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The whole congregation of believers was united as one—one heart, one mind! They didn't even claim ownership of their own possessions. No one said, "That's mine; you can't have it." They shared everything. The apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Master Jesus, and grace was on all of them.
Acts 4:32-33 (MSG)

Recent stories coming from the behavior of churches, missionary and service organizations, governments, and ordinary folk in response to the needs of persons living in and fleeing from the war zones in Ukraine are humbling and inspiring to say the least. It is nothing less than selfless and sacrificial on all fronts from providing shelter, provisions, or hospitality. An overwhelming sense of almost universal solidarity has become ordinary as the numbers and distress of the Ukrainian population has grown exponentially. This, for me, is the best example of an Acts 4 testimonial in my lifetime. While I admit these are extraordinary circumstances requiring extraordinary responses, it has caused me to muse... "does it take a war to motivate and mobilize humanity to show solidarity and shared access to material resources?"

While this question is outside the scope of this writing, it does frame a conversation on how we demonstrate solidarity within and among our various congregations and collectives? One of my favorite memories as a church consultant occurred several years ago in West Virginia. The pastor and church leaders concluded that their stated mission was so far out of reach that it was defeating and disheartening. So, on a given Sunday they did the most radical thing I've ever witnessed in response to this unreachable mission—they gathered and convened a congregational meeting—voted to disband the church—departed the building and paraded around the outside of the church and *re-entered*, *re-convened*, and *reconstituted* the church with a fresh new mission and vision!

While the outcome was anything but predictable, it totally transformed that congregation from long held attitudes of possessiveness to a new sense of collective stewardship and gratitude. They celebrated and surrendered to an overwhelming realization that they were there simply to be the body of Christ with each other and within their community.

This was in 2000 and was for me a true Easter experience. Perhaps (theologically speaking) there is wisdom in the struggle to *let go and let God*. Perhaps congregations that have become imbedded with camps of control and competitiveness could benefit from a ritual of release and sharing. I cannot escape moralizing that as "people of the Chalice" we might benefit from taking a trip around the common table of shared sacrifice and spiritual nourishment represented in the cup and the loaf and leave there our tenacity for grabbing and holding so that we might take hold of that which in Christ is freely given and freely received—and in so doing becoming a people/congregation of *one heart and one mind*.