

Great Thanksgiving
(*Stormy Calm*)

Let not your hearts be troubled.

But they are troubled and heavily burdened.

Don't be afraid.

But we are afraid and fear disaster.

Believe in me.

We do believe but please help our unbelief.

God of the whirl wind,
who invites us into the center of the storm,
calm our fainting hearts.
When our whole world seems to be crashing down
You promise to hold all the pieces together when we can't.
When our lives are filled with nothing but chaos,
you hover over all of it and become creative.
Only You have the ability to work all things for good,
even the deep muddy messes we find ourselves stuck in.
You allow us to wipe away our tears,
and find our smiles again.
You bring back to our memories,
blessed assurance, renewing our strength.
You cause us to laugh again, to praise Your name again,
to find the fullness of life again.
Thank You for caring for our troubled hearts.
Thank You for easing all our fears,
Thank You for giving us someone to believe in.

Hear us now as we sing Your praises with all the choirs of earth
and all the company of heaven, saying:

Sing joy to our Lord!
Strength in the Rock who saves us!
Thanks for God's presence!

God is our strength and our song
and in Christ has become our salvation.
The message of Christ's life is: "don't be afraid."
When oppression comes, "don't be afraid."
When the storms of life are raging, "don't be afraid."
When the unexpected comes your way, "don't be afraid."
We are not alone.
God sent Immanuel.
God is with us.
And if You, almighty God are for us, who in heaven or on earth can stand against us?

You will never forsake us, You who love the world so much that You gave us
Your only begotten Son to save us and give us the gift of eternal life.

Jesus loved us enough to humble himself,
and so willing to take the position of a slave
to wash this filthy world of its sins.

Jesus loved us enough that he embraced promise of the Passover bread,
the promise of hope for all those struggling with the burdens of life.
Jesus claimed the truth of this bread with thanksgiving, and shared its promise with all:
“Take and eat, this is my body broken and shared with you.”
Remember and find hope.

Jesus loved us enough that he embraced the promise of the Passover wine,
the promise of deliverance from all the plagues of this life.
Jesus claimed the truth of this wine with thanksgiving and shared its promise with all:
“Drink from this cup all of you, for it contains my blood, poured out in honor of God’s eternal
covenant of salvation, a promise of forgiveness to you and to the whole world.”
Remember and find hope.

We crave hope.
We crave light in our darkness.
We crave the strength promised to the weary.
This hope we find in the mystery of Christ,
and declare it with a grateful heart:

Christ died for us.
Christ arose for us.
Christ will come whenever he’s needed.

Stormy Calm, Assurance of Salvation
settle upon these gifts of bread and wine
allow them to be transformed for us into
the body and blood of Christ,
our hope and help in times of need.

Stormy Calm, Assurance of Salvation
settle upon the gift of our tears, our fears, and frustrations
allow them to be transformed into your church,
the healing body and steadfast bride of Christ,
our hope and help in times of need.

Stormy Calm, Assurance of Salvation
settle upon the lives of those who are troubled and afraid.
Make a way for them in their wilderness.
Send into their lives your ministering angels.

Open their teary eyes to see the glory of the Lord that surrounds them.
Assure them now that they will never be alone,
for they are in Christ, with Christ and of Christ.
They are filled with the power and loving presence of the Holy Spirit,
and they are embraced by the God who loves them, who will never leave nor forsake them.
Empower all to experience your peace that surpasses all understanding today, tomorrow and
forever more. Amen.

Now as those resting in the powerful arms of Jesus, let us pray with him:

**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 it is kingdom and the power and the glory, Forever. Amen.**

Prayer after communion:

Thank you for allowing us to rest in this your holy mystery found in Jesus Christ our Lord. We needed this communion. In it we have found hope, and peace. The calming presence of Christ has chased all our fears away. This gift has been so meaningful that we feel compelled to share its grace with others. Give us the words to share. Give to us your healing touch. Use our lives to help calm the raging storms in theirs. Use us to honor Christ. Amen.