

(bright church organ music) (slow church organ music) (choir singing) ♪ Blessed be the God and Father ♪ ♪ Of our Lord Jesus Christ ♪ ♪ Which, according to his abundant mercy ♪ ♪ Has begotten us again unto the living hope ♪ ♪ By the resurrection ♪ ♪ Of Jesus Christ ♪ ♪ From the dead ♪ (bright church organ music) (choir singing)

- This is a very special occasion in the year of Duke University when we gather in early December to celebrate the founding of this university. And in celebrating the founding of this university to remember especially those who made it possible. The leaders within Trinity College, William Preston Few with his great vision. The Duke family with its leadership from the time that Trinity College moved to Durham. The great preparations that they made in building a very strong college on which a great university could be founded. And I think some 60 years ago as James Buchanan Duke discussed this with his associates, with his brother Benjamin Duke. And having, I'm sure, earlier discussed it with their father, that no one could fully realize the accomplishments of that act of endowing an university. Now as we look at it 60 years later, no one could possible of realized the vast influence that would have been spread throughout civilization by the creation of this university. And so, we celebrate their memory, and celebrate their accomplishments with vast appreciation of what was done. And it's important for us to remember on Founders Day that no great institution is simply founded and then we're done with it. The founding of a great university continues year by year, and day by day. Continues to be built by those who appreciate it, and who love it, and who contribute to it, and who see its future and all of the brightness that the promise of a great university has. And where maybe 60 years ago, no one could quite realize what could be accomplished. It's easier for us today to have a vision of the future because we have advantage of seeing it now 60 years after the first accomplishment. And the lesson to us is, is we dedicate ourselves to Duke University and to its future. We fairly well know what we can do with out contributions and our love, and our concern. But even at that, I imagine that 60 years from now people will be standing in this chapel saying that those people 60 years ago could hardly of realized the contributions that Duke University would then be making to the cause of civilization all over the world. That's the nature of an university and especially the nature of a great university, and especially the destiny of Duke University. And I thank all of you who have had and are having a part in the ongoing founding of Duke University. Thank you.

- Let us pray. Oh eternal God, bless all schools, colleges and universities, especially our beloved Duke University, that they may be lively centers of sound learning, new discovery and the pursuit of wisdom. And grant that those who teach and those who learn may find that their questions and their scholarly search end in you. The one who art the way, the truth and the life. And make us, those who now teach and study at Duke University worthy of the dream which our founders made a reality. Uniting religion and erudition now and throughout all our lives, amen. Would you join me in the litany of commemoration. All mighty and eternal God in whom our mothers and fathers have trusted, we their children at this time of remembrance offer onto the our prayers of Thanksgiving. Here us, we beseech thee oh 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, continue to worthy school and provided for education and service beyond even their dreams and expectations. We give thee thanks and praise. For the pioneering and persevering men and women connected with this university. Methodist and Quakers, farmers and merchants, teachers and administrators, who in days gone by believed in education and made their belief prevail. We give thee thanks and praise. 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. We give thee thanks and praise. For faculty and staff who's vision was blustered by their courage. Who's patience was tested and found true, and whose idealism was implanted in the hearts and minds of others. We give thee thanks and praise. For the ongoing presence of noble ideas, the blending of erudito 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 possibilities. 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 later years. 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, we give thee thanks and praise. And to thee oh God, we shall ascribe as is most due, all praise and glory, world without end, amen. We welcome you to this service of worship on the second Sunday in the season of Advent. We particularly welcome our visitors, those who are here to celebrate with us this Founders Day, and also in this service of worship. Let us continue as we worship. I should say, by the way, that I thank my friend Stuart Henry for being the preacher of the day. Dr. Henry is retiring this year from divinity school. He will continue to fill some teaching responsibilities in the department of religion. But he has been a good friend, he is an every Sunday worshiper in Duke Chapel. And we are in for a treat as he brings us the word today. Thank you. (slow church organ music) (Choir singing) ♪ O come Emmanuel ♪ ♪ And ransom captive Israel ♪ ♪ That mourns in lonely exile here ♪ ♪ Until the son of God appear ♪ ♪ Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel ♪ ♪ Shall come to thee, O Israel ♪ Let us stand. Let us pray. Oh blessed Lord our God, in this holy season of Advent come again to us this day. Come into our hearts and so cleanse them that we, being pure in heart, may know the peace which comes from thee, the peace the world can neither give nor take away. Come into our minds and so enlightened and illumine them that we may know the one who is the way, the truth and the life. Touch our lips that we speak those words which spread thy love and give other hope and courage in times of special need. Touch our eyes that they may behold the glory and goodness of thy handy work in all that surrounds us this holy season. Touch hands that they may become truly instruments to serve the needs of others. To love as though would have us love. Come when we are sad, to comfort us. When we are tired, to refresh us. When we are lonely, to cheer us. When we are tempted, to strength us. When we are perplexed, to guide us. When we are happy, to make our joy doubly blessed. Come oh blessed Lord, through Jesus Christ, amen. (choir singing and organ music)

