

(slow somber organ music) (slow somber organ music fades)

- Although we are reminded every day at Duke University of the vision and the generosity of James Buchanan Duke and other members of the Duke family, once a year, it's appropriate to celebrate that vision and that generosity and that wisdom in developing the kind of an institution that has carried an influence now for a half-century and looking forward to centuries more. I read from the Indenture: I have selected Duke University as one of the principal objects of this trust, because I recognize that education, next to religion, is the greatest civilizing influence. And he charges the officers, the trustees, all associated with the university to carry forward that concept that this is, indeed, an institution that brings a civilizing influence to society, and we dedicate ourselves to that constantly, and we re-dedicate ourselves on this Founders' Day to this concept and to these principles, linking religion and Christianity and the concepts with education and a great educational institution. (shoes clicking)

- Let those in this chapel and all gathered in the nave of the chapel join as we pray. Let us pray. O Lord, our God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, we, Your children, pause to reflect and to remember with thanksgiving, with some regret, but with hope. With gratitude, we remember those whose ideas and gifts made this university possible. We're grateful for the Duke family, past and present, and for their decisions to invest in the mind as well as in matter, in the spirit as well as in the body, and thus make a place for honest pursuit of truth and knowledge. Without their vision, their concern, their gifts, this university would not be. In all its beauty, this magnificent chapel, the grandeur of buildings and grounds and gardens, the spacious forests and wandering trails, this university provides a challenge and an opportunity to those who seek to understand more clearly, to feel more sensitively, and to serve more helpfully. And so, God, we give thanks for those persons who have loved and served this place, for janitors and maids and gardeners and painters and students and presidents and secretaries and professors and writers and librarians and researchers and musicians. For those who have been and are the custodians of mind and body and spirit in this blessed place. Where we have failed to meet our true objectives or been unable to fulfill the visions of those who have gone before us, or have not prepared well for those who follow, merciful God, forgive us. With hope, we face the future, O God, standing on tiptoes and pressing forward, with fervent trust and genuine concern, we place the prep, the future of this university in Your Providence and in the hands of Your servants. May we seek that knowledge which frees us, may we be free to serve joyfully the needs of others, and in all this, may we and all who follow, commit ourselves to serve You, O God, and to love one another with heart, soul, mind, and strength, through Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher and our Redeemer. Amen. (congregation member coughs) (shoes clicking on floor) (wind rushing) (wood clacking) (congregation member coughs) (slow somber organ music)

(congregation member coughs) (slow dramatic organ music) (gentle uplifting organ music) (slow dramatic organ music) (bright uplifting organ music) (gentle uplifting organ music) (bright uplifting organ music) (congregation member sneezes)

(bright uplifting organ music) (gentle uplifting organ music)

(shoes clicking on floor) (dramatic somber organ music) (bright uplifting organ music) (gentle somber organ music) (organ music fades) (congregation speaking indistinctly) (congregation member coughs) (wood clacking) (congregation member coughs) (metal clinking) (congregation member blows nose) (wood clacking) (slow somber choir singing) (slow uplifting choir singing) (bright uplifting choir singing) (choir singing fades) (bright uplifting organ music) (bright uplifting brass and organ music) (dramatic uplifting brass and orchestral music) (bright uplifting brass, organ, and choir music) (dramatic uplifting orchestral, organ, and choir music) (gentle uplifting brass, organ, and choir music) (bright uplifting brass, organ, and choir music) (dramatic uplifting brass, organ, and choir music) (loud dramatic uplifting brass, organ, and choir music) (dramatic uplifting brass, organ, and choir music slows) (congregation members shuffling) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now. Jesus tells a story of a young man who took what belonged to him and went away from home. After a while, the young man said to himself, "I will arise and go to my father and say, unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you. I am no more worthy to be called a child of yours.'" With just this same self-awareness and honesty, let us now confess our sins before God, and with one another. Let us pray.

