

(harmonic music) (congregation murmuring) (resonant music) (moves into energetic resonant music)  
("Beautiful Savior") ♪ Beautiful Savior ♪ ♪ Lord of all nations ♪ ♪ Son of God ♪ ♪ And son of man ♪ ♪ Glory and  
honor ♪ ♪ Praise adoration ♪ ♪ Now and forevermore ♪ ♪ Be thine ♪ ♪ Now and forevermore ♪ ♪ Be thine ♪  
(reverberant music) (symphonic choral singing) (moves into resonant music) (symphonic choral singing)  
(congregation murmuring)

- Thursday afternoon in this place the university community took occasion on the anniversary of the signing of the Duke Indenture 62 years ago to reflect upon our heritage, to single out those who have made a significant contribution to the university and to recognize recipients of scholarships made possible by the founding family. Today, we pause as we do each year in memory of the Duke family. To honor all those who have given of themselves in service to the future by creating and recreating this university. We reaffirm here our pledge of this university to the ideal of service to humanity and we give thanks for those who unselfishly take responsibility for a future that is not theirs that belongs to other generations. We remember also that this university returns the wealth of the land to its people through respect for knowledge and for truth and through the continuing generosity of those who establish it for all time.

- Let us pray, be seated. (clears throat) Almighty God, accept our prayers for all schools and colleges across this nation and around the world. We pray for all faculty and students in their study and in their research, in their work of learning and the task of expanding the mind and the horizons of the human spirit. We pray particularly for those who study and those who learn here at Duke University. And may our work here be a common search for wisdom, particularly for that wisdom which we greet during this advent season, the light of the world come to enlighten all humanity. Amen. Would you join me in the litany of commemoration. Almighty and eternal God in whom our mothers and fathers have trusted, we their children at this time of remembrance offer unto thee our prayers of thanksgiving.

All: Hear us we beseech thee O Lord. For the members of the Duke family, father, daughter, sons and their spouses, grandchildren and all others in continuing generations until this very day, who with concern and compassion, devotion and dedication, and by their generosity, built on a solid foundation, continued a worthy school, and provided for education and service beyond even their dreams and expectations.

All: We give thee thanks and praise

Rev. Willimon: for the pioneering and persevering men and women connected with this university. Methodists and Quakers, farmers and merchants, teachers and administrators, who in days gone by believed in education and made their beliefs prevail.

All: We give thee thanks and praise.

Rev. Willimon: For the embodiment of their dreams from private school to academy to college to great university, founded in hope, continued with sacrifice, growing in outreach, serving with effectiveness,

All: We give thee thanks and praise.

- For faculty and staff whose vision was bolstered by their courage, whose patience was tested and found true and whose idealism was implanted in the hearts and minds of others.

All: We give thee thanks and praise.

- For the ongoing presence of noble ideas, the blending of "Eruditio et Religio", the freedom for responsible academic research and teaching, the ongoing respect for both the body and the spirit, pursuit of knowledge in the sciences and the humanities, the realization that the old order changes and new times bring new responsibilities,

All: We give thee thanks and praise.

- For the future of Duke University, established for thy glory and for the enlightenment of the human mind and spirit, for consecration to learning by the young for the best use of the wisdom of those in latter years and for the commitment to growth and enhancement of all persons, for a sense of humor, a spirit of cooperation, and a desire for understanding among all within our community and the world,

All: We give thee thanks and praise. And to thee O God, we shall ascribe as is most due all place and glory world without end. Amen. (congregation murmuring)

- I greet you on this third Sunday of Advent and on the occasion of our university Founder's Sunday and we are pleased to have you at the chapel. This afternoon at 5:00 PM, our distinguished university organist Peter Williams will be presenting a concert here in the chapel in honor of the 10th anniversary of the dedication of our Flentrop organ and we invite you to this concert. This has been a weekend of celebration in the anniversary of the Flentrop. Today marks the first time that this Founder's Day service has been televised over the closed circuit system of Duke University. This service is being viewed by those patients in the Duke hospitals. This is a pioneering effort supported in great part by the Friends of Duke Chapel and we thank them for their generosity and we welcome those who join us today on the television. Would you stand as we pray together the Advent Prayer? (clears throat) Let us pray,

All: O Lord God, heavenly king in this holy season of Advent we beseech thee so to rule and guide us by the Holy Spirit that we may hear and receive the holy word with our whole heart and through thy word we may be sanctified and may learn to place all our trust and hope in Jesus Christ thy son and following him may be led safely through all evil until through thy grace we come to everlasting life through the same Jesus Christ thy son, our Lord. Amen. (resonant organ music) (harmonic choral singing)