- Let us pray. Gracious God send your light into our darkness so that by the power of your holy spirit our eyes and ears might be opened to your word, amen. The first lesson is taken from Isaiah. "Comfort, comfort my people," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem "and cry to her that her warfare is ended, "that her iniquity is pardoned, "and that she has received from the Lord's hand "double for all her sins." A voice cries,

"In the wilderness "prepare the way of the Lord, "make straight in the desert a highway for our God. "Every valley shall be lifted up "and every mountain will be made low. "The uneven shall become level "and the rough places a plain. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed "and all flesh shall see it together "for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry and I." And I said, "What shall I cry? "All flesh is grass. "And all its beauty is like a flower of the field. "The grass withers then the flower fades "when the breath of the Lord blows upon it. "Surely the people is grass. "The grass withers the flower fades. "But the word of God will stand forever. "Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, "herald of good tidings. "Lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, "herald of good tidings. "Lift it up, fear not. "Say to the cities of Judah, "behold your God, behold the Lord comes with might. "And his arm rules for him, behold his reward is with him "and his recompense before him. "He will feed his flock like a shepard. "He will gather the lambs in his arms. "He will carry them in his bosom "and gently lead those that are with the young." This ends the reading of the first lesson. The second lesson is from First Peter chapter three. "But do not ignore this one fact beloved, "That with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years. "And a thousand years as one day. "The Lord is not slow about his promise "as some count slowness, "but is forbearing toward you "not wishing that any should perish, "but that all should reach repentance. "But, the day of the Lord will come like a thief "and then the heavens will pass away "with a loud noise, "and elements will be dissolved with fire. "And the earth and the works that are upon it "will be burned up. "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, "what sort of persons ought to be in lives "of holiness and godliness? "Waiting for and hasting the coming of the day of God "because of which the heavens will be kenneled and dissolved "and the elements will melt with fire. "But according to his promise, "we wait for new heavens and a new earth "in which righteousness dwells. "Therefore beloved, since you wait these, "be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish, "and at peace. "And count the forbearance of our Lord as salvation." This ends the reading of the second lesson. (church organ music and choir singing) The gospel is taken from Saint Mark. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God as it is written in Isaiah the Prophet. "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, "who shall prepare thy way. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness "prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. "John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness "preaching a baptism of repentance "for the forgiveness of sins. "And they went out to him all the country of Judah "and all the people of Jerusalem. "And they were baptized by him in the river Jordan "confessing their sins. "Now, John was clothed with camel's hair "and had a leather girdle around his waste "and ate locust and wild honey. "And he preached saying, "'After me comes he who is mightier than I. "'The thong of whose sandals "'I'm not worthy to stoop down and untie. "'I have baptized you with water, "'but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'" This ends the reading of the gospel of our Lord, amen.

- Hear our word as it is recorded in the book of Joshua. "When all the nation had finished passing over Jordan, "the Lord said to Joshua, 'Take 12 men from the people. "'From each tribe of man and command them, "'take 12 stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, "'from the very place where the priest's feet stood, "'and carry them over with you and lay them down "'in the place where you lodged tonight.' "And then Joshua called the 12 men from the people of Israel "whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. "And Joshua said to them, 'Pass on before the arc "'of the Lord God, into the midst of the Jordan "'and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder "'according to the number of the tribes "'of the children of Israel. "'That this may be sign among you "'when your children ask in time to come, "'what do these stones mean to you? "'Then you shall tell them that the waters of Jordan "'were cut off before the arc when it passed over

Jordan. "The waters of Jordan were cut off, "so these stones shall be to the people of Israel "a memorial forever." In the name of the father and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen. Made as they are it is not usually possible for our minds to think in the abstract. I cannot think of truth as truth. Rather I have to think of someone who tells the truth. I cannot think of beauty without thinking of something that seems beautiful to me. However clear abstract ideas are to us we have to put them in specific shapes to be able to think about them. Now a university is a word which places similar demands upon our thinking. For the universities that we know are specific universities. What do you think of when I say the word university? Or, more particularly, what do you think of when hear the word Duke? A certain afternoon? A flowering tree? The cars crowded chock-a-block in the parking lot? Where you sat in a particular classroom? Someone you learned to know? Or, someone you tried to forget? Not improbably the specific image which the word conjures up in our minds is one of buildings. The entrance to a dormitory. The visual rhythm of gothic gables against a fading winter light. A tower against the sky. When I think university, I think Duke. And when I think Duke, walls of warm gray stone rise up about me. I submit to you that there is a sermon in these stones, they speak, they cry out with a commanding voice of experience and hope. What is it that these stones say? Properly to understand and to celebrate.