- O Lord, Creator of all things and source of all truth, we ask Your forgiveness for the sins of the mind, the pride of thinking that we are masters of all creation and history, our slackness or compulsion in our work in this university, our doubts about Your power to make all things new. We ask Your forgiveness for our lack of a sense of history, for thinking all the world begins and ends with us, for our too easy acceptance of our heritage, for those who will suffer because of our unconcern about the future. Help us as we worship You to come to a truer knowledge of ourselves, knowing that we cannot hide from You. God be merciful to us, for we are sinners.

- Jesus' story continues: And the father said, "It is right that we should make merry and be glad, for this child of mine was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." So my friends in Christ, the writer of 1 John says to us, "Your sins are forgiven for Christ's sake." Amen. (slow somber organ music) (congregation member coughs) (slow somber organ music) (slow uplifting organ music) (organ music fades) (dramatic lively choir and organ music) (dramatic choir and brass music) (bright uplifting choir and organ music) (dramatic uplifting choir, brass, and organ music) (dramatic lively choir, brass, and organ music) (lively uplifting choir and organ music) (dramatic lively choir, brass, and organ music) (dramatic choir, brass, and organ music fades) (congregation members shuffling)

- "And in that region, there were shepherds out in the field keeping watch over their flock by night, and an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear, and the angel said to them, 'Be not afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy, which will come to all the people, for to you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth, peace among men, with whom He is pleased.'" (somber organ music) (somber organ and choir music) (uplifting organ and choir music) (uplifting organ and choir music fades)

- Would you join with me in our affirmation of faith? (congregation member coughs)

- We are not alone, we live in God's world. We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in the truly human Jesus to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust God, who calls us to be the Church, to celebrate life in its fullness, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in the life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

- The Lord be with you. (the congregation prays indistinctly) Let us pray. (congregation members shuffling)
O God, most gracious and most loving, we thank you for this holy season of Advent and Christmas, for this holy day and this very moment, for this university and this chapel, for this service and this experience, for this family of Yours on Earth and this people, each person, gathered here in these moments to worship You. We thank You, Lord, that You lead us by Your spirit, that You protect us from others and from ourselves, that You spare us the full consequences of our stupidity, our fear, and our hate. We thank You for peace, where it exists, for love, where it is felt, and for hope, where it is sure. We, O God, who are blessed with riches of body and spirit thank You for life and all that life means to us, individually and together. O God, ever-caring, ever-sustaining, ever-seeking presence, we reach out now in thought and concern for others, men, women, boys, girls, who are in special need. Some are present in this place, O God, well-dressed, well-nourished, and well-educated, but lonely, hurting, struggling, confused, and longing. Some are naked, hungry, and sick, bodies twisted and broken from disease and starvation and neglect. O God, teach us one by one how to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to go to those who are in prison, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to set free the oppressed, for this we know is Your will for each of us. O God, may we become so sensitized to the needs of Your children here and everywhere. We will offer them the bread for life in food and share with them the bread of life in Christ. And now, good Lord, teach us to serve You with loyal and steadfast hearts to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not even to care when we're wounded, to work and not to ask for rest, to serve and not to ask for any reward, O God, except the reward of knowing that we have loved You and have loved one another and thereby have been obedient to You. Hear us in this holy season when Christ comes again, hear us on this special day in the life of this university as we offer ourselves, our minds, bodies, and spirits to be renewed by Your loving spirit. Hear us as we come in the name of Christ, who teaches us to pray, saying,

- "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. Deliver us from evil. Thine's a kingdom of power and glory, forever."

