

(slow music playing) (organ playing) (organ playing upbeat song) (ethereal choir voices singing with organ) (organ playing a softer tune) (voices singing softly with organ) (organ playing quick tune) (men and women singing together) (organ playing fast tune)

- We welcome you this morning to this service of worship at Duke Chapel. We have been led to worship by the Coral Ambassadors, talented young people from Fort Lauderdale, Florida and we thank them for being our guest choir today. Our guest preacher is no stranger to the pulpit of Duke Chapel, he is the reverend doctor Robert Young who led this chapel in worship for ten years. We welcome Dr. Young back to Duke and also his family, who with us today, they will be the guest of the congregation at Duke Chapel for luncheon immediately after today's service. If you're visiting with us today, we're glad you're here and we bid you to join us now as we continue to worship. (organ playing upbeat tune) (ethereal singing with organ)

- Let us pray. Open our hearts and minds, oh 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, amen. The first lesson is taken from the second book of Samuel. David, again, gathered all the chosen men of Israel. 30,000. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up there the ark of God, which is called by the name Allah, Lord of Host, who sits in throne on the cherubim. And they carried the ark of God upon a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart, with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel were making merry before the Lord, with all of their might with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark and he died there beside the ark of God. And David was angry because the Lord had broken forth upon Uzzah and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" So David was not willing to take the ark of the Lord into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite. And the ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. And it was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling And David danced before the Lord with all his might. And David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn. This ends the reading of the first lesson. (organ playing slow song) (choir and audience singing with organ) The second lesson is taking from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. Now as you excel in everything, in faith, in utterance, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in your love for us, see that you excel in this gracious work also. I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was

rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter, I give my advice: it is best for you now to complete what a year ago you began not only to do but to desire, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have. For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he has not. I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality as it is written, "He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack." This ends the reading of the second lesson. (organ playing soft tune) (men in choir singing) Before I read the gospel lesson, may I say just a word of deep appreciation for the privilege of being here this morning. Well to you and Nancy, my thanks for the invitation to come, to preach here again, and I must say to you this morning that it's just as awesome and frightening now as it was the first Sunday I stood here. But it is good to be here. To be with you and to worship God together. It's also a special honor, Will, to be apart of the 50th anniversary celebration services and activities that you have planned for this year. My prayer is that it will indeed be a year of celebration and joy and much thanks giving for the 50 years of ministry that this chapel has had and will continue to have. So my prayers will be with you and all who are apart of the services and activities here. It's also good to be in an air conditioned sanctuary. (laughing) Some of you know where of I speak. I see Alice Clelin sitting over here, she has probably sweater in this place with her late husband, the dean of the chapel Jim Clelin and other friends probably more than anyone else here. So I'm sure Alice, you share the joy of this cool place as all of us do. It is a joy to be here. It's good to be back home and it's good to be among friends many of whom I have seen already and others I look forward to greeting after the service. It is a joy to be apart of this occasion. Let us now hear the word of God as it is found in the gospel according to Mark chapter five, beginning with verse 21. And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. Then came one of the leaders of the synagogue, Jairus by name and seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and besot him saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death, come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." And Jesus went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. And there was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and who had suffered much under many physicians and had spent all that she had and was no better. But rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment for she said, "If I touch even his garments I shall be made well." and immediately the hemorrhage ceased and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus perceiving in himself that power had gone forth from him immediately, turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" and his disciples said to him, "You see this crowd pressing around you and yet you say, "Who touched me?" and he looked around to see who had done it but the woman, knowing what had been done to her came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your disease." While he was still speaking, there came from the rulers house some who said, "Your daughter is dead." "Why trouble the teacher any further?" But ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. When they came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, he saw a tumult and people were weeping and wailing loudly. And when he had entered he said to them, "Why do you make such a tumult and weep?" "The child is not dead but sleeping." and they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in

