

- Good morning, we'd like to welcome you to Duke chapel. I'd like to call a couple of announcements to your attention. Our guest preacher today, is the Reverend Dr. Dennis Campbell, who is the dean of the Duke Divinity School, and we welcome him. Also, this evening at five p.m., Doctor David Arcus will present a concert in the chapel on the Flentrop organ, and we hope you will be able to return for that concert. He is also premiering an anthem today, in the offertory slot. And we are grateful to Dr. David Arcus for his outstanding music that he contributes to our worship. Would you please stand as we continue our worship with a greeting. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Crowd: And also with you.

- The risen Christ is with us.

Crowd: Praise be to our Lord. (organ music) (crowd sings worship song) Let us pray. Oh God, light of the minds that know you. Life of the souls that love you. Strength of the thoughts that seek you. Help us so to know you that we may truly love you. And so to love you, that we may fully serve you. Whose service is perfect freedom through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen. You may be seated.

- Let us pray together, the prayer for Illumination. 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 your word with joy this day, amen. The Old Testament reading is taken from the first book of Samuel chapter two, verses one through 10. Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exalts in the Lord. My strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies because I rejoice in my victory. There is no holy one like the Lord. No one besides you. There is no rock like our God. Talk no more, so very proudly. Let not arrogance come from your mouth for the Lord is a God of knowledge. And by him, actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken but the feeble gird on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread but those who were hungry are fat with spoil. The barren has born seven. But she, who has many children, is forlorn. The Lord kills and brings to life. He brings down to Sheol and raises up. The Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low he also exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust, he lifts the needy from the ash heap. To make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's. And on them, he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness. For not by might, does one prevail. The Lord, his adversary shall be shattered. The most high will thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth, he will give strength to his king and exalt the power of his anointed. This is the word of the Lord.

Crowd: Thanks be to God.

- Today's psalm is number 113 found on page 834 in the Hymnal. Please stand and sing the psalm in glory responsibly. (organ music) ♪ Praise the Lord ♪ (crowd sings) ♪ Blessed be the name of the Lord ♪ ♪ From this

time forth and forevermore ♪ (crowd sings) ♪ The Lord is high above all nations ♪ ♪ God's glory above the heavens ♪ (crowd sings) ♪ God raises the poor from the dust ♪ ♪ And lift the needy from the ash heap ♪ ♪ To make them sit with princes ♪ ♪ With the princes of God's people ♪ (crowd sings) ♪ All glory be to you creator ♪ ♪ And to Jesus Christ our savior ♪ (crowd sings) ♪ As it was, her time began ♪ (crowd sings)

- The epistle for this morning service is from the book the Hebrews, chapter 10 verses 11 through 25. And every priest stands, day after day at his service. Offering again and again, the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time, a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. And since then, has been waiting until his enemies would be made a foot stool for his feet. For by a single offering, he has perfected for all time, those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days," says the Lord. "I will put my laws in their heart and I will write them on their minds." He also adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more. Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin." Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he open for us through the curtain, that is through his flesh. And since we have a great priest over the houses of God, let us approach with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, with your hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering. For he, who has promised, is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some. But encouraging one another and all the more, as you see the day approaching. This is the word of the Lord.

Crowd: Thanks be to God. ♪ Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound ♪ ♪ That saved a wretch like me ♪ ♪ I once was lost, but now am found ♪ ♪ Was blind but now I see ♪ ♪ T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear ♪ ♪ And Grace, my fears relieved ♪ ♪ How precious did that grace appear ♪ ♪ The hour I first believed ♪ ♪ Through many dangers, toils and snares ♪ ♪ I have already come ♪ ♪ T'was grace that brought us safe thus far ♪ ♪ And grace will lead me home ♪ ♪ The Lord hath promised good to me ♪ ♪ His word my hope secures ♪ ♪ He will my shield and portion be ♪ ♪ As long as life endures ♪ ♪ Amazing grace how sweet the sound ♪ ♪ That saved a wretch like me ♪ ♪ I once was lost, but now am found ♪ ♪ Was blind, but now I see ♪ ♪ I once was lost, but now am found ♪ ♪ Was blind, but now I see ♪

- The gospel lesson for this morning is taken from Mark in the 13th chapter, verses one through eight. As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, teacher, what large stones. And what large buildings." Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another. All will be thrown down." When he was sitting on the mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will this be? And what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished? Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say I am he. And they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place. But the end is still to come. For a nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places. There will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pains. This is the word of the Lord.