- You may be seated. Open our hearts and minds O God by the power of your Holy Spirit so that as the word

is read and proclaimed we might hear with joy what you say to us this day. The first lesson is taken from Isaiah. The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad. The desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and with singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees, say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not. "Behold your God will come with vengeance "with the recompense of God. "He will come and he will save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame leap like a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy for water shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water. The haunt of jackals shall become a swamp. The grass shall become reeds and rushes and a highway shall be there and it shall be called The Holy Way. The unclean shall not pass over it and fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it. They shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. This ends the reading of the first lesson. (melodious bell music) (melodious bell music)

- The gospel lesson is taken from Saint Matthew. Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you He who is to come, "or shall we look for another?" and Jesus answered them "Go and tell John what you hear and what you see, "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, "lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear "and the dead are raised up "and the poor have good news preached to them "and blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John. "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? "A reed shaken by the wind? "Why then did you go out, to see a prophet? "Yes I tell you, and more than a prophet. "This is He of whom it is written, "behold I send my messenger before thy face "who shall prepare thy way before thee. "Truly I say to you, among those born of women "there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist. "Yet one who is least in the kingdom of heaven "is greater than he." This ends the reading of the gospel. ("Psalm 9: I Will Give Thanks to the Lord") ♪ I will give thanks to the Lord ♪ ♪ With my whole heart ♪ ♪ I will tell of all thy wonderful deeds ♪ ♪ I will be glad and exult in thee ♪ ♪ I will sing praise to thy name O Most High ♪ ♪ I will give thanks to the Lord ♪ ♪ With my whole heart ♪ ♪ I will tell of all thy wonderful deeds ♪ ♪ I will be glad and exult in thee ♪ ♪ I will be glad and exult in thee ♪ ♪ I will sing praise to thy name O Most High ♪ ♪ Be gracious to me O Lord ♪ ♪ Behold what I suffer ♪ ♪ From those who hate me ♪ ♪ O thou who liftest me up ♪ ♪ From gates of death ♪ ♪ From gates of death ♪ ♪ That I may recount all ♪ ♪ All thy praises ♪ ♪ That in the gates of ♪ ♪ The daughter of Zion ♪ ♪ That I may recount all ♪ ♪ Daughter of Zion ♪ ♪ All of thy praises ♪ ♪ Daughter of Zion ♪ ♪ Daughter of Zion ♪ ♪ I may rejoice ♪ ♪ I may rejoice in thy ♪ ♪ Deliverance ♪ ♪ Be gracious to me O Lord ♪ ♪ Be gracious to me O Lord ♪ (moves into resonant music) ♪ I will give thanks ♪ ♪ I will give thanks ♪ ♪ I will give thanks unto the Lord ♪ ♪ I will give thanks ♪ ♪ I will give thanks ♪ ♪ I will give thanks unto the Lord ♪ ♪ I will give thanks to the Lord ♪

- Hear now this lesson taken from the book of Joshua chapter 24. Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges and the officers of Israel. And they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord the God of Israel, "I gave you a land on which you had not labored, "and cities which you had not built and you dwell therein.

"You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive yards "which you did not plant. "Now therefore fear the Lord "and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. "And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord, "choose this day whom you will serve. "But as for me, and my house we will serve the Lord." And the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord." Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves "that you have chosen the Lord to serve Him." And they said, "We are witnesses." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day. Then he sent them away to their inheritance. The assembly described in this 24th chapter of Joshua represents a new beginning for the people of Israel. This ceremony of encounter with God and covenant renewal is illustrative of our perpetual human need for new beginnings. My title today is a phrase from Charles Wesley's 18th century hymn, "O God of all grace, "Thy goodness we praise, "For ever beginning what never shall end" New beginnings are a gift of God's grace. The events of Founder's Day at Duke University which really now stretch into a long weekend remind us that we, like the Israelites of old, are forever beginning. And we need our times of remembrance of the past appropriation for the present, and resolve for the future. Remembrance involves encountering the story that tells us who we are. On this Founder's Day, we rehearse again the story of Duke. Most of us know the story, but we need to hear it again and again. Next year marks the 20th anniversary of my graduation from Duke's Trinity College. When I was a freshman here, we still had to pass a test, a required test called The Tradition's Test. One of the questions was, "How many stones did it take to complete the Duke chapel?" Now in case you don't know, (congregation murmurs) the answer is one. (congregation laughs) Saturday morning classes were the rule then and class attendance was mandatory. The Tradition's Test is now gone and so are Saturday classes and required class attendance, but our traditions are not gone. The carillon is still played at five o' clock now by my classmate Sam Hammond, who looked the same then as he does now. (congregation murmurs) Distinguished faculty still take real interest in undergraduates even outside the classroom. I will never forget Richard White, now Dean of Arts and Sciences, in his first year at Duke working with me, then a freshman, to help me understand the life cycle of selaginella in botany. Just last night, our soccer team started what we trust is a new tradition. These traditions, some embodied in the university itself, some embodied in its people, shape us even though we may not realize it. Although I was away for graduate professional training and taught elsewhere before coming back to Duke, I am keenly aware that I am who I am in large measure because of this university. We here this morning are the recipients of a magnificent inheritance. Our story is rich and complex and this morning, I want to notice primarily Duke's religious tradition. Although our roots go back to a great foundation started by Methodist and Quaker farmers in Randolph County in 1838, and our trustee and presidential leadership was principally Methodist, the school was not formally and officially religiously affiliated until 1856. In that year, state government refused to give financial support for the college and President Braxton Craven appealed to the Methodist Church. He proposed that the church provide urgently needed funds in exchange for a perpetual agreement that its ministers would be educated at no cost. The church thus literally saved the college and so began our continuing formal relationship to Methodism. Duke University would not be what it is today apart from that relationship. President John Carlyle Kilgo strongly advanced the concept of Christian higher education and his preaching is given credit for inspiring the Duke family to continued support for the college. Kilgo was castigated by many North Carolinians including Josephus Daniels, the editor of the Raleigh News and Observer for what they regarded as his liberal views. He was an unpopular champion of academic freedom, the famous Bassett case occurred during his presidency. Kilgo's understanding of and commitment to academic freedom grew out of his Christian convictions. This is what he wrote, "From childhood, I was