where the child was, taking her by the hand, he said to her, "Talitha Kumi" which means, little girl, I say to you, arise and immediately the girl got up and walked for she was 12 years old and immediately they were overcome with amazement and he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat. The word of God, for the people of God and let us all say Amen. Amen. There is power in touch. That's the theme of what I'd like to share with you today. You know that. I know that. We just need to be reminded and need to remind ourselves occasionally of that. The power and touch that I would like to talk about this morning is God's power. The love and power and presence and healing touch of Jesus the Christ. The gospel lesson which we just heard for today shows us the power of Jesus touch. Jairus daughter, whom he took by the hand and made well, even to the point of telling them to give her something to eat. The woman with the flow of blood who did not touch Jesus body but touched, simply, the hem of his garment and was made well. There are, I believe, some principles. Some holy principles of how God acts, and who God is, and what God wills at stake in this message and in these stories in Mark's gospel. The principles are these: One, we have to believe that God's will is for wholeness and health, for healing and goodness. For wellness of body, mind, and spirit. For each and every human being, for every one of us. The second principal is that we have to have faith that God's power, the power of touch can and will come and make us whole. The third principal is that we have to be willing to risk, to take a chance, to trust, to put ourselves in the care of someone else, someone with a little s or someone with a capital S, if you will. But first, let's look at the power of touch that people experienced with and from Jesus, if you will. Jesus must have been known widely and well as one who's touch had power, real power, healing power, life giving and life sustaining power because the gospel's are full of examples of how Jesus touched people and made them whole. In one place in the gospel's we're told that all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him and he laid his hands on every one of them, every one of them and healed them. In another place we're told about the leper who was brought to Jesus. Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him and the leper was healed. In another place, we're told that the crowd sought to touch Jesus for power came forth from him and healed them all. The son of the widow of Nain touched Jesus simply touched the coffin of the dead man. The funeral session halted, Jesus told the dead man to rise up and he did simply by the power of touching the bier, if you will. There was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for 17 years, whom he touched and said, "You are free from your illness." There's a story of Peter's ear being cut off. Peter cutting off the ear of the slave. Jesus told Peter, "No more of this, no more violence." and took the ear and placed it back on the slaves head and he was made well. Healing by touch was common place for Jesus. Even the disciples in the book of Acts, we're told, also had the power to heal by touch. And so the power of touch has been a part of the Christian tradition from the very beginning. It is real to all of us but we don't just always realize it. There are, we are told, three different kinds of touch and we all know this as well, three different kinds of touch that we experience. There is the strictly external touch which comes to us skin to skin, contact we have with another human being, with another that comes in many ways, it may be a kiss, or it may be a kick, or it may be a caress or it may be a push. And then there is the experience when something external touches something inside us. And we are moved. The look of love, the sound of music as from the choir this morning. The smell of cedar wood burning in the fireplace, the aroma of a cake baking in the oven. Something outside which stimulates something inside us and we are touched. And then there is the strictly internal experience of touch, where the touch is holy within. We feel our heartbeat, we feel our headache, we feel our spirit stirring inside. Three different ways we experience touch, and I'm convinced that God, through the power of Christ, can heal us through any one or all three of

