We Give Praise (Thanks-Giving Theme) (2006)
SATB (or unison) chorus w/organ
Difficulty rating: 1+
Duration: 3’00”
Commissioned by the Thanks-Giving Foundation
Premiere: Choir of Temple Emanu-El, Dallas, TX, 01/07/07

*We Give Praise* was commissioned by the Thanksgiving Foundation to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the “Thanksgiving Together” event in Dallas, Texas, in 1907. It was a pioneering event at the time, a celebration of the values of thanks-giving and prayer for people of all faiths. The event was an inspiration for the founding of Thanks-Giving Square in 1964, a park and ecumenical sanctuary in the heart of Dallas, which continues to work for the promotion of these values.

The Foundation’s Executive Director, Tatiana Androsov, and I searched far and wide for the right text, one which both would be appropriately ecumenical and also include much of the imagery associated with Thanks-giving Square. In the end we decided it would be most efficient and more on target if I wrote it myself. Today the Foundation uses the hymn as its theme song, which is heard upon arrival at its website home page, www.thanksgiving.org.

The hymn can be performed either with or without the organ prelude, and either fully unison or with the 4-part harmonization of the final stanza.

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We give praise with a single voice,
Though it’s sung to the words of many tongues,
Clapping hands to the beats of many lands
We give praise with a loud and joyful noise.

We give thanks for the earth we prize,
For the wonderful radiance of sun
And for all living creatures, great and small;
We give thanks for this precious gift of life.

We are all children of one Creator
Who gives us blessings pure and free,
Who grants us all the joys of nature;
We close the circle, singing in praise and harmony.

With thanks-giving we rise above
And the boundaries between us tumble down,
And we help others as we would ourselves;
We give thanks and we share a greater love.

--Jonathan David