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## Sermon

*“Enabling All to Use Their Gifts in Mutual Service”*

*based on Romans 12:4–8, Exodus 3:9–12, 1 Corinthians 12:4–7*

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**::: ZERO :::**

*“Grace to you and PEACE from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

*1 Co 1:3. (NRSV)*

**::: Amen.**

**::: ONE :::**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Today, we have reached the last of our Mission  
Services...

After...

... **P**roclaiming the Good News of Christ.

... **E**ncouraging spiritual growth,  
through Bible-reading and prayer,

... **A**ccepting all-comers from all nations,

... **C**elebrating God and each other,

the theme today is *“**E**nabling All to Use Their  
Gifts in Mutual Service”*.

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∴ TWO ∴

Three texts we have heard earlier in our bible readings.

And—as a suggestion—I reckon it would be helpful if you kept your bulletin open on the page of the bible readings. So, you can always have a glimpse what my thoughts are referring to.

The three biblical texts, 2 from the Apostle Paul, they are later texts of our biblical heritage.

One from the book Exodus. A text with important meaning to the Israelites during the Babylonian exile.

Reminding them that their God is a God who will lead the captives into freedom.

So, right from very early to late texts in the bible, we hear about different aspects of God's mission, and the ministry of his followers, his children.

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**:: THREE ::**

In Romans 12 Paul uses this image of the body with many organs. All belong together. All are part of Christ's body.

Whenever we read about the body of Christ in Paul's writings we are pointed to the words which are spoken in the liturgy of the Holy Communion:

*<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

*1 Corinthians 11:23f*

So, imagine... When you receive this piece, your piece of bread from the one loaf of bread... it lets you experience that you are one part of this body.

All the pieces belong together, and you are one piece of the body of Christ.

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∴ **FOUR** ∴

Maybe we do not realize this important experience every time we celebrate communion.

But that's such an important message, experience, sign... although we are different, we are one in Christ.

That's why we, although it might look differently for each one of us, we are in mission together. Even more so... we are in mission as one!

Paul delivers a few examples of what the ministries of the different organs of the body can be.

It's like a list of things—surely not comprehensive—of typical ministries in the community of disciples.

God, in his grace, has given gift to everyone!

Maybe you are not sure yet what your 'begrace-ment' is, what your mission or your part in ministry is.

But it's a wonderful opportunity to try and find out today... and let yourself be inspired by our ministry fair.

A try to translate Paul's thoughts into our actual reality of Peace Church, into what we see as ministry, as our mission in the church and in the world.

So be prepared: God wants to call you to become part of his mission today. That's your great opportunity to come, see and give it a try.

### ::: FIVE :::

Now, right from the beginning of God's calling his disciples there has been an issue. A very human kind of issue:

*But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"*

*Exodus 3:11*

"Who am I", what a question this is.

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For Moses it may have meant, “How can you call me? I have murdered, I fled from Egypt. I am the wrong guy for this. I am not worthy to do this.”

And what does God do, what does he say? He says, “I will be with you”. This is for you and no one else.

The whole story in Exodus sounds a little bit like Moses has already settled for a life as shepherd of his father-in-law’s flock.

But God says, “there is more for you”. You will be my missionary. I have a mission and a ministry *for you*.”

### ::: SIX :::

So, hand to the heart... How is it for you?

Do you feel like, you’re the wrong?

Do you feel like you’re not worth it?

Do you feel like, ‘this is not mine’?

Do you feel like you don’t have time?

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Then you're the one to whom God says, "there is more for you". You will be my missionary. I have a mission and a ministry *for you*."

In other words: God says "I need you as a worker for my kin-dom. I need you here to support the life and the growth of my church. And I need you to be a messenger of my kin-dom to the world."

So, this day today is your chance to find out what your part as worker for God's kin-dom is. This is your chance to dive into the ministry fair and try...

You are gifted, You are worth it, and you are called, right here, right now.

### ::: SEVEN :::

A last glimpse we catch on 1 Corinthians 12:

*God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is*

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*given something to do that shows who God is:  
Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All  
kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit,  
and to all kinds of people!*

*1 Corinthians 12:4–7 (The Message)*

We might have organized a ministry fair today.  
Even the term might sound a little technical.

But this is not about advertising.

Today it is about the understanding that...  
You are a part of Christ's body. He has given  
everything for you—and you are worth it!

Today it is about the understanding that...  
You are a gifted by God through his Spirit to be  
a worker towards his kin-dom.

And, today it is about understanding that...  
you have a mission, in this church and you are  
needed so that together we are able to carry  
out the mission *of making disciples of Christ for  
the transformation of the world.*

Do not stand back, take your place and hear  
your call. You are a missionary of God's kin-  
dom.

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Be part of the journey and be part of wonderful community of the people on its way towards the all-radiant reality of God's kin-dom.

Today it is about the understanding that...  
You are a part of Christ's body. He has given everything for you—and you are worth it!

Find your place, take your place... it is yours.

::: Amen.