taught the doctrines "which belong to Methodism, "a church seemingly ordained to proclaim "the doctrine of human tolerance and freedom "at a time when ecclesiastical, civic and social intolerance "was arrogant and tyrannical." Kilgo's theological views thus shaped Trinity College at a crucial time in its academic development. William Preston Few, who would be the first president of the university and its brilliant and visionary leader during its most formative years, was Dean while Kilgo was President. Few was a deeply committed churchman who believed that religion provided the unity for education. We know from Few's letters and papers that he and James B. Duke spent a great deal of time together before Mr. Duke signed the famous Indenture of December 11th, 1924. Mr. Duke was clear about his desires concerning the religious commitment of the new university. And it is also clear that these desires coincided with Few's. In his splendid book, "The Architecture of Duke University", the late professor William Blackburn wrote, "The chapel was the building first in the mind "of James Buchanan Duke. "At the heart of his idea of education was religion, "and the physical center of the university "was to be the chapel. "I want the central building to be a church, "he used to say when making plans for the university. "A great towering church which will dominate "all the surrounding buildings, "because such an edifice would be bound "to have a profound influence on the spiritual life "of the young men and young women who come here." Now Duke University was not simply to have a chapel. Duke was to continue to stand for the union of education and religion. Our motto "Eruditio et Religio" derives from a proposition of Weslian theology expressed well in one of Charles Wesley's greatest hymns, "Unite the two so long disjoined, knowledge and vital piety." We know very clearly what the founders wanted. They wanted religion to be the formative influence on this university. The Christian theological commitments of Duke's early leadership determined the kind of university Duke was to become. They believed that Christian faith mandated higher education that was excellent, rigorous, free, inclusive and open. We who gather in this assembly today have been given a great inheritance. Inheritance from the past however, requires appropriation for the present. It's not enough just to remember. What responsibility do we have to our founders and benefactors? Now this question is an ever present one because we are forever beginning. Many of you here this morning are benefactors of this university. Gifts of service, money and concern all become part of our inheritance. How we treat our inheritance tells us who we are and whether we are worthy of that which is given to us. We must be faithful to the intentions of those who have brought us to this place. Being worthy of our inheritance requires us to attend to continuity. But it also requires us to attend to appropriate change. Real benefactors recognize that human communities and institutions cannot be static. Growth and development must take place. There must be a balance between continuity and change. Our world, our nation and our region are constantly changing, and so are we. We are forever beginning. Historically, Christian vision provided unity and purpose for higher education. The great universities of Europe and England were founded with such a vision as were our own major private universities. But the forces of secularization in western culture have destroyed that unity and purpose and left us with fragmentation and confusion. What meaning, if any, does the remembrance of our own story on Founder's Day have for us at Duke, in relation to this larger picture? We cannot return to a time when it was possible, whether or not it was true, to claim a Christian vision for the whole university. Nevertheless, our story as a university includes provision for the Christian vision of reality within the university. This chapel is the major embodiment of that tradition. Here, Christian truth is proclaimed even though not all in the university can, do, or necessarily should believe or espouse it. Duke University gives place to religion and accordingly recognizes the legitimacy of claims that there is unity, purpose, and meaning in education. In this special sense, we are not neutral. I think of Bishop Kenneth Goodson's remark that as he looks at the

