Greetings to you in the name of Christ!

This past week I hosted my Dad and one of my brothers for a Thanksgiving meal. Since they were traveling a relatively significant distance, I did most of the cooking. And when deciding what to prepare, I ended up finding some new recipes to try out. I baked bread for the first time in my life and got creative with how I prepared the sweet potatoes. Normally, I wouldn’t try a new recipe when I have guests coming over, but I knew that my family would be understanding and supportive if one of these new foods ended up being unpalatable.

With everything in life, we need that same kind of loving, accepting, and supportive place to experiment, to try new things, to reason through new thoughts, or to ask new questions. In the same way that my Dad and brother offered that space for my cooking, the church can be the space that we are able to come and speak our questions, doubts, fears, and hopes. I pray that each of you feel as though this is a space in which you feel that you are able to voice your opinion, ask your question, and learn new things together. We serve a vast and complex God; because of this, there is always something new to discover. But discovery only happens when there is a space to be confused, a space to be enlightened, and a space to be wrong. What is critical for us in making that space is our commitment to treating one another with grace, understanding, and love, regardless of what questions, events, or emotions one another are working through.

As you go into this week, I pray that you feel safe in this space to come and bring your continuous prayers, your focused presence, your unique gifts, your faithful service, and your transformative witness!