- Amen. This is a very special service of worship, where, as you will notice from the lighted candles on the Advent wreath, this is the Third Sunday in the holy season of Advent, when we anticipate and celebrate the glorious coming of Jesus the Christ to bring peace on Earth and to bring love to us all. It's also a special day in the life of this university, when we celebrate the 51st anniversary of the founding of Duke University. And so we welcome you to this worship service, whether this is the first time, or whether this is one of many times for you to be here, we pray that it will be a holy and a very special time when God's spirit will renew

your spirit in a very special way. This afternoon at five o'clock, we will have a special service of Christmas carols and Christmas readings, the readings being done by Ms. Barbara Walker, Dr. Stuart Henry, and Dr. Reynolds Price. It promises to be a rich and very, very enjoyable time together. We invite you to come and sing and worship with us at that time. I say this to those who are listening by radio and to those who are gathered here, there are some 200 or so children in the Edgemont Community who need our help. You can find some of their needs described in the bulletin this morning. If you have gifts which you would like to buy, money which you would like to donate, or clothing or toys which you would like to make available, we invite you to bring them to the chapel, and we will see that they are made available to the children and the young people in Edgemont Community. It is our privilege this morning to welcome back to Duke University Dr. Ernest Fitzgerald, a distinguished alumnus of this university, its Divinity School, an outstanding preacher, a committed churchman and leader, not only in the United Methodist Church, but throughout the Church, a personal friend, and so, on your behalf, may I say, Ernest, welcome, and we hear you gladly as on this Founders' Day and this Third Sunday of Advent, you bring God's word to us.

- Let me say a word of genuine appreciation to you for the invitation to share in this significant service in this lovely place. I have the strong temptation to remain silent, letting each of us spend these moments in the beauty of this hour. Perhaps I can take just a few moments to direct your thoughts by reminding you of a text in the lesson which was just read, "And the angel said, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth, peace, goodwill to men.'" In a magazine that comes to me regularly, I found an article recently, which I hope you do not read. The article was entitled, "Information You Can Live Without," and never have I seen a more aptly chosen title. There were six pages of facts you would never need to know. Accountants have discovered, for instance, that it cost as much to write with a ballpoint pen as it does to drive a car for the same distance. Imagine how delighted I was with that information. We can now include in our budget the cost of writing at 12 cents a mile. (congregation members laugh) There was another note in that article which I found not interesting. The golf ball which Alan Shepard carried to the moon cost the American taxpayer 400, or rather, 40,000 dollars. I suppose statisticians came up with that figure after calculating the weight of the golf ball against the total cost of the mission. And if that's true, then Mr. Shepard's golf game must have been the most expensive on record, but who cares about cost? To the addicted golfer, cost is secondary, and, I am told, so is everything else. (congregation members laugh) There was, however, one provocative thought in that article. I think it was gleaned from a book by Norman Cousins. He said that in the last 5,600 years, there have been only 292 years of general peace in the world. During that period of time, 14,513 wars of major or lesser importance have been fought. Now, I don't know whether these figures are accurate, but even if approximate, they suggest a dilemma when examined in the light of the biblical witness. The angels who announced the birth of our Lord said, "Peace on Earth, goodwill to men." Impressive fact, however, is that the world has known precious little peace in all of these centuries, and thoughtful people are likely to wonder why this difference between promise and reality. I sometimes wonder if the problem is if the lack of peace is not more the result of our unwillingness to receive it than God's willingness for us to have it. Divine gifts are given on our acceptance of them. It was a wise person, indeed, who said that it does little good to pray for sunshine if you insist on living in the cellar. Perhaps our problem with peace is a misunderstanding of the meaning of the word and our unwillingness to meet the conditions necessary to have it. I think the word peace has come to mean a variety of things in our time, and I wonder if you would take just a moment to consider some of them. For one thing, there is the peace of suppression. Now, the attractive and

