

Thank you to **Michael Cross** for the beautiful Thanksgiving Table!

Two pink rose buds are given in celebration of Savannah Reid Whaley and Reagan Mackenzie Whaley, new great-granddaughters of Rachel Taylor and George Francis.

PRELUDE

The Brass Quintet

Aaron Romm & Ronald Romm, trumpets; Larry Solowey, horn;  
Brad Williams, trombone; Aaron Tindall, tuba

INVITATION

Joanna Macy's book "Coming Back to Life."

There is so much to be done, and the time is so short. We can proceed, of course, out of grim and angry desperation. But the tasks proceed more easily and productively with a measure of thankfulness for life; it links us to our deeper powers and lets us rest in them. We have received an inestimable gift. To be alive in this beautiful, self-organizing universe — to participate in the dance of life with senses to perceive it, lungs that breathe it, organs that draw nourishment from it — is a wonder beyond words. It is an extraordinary privilege to be accorded a human life, with self-reflexive consciousness that brings awareness of our own actions and the ability to make choices. It lets us choose to take part in the healing of our world.

OPENING HYMN

*Festival Hymn of Thanksgiving*

arr. Paul Sjolund

**We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;  
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;  
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing  
Sing praises to His name; he forgets not His own.**

**Beside us to guide us, Our God with us joining  
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;  
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;  
Thou, Lord wast at our side, all glory be Thine.**

**We all do extoll Thee, Thou leader triumphant,  
And pray that Thou still our defender will be.  
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;  
Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free.**

**With voices united our praises we offer;  
To Thee in thanksgiving, glad anthems we raise.  
Thy strong arm will guide us, through all Thou art beside us;  
To Father, Son and Spirit, forever be praise!**

CENTERING PRAYER

*For Calling The Spirit Back*

by Joy Harjo

One: Put down that bag of potato chips, that white bread, that bottle of pop.

Choir: *Turn off that cellphone, computer, and remote control.*

One: Open the door, then close it behind you.

**Women:** *Take a breath offered by friendly winds. They travel the earth gathering essences of plants to clean.*

**All:** **Give back with gratitude.**

**Choir:** *If you sing, it will give your spirit lift to fly to the stars and back.*

**Men:** **Acknowledge this earth who has cared for you since you were a dream, planting itself precisely within your parents' desire.**

**One:** Let your moccasin feet take you to the encampment of the guardians who have known you before time, who will be there after time. They sit before the fire that has been there without time.

**Women:** *Let the earth stabilize your postcolonial insecure jitters.*

**Men:** **Be respectful of the small insects, birds and animal people who accompany you. Ask their forgiveness for the harm we humans have brought down upon them.**

**One:** Don't worry. The heart knows the way- though there may be high-rises, interstates, checkpoints, armed soldiers, massacres, wars, and those who will despise you because they despise themselves.

**Many:** **The journey might take you a few hours, a day, a year, a few years, a hundred, a thousand or even more.**

**Women:** *Watch your mind. Without training it might run away and leave your heart for the immense human feast set by the thieves of time.*

**One:** Do not hold regrets.

**Men:** **When you find your way to the circle, to the fire kept burning by the keepers of your soul, you will be welcomed.**

**One:** You must clean yourself with cedar, sage, or other healing plant.

**Women:** *Cut the ties you have to failure and shame.*

**One:** Let go the pain you are holding in your mind, your shoulders, your heart, all the way to your feet. Let go the pain of your ancestors to make way for those who are heading in our direction.

**Men:** **Ask for forgiveness.**

**One:** Call upon the help of those who love you. These helpers take many forms: animal, element, bird, angel, saint, stone, or ancestor.

**Women:** *Call yourself back. You will find yourself caught in corners and creases of shame, judgment, and human abuse.*

**Choir:** *You must call in a way that your spirit will want to return. Speak to it as you would to a beloved child.*

**Women:** *Welcome your spirit back from its wandering. It will return in pieces, in tatters. Gather them together. They will be happy to be found after being lost for so long.*

**Men:** **Your spirit will need to sleep awhile after it is bathed and given clean clothes.**

**Many:** **Now you can have a party. Invite everyone you know who loves and supports you. Keep room for those who have no place else to go.**

**One:** Make a giveaway, and remember, keep the speeches short.

**Many:** **Then, you must do this: help the next person find their way through the dark.**

## A GATHERING of GRATITUDES

### PRAYER

**God of grace and God of glory, You enfold and embrace us always. We know this to be true. But we get lost, wander away, get caught up in a world where cash and confidence and certainty all lure us to live our lives dancing to a different tune than Your love. Thank You, God, for this moment. Thank You for this breath. Thank You for this time, this season, to not just count our blessings, but live a life where our blessings count. Where Your presence is what feeds and fuels our daily living. We pray that these words would not just be said and left behind, but challenge and compel our life every day this week. In the name of the One who lived His life with an attitude of gratitude, grace, love, joy, peace, and hope, Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

### ANTHEM

*Cantate Domino*

David Brunner

### ENGAGING SCRIPTURE

Mark 12:28-34

<sup>28</sup> One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that He answered them well, he asked Him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; <sup>30</sup> you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup> The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” <sup>32</sup> Then the scribe said to Him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘He is one, and besides Him there is no other’; <sup>33</sup> and ‘to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” <sup>34</sup> When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask Him any question.

### SERMON

*Finding Home Again*

### PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD’S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### CLOSING HYMN

*Now Thank We All Our God*

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**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

The Brass Quintet

Greeters / Ushers: Dave and Karen Abel, Drue Murray

Liturgist: Sarah Melcher

Fellowship Time:

Bus Driver: Len Murray