

A Celebration of Ministry

Year C



This liturgy is written primarily for churches that are finishing one or more ministries, such as tending the church school for the year. However, with adaptation it can be used in other settings.

- ❑ Bring a *basket or baskets* labelled with a sign that reads "A Harvest of Ministry."
- ❑ Bring a *small card* and *pen* for each person. Consider bringing cards in shapes that reflect the theme of harvest, such as a piece of fruit or corn stalk.
- ❑ Set up a *room* with a circle of chairs and a worship table if this litany is to take place in a small group setting.
- ❑ Arrange to have someone create a *display* for the cards that are collected during the ritual.

PREPARE

Celebration ritual

Distribute the cards and pens as people enter.

Introduction

The following litany is based on chapter 1 of Paul's letter to the Philippians, which resounds with the joy of shared ministry. Paul refers to God's "good work" through the community and describes the results as a "harvest of righteousness."

LEADER: I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.

ALL: **I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.**

LEADER: And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine what is best,

ALL: **so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.**

Ritual

Invite those gathered to participate in a reflection on the "harvest" of recent ministries. Distribute cards and ask participants to write on their cards the name of a person or recent event in the life of the church that is associated with challenge, growth, joy, or transformation for them. Mention that the cards will be used in a display afterwards (optional).

If this is a small group setting, invite people to read their card aloud before placing it in the basket.

If this is a worship setting, invite people to read aloud their cards at the same time. Offer a simple statement such as, "Thanks be to God" in conclusion. Then pass around a basket to collect the cards. Place the basket(s) on the table as a sign of a fruitful ministry.

Consider saving these cards and using them later to create a display along with photographs, of the various ministries of the congregation.

Prayer

LEADER: O Holy One,
for steadfast love,
ALL: **we give thanks.**

LEADER: For the call to ministry,
ALL: **we give thanks.**

LEADER: For this community of servant leaders,
ALL: **we give thanks.**

LEADER: For a harvest of righteousness
greater than we asked for or imagined,
ALL: **we give you thanks and praise.**

LEADER: We rejoice together
for the good work being done
in and through the ministry we share
and we pray for bold blessing
on this work.

ALL: **Amen.**

