

Great Thanksgiving
(Speaking for the Voiceless)

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.

Yours is the heart felt cry for justice.

Yours are the enveloping arms of compassion.

You hear the faintest cry of the needy.

You see clearly into the rankest corners of humanity, the oppression of the forgotten.

You respond generously to those in want of shelter, food, and clean water.

We are Your response.

We are the help You send in answer to prayer.

Out of our loaves and fishes, You choose to feed the multitude.

With our voices, You give voice to the voiceless.

Into our arms You intrust Your most vulnerable children for a blessing.

We are not alone, and we are gathering others to join in our worship and our service.

Together we join in the songs of praise and the dances of joy.

Together we proclaim that through our lives,

You are able to accomplish more than we even imagined.

We join not only with the earthly congregation but we join with all of heaven to proclaim:

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 holy and Jesus is the fullest expression of that holiness.

Your holiness is expressed by Your willingness to give.

Jesus emptied himself, giving everything for others.

Jesus was counted among the lowest of society:

not ashamed to call social outcasts his friends;

not hesitant to embrace those who were viewed as hopelessly unclean;

open to treating community outsiders as those worthy of divine mercy and grace.

Jesus was willing to use his privilege to give his voice to the voiceless.

Jesus embraced with dignity the tasks of the lowest servant.

With thanksgiving, knelt and washed the feet of those who knew they were unworthy.

This is our calling to follow Christ in service.

Jesus remembering that there were still precious souls weighed down by oppression,
Took with thanksgiving the memorial bread and broke it.
Providing it for everyone, said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you."
This is our calling to follow Christ in service.

Jesus remembering that there were still precious souls longing for the hope of salvation,
Took with thanksgiving the memorial cup.
Providing it for everyone, said, "Drink with me,
this is the cup of my blood poured out in witness to the efficacy of God's eternal covenant of
grace to wipe away your sins and the sins of the whole world."
This is our calling to follow Christ in service.

We have answered Christ's call to follow.
We are going out to the highways and the byways
To the last to be chosen, the last to be helped, the last to be called by name to share with them the
Christ we have found alive in this holy mystery that we loudly proclaim:

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

Call of Safety, Whisper of Comfort,
breathe freely upon these gifts of bread and wine,
allow them to become for us the body and blood of Christ,
food for the journey.

Call of Safety, Whisper of Comfort,
breathe freely upon the gift of our lives, our prayers, our presence, our humble service,
allow them to become for a world in need, your church,
the sacrificial body, and compassionate bride of Christ,
food for the journey.

Call of Safety, Whisper of Comfort,
use the order of deacons to be your voice for those robbed of their voice;
to be a wall of protective grace to those who are vulnerable to injustice and oppression;
to be a safe harbor for all those caught up in the raging storms of life.
Use our lives to bring honor to the name of Jesus.
Use our lives to show forth the power of the Holy Spirit.
Use our lives with such creativity that the God of Love will be glorified throughout all the earth.
Use our lives so that others will desire to join us in our endless worship around Your throne.
Amen.

Now as those called of God and as Deacons of the United Methodist Church let us pray in the
way taught to us by Christ:

**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)

Lord, thank you for giving us this opportunity to share in this holiest mystery of our faith. It has strengthened our call, and our desire to serve as Your voice, Your hands, Your presence in the lives of others. So send us out with your blessing, and use us in ways that we allow others to receive your touch, your healing grace, your listening ear, and their call to join with you in healing our world. We ask as servant of Jesus Christ. Amen.