

Great Thanksgiving
(Manger)

Tonight we gather to remember:
how You, the greatest, became one of the least;
how You, the richest, became one of the poor;
how You, the most amazing, became so very normal.
Tonight we gather to remember:
how You, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth,
became a new born babe in their mother's arms.
Tonight we gather to remember:
how easy it was to have no room, and to chase You away.

Tonight we gather to remember,
Shepherds watching over their flocks by night,
Angels lighting up the sky with the glory of God,
and Immanuel, God with us as a babe in a manger.
Tonight we gather to remember,
why Jesus came,
how Jesus loved,
how Jesus sacrificed,
and to ponder the difference Jesus has made to our lives.
Jesus came to serve.
Jesus lived humbly among us.
Jesus did not turn anyone away.

Jesus came to be the bread of life.
With a joyful heart, broke the bread, sharing it with all saying:
"Take and eat, this is my body, given for you."
Tonight we gather to remember.

Jesus came to bring life in abundance.
With a joyful heart, took the cup of God's blessing, sharing it with all saying:
"Drink this with me, this is the cup of my blood,
poured out in testimony to God's eternal covenant of grace,
guaranteeing forgiveness for all the world."
Tonight we gather to remember.

Christmas Joy, Christmas Peace
touch these gifts of bread and wine,
allow them to become for our lives the body and blood of Christ
the babe in the manger.
Christmas Joy, Christmas Peace
touch these gifts of our lives, our hopes and dreams,
allow them to become for the world, Your Church, the living body and bride of Christ,
the babe in the manger.

Christmas Joy, Christmas Peace
move across our world and into each and every life.
Change the way we view each other:
Deepen our compassion,
Expand our empathy,
Widen our acceptance
that all might become aware of Your coming.

This we pray as we bow before Jesus the babe in the manger,
This we pray as we are filled with Your holy Christmas Spirit.
This we pray as we become Your new creation, Almighty and Loving God,
so that all the world might come and adore You, tonight and always. Amen.

Now let us pray as Jesus taught us saying:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

We thank You for giving us this opportunity to enter into this Your divine mystery. Through this little baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger, we have found hope, and help and full salvation. Now as You send us out this Christmas Eve, allow our lives to reflect Christ's hope, help and salvation for others to experience. We want all to join us in worshiping You to night and always. Amen.