interesting thing about the Bible is its reflection of human experience. No matter what our circumstance, someone has been down these roads before. In the Old Testament, there is a story of a king named Ahab. One day he was debating a national policy. Unfortunately, in his cabinet of the advisors, there was no one of contrary opinion. No matter what the issue, they always gave him a unanimous vote. But one of Ahab's colleagues said to him, "Ahab, is there not an honest man in your kingdom?", to which Ahab replied, "Yes, there is one. His name is Micaiah, but I hate him, because he never prophesied anything good about my plans." The colleague insisted and Micaiah was called. He was pressed for an honest answer. His prediction was ominous. "Ahab," he said, "I see a kingdom without a king." The prophet's prophecy of doom turned out to be accurate. Ahab ignored him and locked him in the nearest jail, went off about his plans, but his plans led to disaster. I wonder if this isn't a commentary on the common pursuit of our times. We attempt to build the structures of peace on the uncertain foundations of turmoil. If somehow we can eliminate the uncomfortable, if we can suppress the violence, if we can ignore the deprived people of the Earth, somehow we can achieve a measure of tranquility. But why is it we don't remember that when water boils, it produces steam, and when steam is under sufficient pressure, it escapes? Peace, the result of suppression, is only temporary, and, at best, is only on the surface. Somewhere, if permanent peace ever comes, someone has to put out the fire. I saw it again the other day, that old story of the little lady who was steeped in orthodoxy. One day, for the first time, she heard about the theory of evolution, and she prayed fervently, "God, grant that it isn't true, but if it is, let few people hear about it." This I suggest to be a marvelous solution to many thorny, thorny problems, if it would only work. Unfortunately, or fortunately, truth is effervescent. It cannot be contained, nor will it be silenced or stifled by threat. Could it be that we spend most of our time trying to silence the voice of guilt in our lives, rather than looking at the causes of that guilt? Could it be the reason we are disturbed is because there is good reason to be disturbed? Could it be that our course, our pursuit for a national peace, for world peace takes us down the course of the suppression of the deprived peoples of the Earth? And if this be our course, then the insistent voice of Micaiah witnesses against us. Somewhere, if there is ever permanent peace, someone has to put out the fire. There is a second kind of peace attempted in our world. It is called the peace of neutrality. By common consent, the most tragic person in the New Testament is a Roman judge standing outside his courtroom, washing his hands in front of a partisan band of rabble-rousers. You can understand what Pilate was after that day in Jerusalem. A man was about to be lynched. The charge was civil insurrection. Pilate had exercised his judicial powers, had found the man to be blameless. And you can almost hear him muttering to himself as he washes his hands, "The blood of Jesus will not be on me. I will wash my hands of the whole affair. I will be neutral in the death of Jesus." Peace by neutrality, a measure of it can be had that way. You can simply stand aside and let those who will slug it out. You can win peace at the expense of personal responsibility. Lee Tuttle tells the silly story of a couple of mountain men who were engaged in assisting nature in the conversion of their corn crop to its liquid assets. One pitch dark night, the government agents stumbled upon their still, and one of the agents, one of the mountain men reporting later said, "We took off down an old logging road, and we were running along at top speed, and all of a sudden, I recollected that there was a barbed wire fence coming up, but I couldn't remember where it was, so I just dropped back a pace or two and let my buddy find it." This, I think, is a parable on the way life can be lived. You can stand aside, you can drop back a pace or two, or you can hang loose, as we say it in our times. The evasion of personal responsibility to find peace by neutrality. The only trouble with neutrality is that it usually ends in becoming a side, and it is usually the wrong side, at that. Pilate's plan for peace left him the most troubled man in history, and what we have learned from him has

