

Communion INSERT

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

May the God of new beginnings be with you.

And also with you.

People of light, offer your hearts to God.

We lift them to the One who comes, new hope and life cradled in loving hands.

People of the journey, sing glad praises to our God.

We come, for we have received the good news,

we have believed the Word, we are given joyful songs to sing.

When chaos thought there was no end, you began, Fullness of all time.

Your Word ran sprints through creation, scattering the seeds which sprang forth into fruit, flowers, mountains and molehills. Your Spirit sang songs of wonder and hope, that Breath which gave your children life.

We were as close to your heart as the blood which flows through ours, but the soft, insistent whispers of others grew louder and louder in our ears, and we ran off, letting the concerns of power, pride, and despair overwhelm us.

Time and again, every time you could, you sent your messengers to us, crying out in love and hope, 'return!' but we did not recognize them nor listen to their words.

So turning to the angels, you said, 'Watch!' as you sent Jesus to bring us home to you.

So, with those in every place, and with those from every time, we join our voices, singing to you:

Holy, holy, holy, God of every blessing.

All creation lavishes praise on you. Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who comes to live among us.

Hosanna in the highest!

You could have kept us scattered to the limits of loneliness, God of Wonder, but you sent Jesus, your Glory, to become the Gatherer of those who had wandered far from you.

Peering into the shadows of our lives, he is the Light which overcomes all our fears, our doubts, our worries.

Speaking into the hollows of our hearts, he is the Word who teaches us new songs of gratitude and awe.

Gathering the cross into his arms, he is the Deliverer who breaks the grip of greed and want on us, walking with us by the brooks of water, into the kingdom of life eternal.

As we begin this year with hope, we remember his promise to be with us always, even as we tell of that mystery we call faith:

**At the beginning of time, Christ was the Word of creation;
at the right time, Christ was the Word of redemption;
at the end of time, Christ will be the Word who brings us home.**

And in this time, in this place,

with these people, we come to your Table, Gatherer of your children.

The simple gifts we take for granted, the bread which has been a staple of life, the cup which refreshes us when we thirst,

you transform into imaginative grace, the Meal which is blessed by the presence of your Spirit of power and peace.

You bring us from every point on the compass - young and old, every beautiful colour, rich or poor welcoming that great parade of your children who come with outstretched hearts to receive every blessing imaginable.

And when our beginning has come to your fullness, when we come, our faces glowing with wonder, our voices ringing with the songs of freedom, we will gather around your Table in heaven, comfort and gladness our eternal inheritance from you,

God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

The Gifts of God for the People of God