Crowd: Thanks be to God.

- If you were here in the chapel last Sunday, you heard not only, magnificent music as we always hear but you also heard a wonderful sermon about the widow's offering preached by Dr. Willimon. Jesus was in the temple in Jerusalem and he sat down, opposite the treasury. And there, as people came up to the treasury, he watched wealthy people putting in large sums of money to support that enterprise. But he also watched a poor widow. She put in two small copper coins worth a penny. And Jesus noticed this and praised her. "I tell you" he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of abundance. But she, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had, all she had to live on." Jesus makes it clear that the small and insignificant offering, is in fact, a great offering. And we are reminded that often, what seems great and magnificent may not be as great as it first appears. The truth requires much more careful analysis. Today's lesson from the gospel of Mark comes immediately after that story about the poor widow and her offering. In fact, the temple precincts have been the site of Jesus activity for Mark, since his entry into Jerusalem two chapters earlier. Last week, we saw Jesus in the temple sitting by the treasury. Today, he and his disciples have come outside. And as they emerged, one of the disciples looks around and comments on the buildings. "Look teacher" he says, "what large stones and what large buildings." The disciples were astonished at the magnificence of the construction and adornment of the sanctuary and its complex of courts, porches, balconies and buildings. The temple precincts took at least 1/6 of the whole of Jerusalem. The construction was of huge, white marble stones. Superbly engineered and exquisitely finished. The great white marble was decorated with gold. The Jerusalem temple was in fact, one of the architectural wonders of the ancient world. I was at a football game yesterday afternoon. Before the game, we were invited to tailgate with some people from Lexington, Kentucky. There were people there that I had never met before. One man came over, introduced himself and asked who I was and where I was from. The first thing he said, when he heard Duke, he said, "Well, I've ridden up in the chapel elevator. I've seen that magnificent building. And he went on to talk about this chapel, its tower and its windows. And if you are a Dukee, that has almost surely happened to you. People come from all over the world to see this chapel. It is the most visited attraction in the state of North Carolina. During good weather, tour buses pull up almost everyday. We aren't known as the gothic Disneyland for nothing. This chapel is an embodiment of the best in institutional religion. Mr. Duke wanted this place as a centerpiece on this campus. A great, towering church that would inspire students and faculty. It's impossible to ignore the Christian foundation of Duke University. This magnificent building literally symbolizes Duke all over the world. When someone remarks to me about this chapel, I respond with polite, restrained pride. I'm sure that's what the disciples expected of Jesus that day in Jerusalem. Look teacher at these beautiful stones and this wonderful building. Yes, Jesus might have said it's wonderful. A fitting tribute to God. We are proud of the temple. People come from all over to Jerusalem to see it. Trouble is, that's not what Jesus said. He never did the predictable things. He usually said things that were unexpected. Things that cause people to stop and think. Things that still make us think in new ways about things we take for granted. Jesus said in response to the disciple's statement, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another. All will be thrown down." A suitable, appropriate deconstructionist text for Duke University. Imagine if someone said that about us here at Duke Chapel or Canterbury Cathedral or St. Peter's in Rome. We would be horrified. We might even think the person crazy or dangerous. In fact, years later, the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. In 70 A.D., the Romans burned the temple and then it was dismantled stone by stone. When Jesus made his startling statement, however, the disciples immediately