chapel, he is reminded that Duke University has taken sides. Openness and pluralism do not rule out the fact that our founder's vision persists and that it has a legitimate claim on us. What then of resolve for the future? Remembering who we are seeking to appropriate our tradition in the present. What does this mean for our future? There is great excitement in being at Duke just now. We all feel that as we walk these beloved halls of our buildings and sidewalks and lawns. There are very positive and hopeful signs. But because we are a part of the larger picture of American higher education, there are also concerns. As we think about the future, perhaps the chief concern ought to be that of purpose. What are we, in the end, here to do? That question is a moral question and if pursued deeply, a religious one. Indeed as Samuel Johnson suggested, "No one can think deeply without thinking religiously." Margaret Clapp, a former president of Wellesley College once observed that "Evidence can be amassed "that universities have been more effective "in scientific research to help the world wage war "than to wage peace." Interestingly, the McArthur Foundation last year announced massive funding for peace studies research by scholars in American Universities. I welcome that idea because it signals a recognition of our responsibility to participate in the shaping of the future. While asserting that the future belongs to God alone, through God's grace, we have the freedom to choose to make positive contributions to the human future. I like to describe Duke as a university whose character helps men and women learn to commit themselves to lives of service. Such service to human need can and does make a difference in this world that desperately needs such commitment. Recently, President Brodie gave me a copy of a remarkable speech given on Armistice Day 1948 by General of the Army Omar N. Bradley. General Bradley said this, "With the monstrous weapons man already has, "humanity is in danger of being trapped in this world "by its moral adolescence. "We are stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness "while toying with the precarious secrets of life and death. "We have many men of science, "too few men of God." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day. Then he sent them away to their inheritance. Amen. (congregation murmuring) ("Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates") ♪ Lift up your heads, ye might gates ♪ ♪ Behold the king of glory waits ♪ ♪ The king of kings ♪ ♪ Is drawing near ♪ ♪ The savior of the world is here ♪ ♪ Fling the portals of your heart ♪ ♪ Make it a temple, set apart ♪ ♪ From earthly use for heaven's employ ♪ ♪ Adorned with prayer and love and joy ♪ ♪ Redeemer come with us abide ♪ ♪ Our hearts to thee we open wide ♪ ♪ Let us thy inner presence feel ♪ ♪ Thy grace and love in us reveal ♪

- Please remain standing as we join in the historic confession of our faith, The Apostle's Creed.

All: I believe in God, the father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, he descended into hell. On the third day, he rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty from this he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. The Lord be with you.

All: And with you also.

- Let us pray. How can we pray to thee, thou holy and hidden God whose ways are not our ways, who reignest in mystery beyond the realm of time and space? Yet, how can we not pray to thee, gracious God,

who knowest what it is to be human because thou has come among us as one who took our common life upon himself to be like us in order that we might be like him. Hear us O God, both in our words and in our silence, for it is often the silence that speaks better of our need. Breathe thou life into our less than life, not for our sakes only, but for the sake of those to whom, with thy life in us, we may ourselves bring life. Hear now gracious God, the prayers of all thy children everywhere for forgiveness and healing, for courage, for faith, for hope in times of despair, for endurance in the midst of trial. Hear our prayers for the needs of others this day, for the homeless, the destitute, the imprisoned, the sick and the dying, for the hungry and for those who seek to battle the causes of hunger, for victims of violence everywhere and for those who know no other way than violence, for those who govern the nations of the world, especially those which are conflict torn, for women and men who suffer for the sake of conscience, for the unemployed who suffer want and anxiety from lack of work, for this university that it may be a center for sound learning and a pursuit of wisdom, and for the memory of its origins that a worthy vision of its mission might be nourished, for the entire human family that the walls which separate us may be broken down, and that in thy good time, all nations and races may serve thee in harmony around thy heavenly throne. Deep beneath all our asking O God, hear the secret song of every human heart lauding and magnifying thy name for being what thou art. Make strong and clear this song of praise within each of us until it burst forth at last to thy glory and our salvation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen. We offer a special word of thanks to the Bell Ringers of the First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, North Carolina who are making their ninth annual Advent appearance here at the chapel. And now, in the spirit of thanksgiving for all that God has done, let us offer our gifts and ourselves onto God. (melodic bell music) (moves into "O Holy Night") (reverberant music) (melodic choral singing) ♪ Hallelujah, Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, Hallelujah, ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Amen. ♪ O everliving God, we give thee thanks and praise for whatsoever thou hast given us richly to enjoy, for health and vigor, for the joys of friendship for our time and place in history and for every good gift of happiness and strength. We praise thee for all the servants who by their example and encouragement have helped us on our way, especially for the founders of this university and for every vision of thyself which thou hast given us in sacrament or prayer, and we humbly beseech thee that all these benefits we may use in thy service and to the glory of thy holy name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray who taught us boldly to say

All: 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 is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. (reverberant music) (melodic choral singing)

- The grace of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be among you now and always. (harmonious a capella music) ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (reverberant organ music)