these ways in which you and I are touched. I wanna ask you this morning, have you ever had an experience of being healed by touch? Have you? Anybody? Have you ever been healed by the touch from someone else? My guess is that your immediate response is to say no. But I'd like to suggest this morning that unless I am badly mistaken, every one of us here this morning has experienced healing by touch. And that, my friends, is God's grace working through us to bring wholeness back to us. Have you ever had a tension headache that settle in the back of your neck and somebody took the time to rub it and relax those muscles and the headache goes away? Have you ever had a cramp in the back of your leg? Or in your thigh? And either you touched it and rubbed it and helped the muscles relax and it go away. Or someone else did. Have you ever had a broken bone and someone else take the time and had the talent and the skill to pull those bones back into place so that healing could take place? Have you ever felt down and depressed and lonely and unloved and had someone touch you with a look of tenderness and gentleness and caring and help make you whole again? Have you ever felt discouraged and saddened or broken hearted and defeated and had someone heal you by saying just the right word that you needed to help put you together again? Have you ever felt as if no one really cared for you and felt as if life really was not worth very much and then your life, for some mysterious reason, was touched by a phone call or a card or a note or a letter? And suddenly wholeness began to come back to you again. You see, we have so spiritualized the stories of Jesus power of touch, that we are often unaware of the beautiful healing ways that God touches us day by day and moment by moment through words, or sounds, or looks, or letters, or pictures, or calls, or prayers, or by physical touch. And I'm convinced that Jesus healed by using the power of touch in every way possible. His words have the power of touch in them. His look had the power of touch in it. His expressions, his gestures, his feelings, his emotions had the power of touch in them. We would say today that his body language had power in it. His whole being, his whole self, his demeanor, his lifestyle, his preaching, his teaching, all conveyed the healing, life giving power of touch and just like Jesus, my friends, we touch each other every day. With our words, our looks, our gestures, our feelings, our bodies. The concern that I think we need always to keep before us is to let the power of touch which emanates from us to another. Always, if at all possible, be a healing rather than a hurtful touch or we can indeed hurt or heal through touch. You can put down or you can lift up. You can put together or you can tear apart. You can make someone's life or you can break someone's life by the way you touch it. Often just a word, a word when you say to somebody else, you are no good. Or a word when you say, I love you. A look. A smile of compassion and tenderness. Or a frown of condemnation. A gesture. Open arms. Or a gesture of rejection. A physical touch, your hand can be either clenched and express anger or it can be open and show acceptance and affirmation. There is power in touch, power to build up or power to tear down, power to hurt or power to heal. Jane M. Wiler tell us that touch is one language of love. It is. The power of touch is incredible, it's mysterious but it is very very real. We really do not know why or how touch heals, we only know that it does, you know that and I know that. So we go back now to the three principles at stake in the healing power of Gods touch. We have to believe that God's will is for wholeness. You say, "Why do we have to believe that?" Well my friends, what else is there for us to believe about God? What else do we dare to believe? What kind of God is God if God's will is for anything other than (track skipping) God wills life, joy, freedom, peace, salvation and that is the truth and it is for us to believe it and internalize it. Second is that we have to have faith that God's power can and will make us whole and I want to be very very careful here, my friends. Because back home in the church we now serve, we have one of the most beautiful young women I've ever known who will not get well. Her mother and father were killed in an automobile accident about six weeks ago and she has terminal cancer, she's 38 years old and it breaks my

heart every time I go in and go from that hospital room. So I want to be very very careful here. Because I do not believe that if you only have faith you will be healed or delivered or spared pain or suffering. Jesus had faith and he had to go through death on the cross. He was not healed, he was, however, made whole. We want, all of us do, all of us want for ourselves and our loved ones to be healed in this life, in the here and the now but healing may never come in this life. But wholeness can and will come to any of us who open ourselves truly and freely to God's love and God's grace and let that spirit come into us and fill our lives and make us whole. That's why, my friends, when you go see someone who has a permanent lifetime handicapping condition, or you go to see someone who is terminally ill and you think you're going in to make them feel better and because of their wholeness of body, mind, and spirit, you leave that room, or that place, or that house. You leave that encounter with that person who is whole, in spite of his or her illness or handicapping condition. You leave their being made more whole because of the wholeness that God has given to that person. We may not be healed in this life, but by the power, and grace, and love of God, we will be made whole. Third thing is, we have to be willing to risk, to take a chance, to, as Paul said, "Be a fool for Christ's sake." For this real power of God to touch us. Look at the faith and the risk that these two people had. You can say, well Jairus didn't have anything to lose because his daughter, they told him, was at the point of death and then they told him she had already died but he didn't have anything more to lose than to believe in Jesus and put his trust in Jesus, he had everything to lose. Here was one of the rulers of the synagogue, he had his reputation and his power and his prestige and all of the success that he had in life, why would Jairus succumb or submit himself to someone else and ask for healing or for anything from anybody else? He had everything to lose. You can say, well the woman who had a flow of blood for 17 years didn't have anything to lose. She had everything to lose.