asked him when it would happen. It's a suitable question perhaps, but Jesus cautioned them, you heard the text. "Don't get led away by false prophets," he said. "You'll have people who will tell you all kinds of prophecy. But be careful." I was told just last week by a friend that he had gone into his brother-in-law's home and there, on the coffee table, was a copy of The Jerusalem Times. They subscribed to it, he told me, because they believe that by reading The Jerusalem Times, they can see predictions about the future. Appropriate to the Bible. Jesus clearly suggests that's not a very appropriate thing to do. The future is in God's hands. It's not ours to worry about. Our job, Jesus suggests, is to be faithful and to carry on God's mission in our own time and place. Jesus' statement about the temple should make us think about what is ultimately important. What will endure when the things of this world, even the most magnificent things of this world, are gone. Number of years ago, my wife Lisa and I had the occasion to visit the holy island of Iona. This tiny island lies in the midst of the Hebrides off the western coast of Scotland. Fashioned of rock and heather, the Atlantic seas beat ceaselessly upon it. 1,400 years ago, on the last day of his life, St. Columba, whose name is forever bound with that of Iona, ascended a little hill overlooking the monastery which was located there, and blessed the island. For centuries, from all over the world, pilgrims have come to worship and to be refreshed. In the medieval period, Iona was a center from which learning and piety went out throughout all of Northern Europe. Iona became known as a lighthouse to the dark ages. It witnessed to the truth, power and vitality of the gospel, in a time when it appeared that nothing would endure. Now Iona is a peaceful island and the monastery has been restored by the church of Scotland as a center for the Iona community. A community which promotes world peace and works to reform, especially, inter-city Scotland and other areas of the world. The island is a home for work parties, study groups and persons seeking spiritual retreat. On the road from the village to the Abbey church, on the spot it is said where St. Columbo rested halfway on the last day of his life, there stands a medieval wayside cross. Beautifully carved, more than 10 feet high. And on the day we were there, we had taken a walk and we came up the hill and stood at the top and looked down onto that cross and at the base of the cross, there was a work party of college students. It was very moving, they were having a time of worship during their retreat, and we could hear them singing from afar. And they were singing that great hymn in the cross of Christ I glory, towering o're the wrecks of time. It was very dramatic because there on Iona, you could literally see some of the wrecks of time. Ruins of houses and barns, remains of former churches, tombs of kings and queens of Scotland, graves of nobles and of common folk, these were all around us, giving immediate evidence of the wrecks of time. But the cross of Jesus Christ was standing and it alone, pointed to the truth of the eternity. Now we can see the meaning of Jesus' statement outside the temple in Jerusalem. It's easy to get focused on the magnificence of the things of this world. The temple after all, was an extraordinary achievement. It embodied the outward splendor of institutional religion. I think, by the way, that we should not lose sight of the fact that this passage immediately followed Jesus teaching about the poor widow that Will preached about last Sunday. Jesus had been sitting by the treasury in the temple watching people contribute large sums of money. And it was that money that sustained the power and glory of the religious establishment of his time. As well as praising the poor widow. Jesus was pointing to the danger of a self-satisfied elite living off of the money and sacrifices of others. The theological meaning of this passage about the destruction of the temple is that Jesus himself is to be the center of worship. In the second chapter of John's gospel, Jesus cleanses the temple and then he says, "Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up." the religious leaders who heard him say that mocked. They said back, "This temple has been under construction for 46 years. And you will raise it up in three days?" But of course, he was speaking of his

