

Thank you to **Michael Cross** for creating the Harvest Table today.

We are grateful to our **brass quintet** for pre-recording our service music this morning.  
Dan Kassteen and Anthony Limoncelli, trumpets; Larry Solowey, horn;  
Brad Williams, trombone; Aaron Tindall, tuba.

PRELUDE

*Contrapunctus, No. 1*

Johann Sebastian Bach

CALL to WORSHIP

One: For a cornucopia of grace and love that has brought us this far, *especially* this year.

**Many: For God's presence that wakes us up and gets us up.**

One: For gratitude that stirs in our hearts, we **name** our thanksgivings to God right now.  
*Please type in the comment section a person, a place, and a prayer you carry in your heart this Thanksgiving Sunday.*

One: For this spontaneous and sacred litany we have now crafted and created, we give thanks! We sing out for all Sarasota to hear.

**Many: Alleluia and Amen!**

OPENING HYMN:

*We Praise You, O God*

No. 420

**We praise You, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;  
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.  
We lay it before You, we kneel and adore you;  
we bless Your holy name, glad praises we sing.**

**We worship You, God of our mothers and fathers;  
through life's storm and tempest our guide You have been.  
When perils o'er take us, You never will forsake us,  
and with Your help, O God, in life's struggles we win.**

**With voices united our praises we offer,  
and gladly our song of thanksgiving we raise.  
Our sins now confessing, we pray for Your blessing;  
to You, our great Redeemer, forever be praised!**

OPENING PRAYER

How can we say, "Thank you," O God this year in a way that is heartfelt and honest? How do we gather our gratitude when so much of life still seems out-of-sync with what we called, "Normal," just a year ago? We are all trying to figure out how we do thanksgiving during a pandemic? In response, Holy One, You invite us to begin by noticing our breath, the simple rhythm of inhaling and exhaling. We open ourselves to this present moment that we can be connected, even as we are scattered around Sarasota and beyond. We open our hearts to music that comes through our computer, the images upon our screen, and a beautiful harvest table. We name that we hold lightly the beautiful litany we created alongside the names we see in the comment section. Suddenly, O God, our cornucopia of love starts to feel fuller on this Thanksgiving Sunday. It may *not* be the way we wanted or wished, but there is goodness here; there is certainly grace; and we lean into Your eternal

**love that makes us whole. Guide us this week to be to open You in the present moment, with all of its beauty, brokenness, and blessings that are part of every minute of our lives. In the name of the One who lived His life with His heart open to You, Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

OUR ENCOUNTER with SCRIPTURE

1 John 4, *selected verses*

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. <sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we can love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

SERMON

*What is God Up To? Loving All of Us*

MUSICAL INTERLUDE to PRAYER: from Seasons, *Autumn*

John Stevens

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

*Now Thank We All Our God*

No. 419

**Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices,  
Who from our parents' arms, has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.**

**O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,  
And keep us still in grace and guide us when perplexed,**

**And free us from all ills in this world and the next.  
All praise and thanks to God, our Maker now be given,  
to Christ, and Spirit, too, our help in highest heaven,  
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,  
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Scherzo*

John Cheetham