to be like Jesus, so we claim this holy mystery as our very own:

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

Expansive Grace, Inclusive Embrace  
accept these gifts of bread and wine  
allow them to become for us the body and blood of the marginalized Christ.  
Expansive Grace, Inclusive Embrace  
accept the gift of our lives, our open hearts and minds  
allow them to be for others, Your church, the body and bride of the marginalized Christ.

Expansive Grace, Inclusive Embrace  
keep us seeking with You the next margin.  
Open our eyes to see those who are being excluded by the church, but not by Your heart.

Open our ears to recognize the cries of those ignored by the church, but not by Your compassion.  
Open our lives and free us  
to cross into uncharted territory to seek out those You are dying to show Your love to through us.

We know that at the margins, You, O Christ are glorified.  
We know that at the margins, You, Most Holy Spirit are honored.  
We know that at the margins, You who so loved the world gave, so that all might have  
everlasting life,  
to You be all honor glory and praise, now and forever. Amen.

Now 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 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.**

*(Prayer after Communion)*

Thank You for the honor of sharing in this holy mystery of Jesus Christ.  
When we were lost, out on the margins of life, Christ sought us, found us, and saved us.  
We who were nobody, have been embraced as the children of God. So send us out with Your  
blessing to share with others out on the margins, that they too may know that You see them, You  
hear them and You love them as Your own. Only then can we rejoice together in Your presence,  
always. Amen.