own body. After he was raised from the dead, the scriptures tell us, his disciples remembered that he had said this and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. Jesus becomes the new center of worship for the Christian community. Alexis de Tocqueville once wrote, if I had children, I would teach them to choose that which endures in a world of change. What endures in a world of change? Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another. All will be thrown down. Now certainly, I hope Duke Chapel will endure long beyond my lifetime. But the point Jesus is making is essential for us to understand. In one way or another, the wrecks of time engulf us all. What are these wrecks of time? Certainly, material things, buildings, human achievements, our grand schemes and plans, our ego, so tenderly nurtured in this university. I was talking not long ago with a woman doctor from mainland China and I asked her, what it was like in the Christian church today in China? And she told me the story about how during the time of Mao Zedong, the Christians had endured through small house churches. Sometimes, she said, even members of the same family didn't know that each other was participating in a small house church. But she said the Christian faith endured. Mao's China is gone. Oh there still are problems. Human rights and Christians are still not free. But nevertheless, it's a new day there and we are learning more and more everyday that the Christian witness was never snuffed out. It was never a part of the wrecks of time that the rest of that society, that tried to snuff it out became. You can think also of the church in Eastern Europe. We were in Eastern Europe in September to talk about the present state and the future shape of the church. And we were told story after story of individual Christians and small Christian communities that had endured through the desolation of repressive regimes that sought to stamp out the church. Oh where are kings and empires now of old, that went and came but Lord thy church is praying yet. A thousand years, the same. What endures? The cross of Christ alone endures and all that it stands for. And we are called I think, to choose that which endures in a world of change. All of us ought to ponder today, why should we commit our lives to the wrecks of time when we can commit our lives to that which endures? There are huge needs in our society and we are called to live our life for something that's greater than ourselves and our own interests and our own enjoyment, our own parties and good times. Those won't endure. But what we do for others, what we care about that will matter to our communities, those things will endure beyond our own life. The city in which we live is troubled as are virtually all our nation's cities. We have abiding concerns for racial justice and for community. The plight of children and the quality of education loom before us. Many of these needs masquerade as social policy and no matter who controls the congress, the answers won't come simply from social policy. Because at root, they are moral and spiritual. As has been true throughout human history, our problems are finally matters of identity, character and meaning. And these things will endure. These matters are answered by faithful response to the call to service. And it doesn't have to be heroic. I visited with a man a number of years ago and actually participated in his funeral who had spent his whole life as a teacher in a high school in rural Wisconsin. And as I talked with him, he seemed a bit depressed, he had given up any hope of material well-being or fancy recognition. And yet, at his funeral, people came back from all over including one man who talked to me afterwards who had become a permanent member of the staff of the United Nations and he told me that this man had literally changed his life, had gotten him to see beyond the limitations of the community in which he lived. And I was reminded and reminded everyday in one way or another that one person whose life is committed to ideals greater than the self, to things that will endure can make a difference in individual lives and in the life of our community and world. That's what Jesus was talking about. That we not fail to see the truth. All about us are evidences of the wrecks of time. Jesus reminds us of what endures. In the end, the good news of the

gospel of Jesus Christ endures, that alone. It is the truth for all time in every place. Giving for others, living for others. It cannot, and will not be silenced by the wrecks of time of this world. In the cross of Christ, I glory. Towering o're the wrecks of time. Amen. (organ music) (crowd singing worship song)

Debra: The Lord be with you.

Crowd: And also with you.

- Let us pray, you may be seated. Enduring God. It is so easy for us to be misled by the things of this world that do not last. Give us clear vision that we might discern what is true and lasting. Guide us on pass that lead to life everlasting. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Oh God, the wrecks of time are sometimes, overwhelming. In the burv pangs of of the age to come. Sometimes, we see and feel only the pain. Help us not to lose sight of the joy of your new creation. Keep our eyes focused on the cross of Christ that towers over the wrecks of time. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Deliver us from the threat of despair and hopelessness. Help us recognize the truth about our world that keep us from believing only in tragic headlines of violence, disaster and war. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Deliver us from excessive fear about the future. Keep us from profits of doom who forecast only worsening conditions without hope. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer. Keep us also from excessive pride in our ability to fix things. Help us become those who faithfully labor in your kingdom now. But also remind us that the future and the age to come are in your hands. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Make us mindful of those around us who need signs of hope and something greater than themselves to believe in. Show us ways that we can reach out to them that they may know your love through our love. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Bless your church in the world that we might be a sign of the age to come. Help us create enclaves of mercy, peace and love where the reflection of your glory might become visible to the whole world. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. God of wonders, you work your will throughout the world. And we believe that ultimately, all things will work for the good of those who love you. You are the ground that we trust and the source of all our hope. Keep us close to you that we might serve your eternal enduring purposes as you have revealed them in Jesus Christ. Take us and all that we are and all that we do. Forgive what is imperfect and flawed. And show us how to make amends so that our lives maybe better witnesses to the presence of our risen Lord and savior Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, amen. God has graciously blessed us, it is our privilege to share. (organ music) (choir singing worship song) Let us pray. God of all mercies, we give you amble thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness. To our center all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life. But above all, for your immeasurable love and the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. For the means of grace and for the hope of glory. And we pray give us such an awareness of your mercies that with truly thankful hearts, we may show forth our praise, not only with our lips but in our lives. By giving up ourselves to your service. And by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be honor and glory throughout all ages, amen. 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen. (organ music) (crowd singing worship song) Go forth in peace. The grace of the Lord

Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you and keep you. (crowd sings worship song)