been sustained by all of human experience. Disease needs treatment, and to ignore that only contributes to the problem. It was John Stuart Mill, I think, who said that a person who has nothing to think about more important than his own personal safety is a miserable man. Joe Louis, in a less sophisticated way, put it in this fashion: "In this life, you can run, but you cannot hide." And that's true, isn't it? Why is it that we have succumb to the temptation of believing that the way to get along in this world is to go alone? We drug ourselves against every unpleasant circumstance. We become insensitive to pain. And yet we're not a very happy people. Peace by neutrality leaves us with anxious hearts. Few people have found peace by the road of indifference, or by the way of neutrality. Finally, there is the peace of right. The other day in a book, I found an intriguing paragraph: "If someone said that there is no particular virtue in wanting peace, everyone wants it." Hitler wanted it, promised the Nazis a thousand years of it, Teddy Roosevelt wanted it, provided it, didn't interfere with the fighting. All of us want peace. It is easier to want it than it is to root out those things in our lives and in our hearts and in our world that disrupt peace. Long ago on that rocky windswept hillside, the angels came to announce the birth of the Lord. The common translation of their hallelujah chorus was, "Peace on Earth, goodwill to men," but that translation has always troubled me, because it was a promise without requiring any responsibility. It was a gift which incurred no obligations. The other day, I found a better translation, at least one which seems to fit more nearly into the context of the New Testament. Someone has said that what the angels really sang that night was, "Peace on Earth to men of God's will." And that may not be faithful to the original tongues, but it is akin to what Jesus said when He declared that in the Father's will, there is perfect peace. Is there any other way? In our pursuit of global peace, can it ever come as long as there is injustice, as long as people are deprived? If every nation of the Earth were to dismantle its bombers, strip its soldiers of their uniforms, convert their tanks into tractors, and send all of their weapons on a thermonuclear rocket to the moon, the problem would still remain, and it would not be long before men, before tractors were used as weapons, and farmers became soldiers. Peace without God's will, peace without justice, peace without compassion, peace without a reconciliation. Can peace ever come until it comes in accordance with God's will? And there is even a more pressing question, perhaps more to the point: is it ever possible for us as individuals to find peace on the outside until there is peace within? Through the years, I have collected a few woodworking tools. Now and then I go down into the basement of our parsonage to work with them, and occasionally, I stumble onto a lesson of life. Take a piece of wood and put it to a sander and pretty soon you will discover that the wood has grain, the way in which nature has pitched its fibers. And if you work with that grain, you can get a smooth piece of wood. You work against it, and smoothness never comes. (congregation member coughs) And isn't this a principle that prevails all the way through Creation? Peace comes when life is lived in harmony with the Creator's intent. You live against it, and peace never comes. Perhaps this is the reason, dear friends, that so many institutions of learning have their roots in man's need for understanding of the great theological and ethical truths which have been proclaimed on this planet. You see, this man Jesus is important to us. Long ago, He walked the dusty trails of a far away corner of the Earth, and He laid down a carefully conceived plan of life, and that plan has been tried in the fires of human experience, and the common verdict of history is that this is the way God intended life to be lived. No one yet has managed to match life completely with that plan, but those who turn their faces in that direction and who climb the high and the rocky peaks whisper back to the rest of us, "This is the way to peace. It is through God's will." This, I think, is what the angels really said, and there is no other way to find peace, in this world, or the worlds to come. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, amen. (congregation member coughs)

- As we pray responsively, let us offer to God this litany of commemoration. (congregation member coughs)
Almighty and eternal God in whom our parents trusted, we, their children, on this day of remembrance offer unto You our litany of commemoration.

- Hear us, we beseech You, O Lord.

- For the men and women of this state, Methodists and Quakers, farmers and merchants, teachers and administrators, who believed in education and made their belief prevail:

- We give You thanks and praise.

- For the embodiment of their dreams, private school, academy, college, university, founded in hope, continued with perseverance, growing in outreach, established in assurance:

- We give You thanks and praise.

- For educators whose vision was matched by their courage, whose patience was tempered by their indignation, whose idealism was moderated by their awareness of sin:

- We give You thanks and praise.

- For the Duke family, father, sons, and their wives, grandchildren, and continuing generations, who, with wonder and surprise, bewilderment and tenacity, laid a good foundation, built a worthy school, and provided for exciting growth beyond their kin in years unseen:

- We give You thanks and praise.

- For the continuance of good ideas, the union of truth and reverence, the freedom of responsible academic thought and the right of public concern, the joint care of the body and the spirit, the linking of science and humanities, the realization that the old order changes:

- We give You thanks and praise.

- For the future of our university, established to Your glory and for the relief of the human condition, for the consecration of the discontent of the young, for wisdom and the conservatism of the middle-aged, for resiliency and the obstinacy of the old, for understanding, cooperation, and a sense of humor within our community:

- We give this, our prayer.

- And to You, we shall ascribe, as is most due, all praise and glory, world without end. Amen. (mellow organ

music) (slow uplifting organ music) (uplifting organ and choir music) (uplifting organ and choir music fades)