

Great Thanksgiving

HYMN #617: I Come with Joy

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: 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.

O God, you created the universe with a shout of joy,
a word of delight and a big bang.

You made gravity holes and antimatter,
swirling electrons and dancing quarks,
shooting stars and sapphire blue planets.

You filled the ocean with clown fish and sharks,
with dolphins and killer whales.

You filled the air with doves and hawks, songbirds and hummingbirds.
You covered the land with shimmering aspen and weathered pine.

And You blessed all the creatures of the earth:
the bugs, snakes, lizards,
the lions, tigers, and bears,
the puppies and the hippos,
the zebras and the penguins.

And You blessed all the children of the earth
every shape and size,
every color and complexion,
every makeup and mood,
every style and substance.

But we, O God, preferred to go our own way. We messed things up.
We wanted to be in charge. We wanted to be in control.

We thought everything belonged to us.
We polluted the environment.
We destroyed each other.
We turned playgrounds into battlefields,
schoolyards into mine fields,
hospitals into death camps, and children into killers.

But God, you never gave up on us.
You never walked away or walked out.

You always honored your promises even when we broke ours.
You always welcomed us home with open arms and a warm heart
Even when our fists were clenched and our minds still closed.

When we walk through sorrow and chaos,
You are with us.

When we live through moments of war and acts of terror,
You walk with us.

When our homes are destroyed,
You help us build new homes and finally lead us home to you.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

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

One: In the right time, in the fullness of your time,
In the nick of time, you sent your Son to bring us back to life.
He opened a window into your new creation.
He showed us a vision of your way:

where every child has enough to eat,
and can sleep safely all through the night,

where every graveyard is a front porch of heaven,
where the untouchable and unlovable are given the seats of honor,

where tears of mourning become tears of laughter,
where grievous wrongs and horrid suffering are made right and fair,

where children hunt Easter eggs on playgrounds made from battlefields,
and where everyone is welcomed and loved.

In the dead ends of our lives, Jesus clears a way ahead.
In the dead spots of our relationships, Jesus speaks words of hope and renewal.
In the dead zones of our cities, Jesus calls forth a new kingdom.

When we are dead tired, Jesus picks us up and carried us to a place of rest.
When we are dead wrong, Jesus confronts us with the truth.
When we are dead last, Jesus tells us that he has won for us eternal life.

One: *And so, on the night which he gave himself up for us. Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Drink from this, all of you; this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, In remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the living presence of Christ that we be Christ's body for the world.

Renew our communion with all your saints, especially those who now live with you. Since you have refreshed our souls from the waters of life,

Help us refresh and renew others. Since you have given us strength for the journey, Help us to strengthen others on their journey.

**Send your Spirit to renew our faith and transform our souls
so that we may hear your music, work for justice, delight in heavenly food,
and strengthen one another in love and grace. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

"Jesus We Are Here" (Yesu Tawa Pano)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Eternal God,
we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.
Grant that in the strength of your Spirit
we may give ourselves for others,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

*Edited for 2020 Transitions Retreat (Greater Northwest Episcopal Area)
By Rev. David Valera*

The text of the Prayer of Great Thanksgiving began with a death. When a clergyperson, Katherine Gara, died of brain cancer in 2001, several friends wrote a Communion Liturgy that included remembrances of her and her theology. The Great Thanksgiving at her funeral became the foundation for the Memorial and Communion Service of the California Pacific Annual Conference. The liturgy was revised in 2002 because of 9/11 and was focused upon Easter themes. The liturgy was written by the Rev. Mark Wiley, the Rev. Preston Price, the Rev. Jan Wiley, and Marian Gill. Copyright ©2001, 2002 Mark Wiley. Reprinted with permission.

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