

(light organ music)

- Good morning, welcome to the service of worship here on the 17th Sunday after Pentecost. We're glad that you're here. Call your attention to a couple of announcements in the bulletin, this afternoon at two o'clock is the information meeting for our annual chapel work team mission team, trip to Honduras. This was a life-changing event for those Duke students who participated in this last year and today this afternoon is a time to come to get information if you're interested in being a part of that mission project. This week on Tuesday evening at 5:15 we begin our Tisae Prayer Service here in the chapel, in Memorial Chapel, we thus have two afternoon or evening prayer services on Tuesdays with the Tisae Prayer Service and on Thursday with Choral Vespers. We had an overflow crowd this Thursday for the first Choral Vespers. If you're around campus on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons, you would probably like to come in and be a part of those services. And now let us continue our worship with a greeting, stand. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Crowd: I salute you.

- The risen Christ is with us.

- Praise the lord. (rousing organ music) ♪ Sing praise to God who reigns above ♪ ♪ The God of all creation ♪ ♪ The God of power ♪ ♪ The God of love ♪ ♪ The God of our salvation ♪ ♪ With healing balm my soul is filled ♪ ♪ And every faithless murmur stilled ♪ ♪ To God all praise and glory ♪ ♪ The Lord is never far away ♪ ♪ But through all grief distressing ♪ ♪ An ever present help and stay ♪ ♪ Our peace and joy and blessing ♪ ♪ As with a mother's tender hand ♪ ♪ God gently leads the chosen band ♪ ♪ To God all praise and glory ♪ ♪ Thus all my toilsome way along ♪ ♪ I sing aloud thy praises ♪ ♪ That earth may hear the grateful song ♪ ♪ My voice unwearied raises ♪ ♪ Be joyful in the Lord, my heart ♪ ♪ Both soul and body bear your part ♪ ♪ To God all praise and glory ♪ ♪ Let all who name Christ's holy name ♪ ♪ Give God all praise and glory ♪ ♪ Let all who own his power proclaim ♪ ♪ Aloud the wondrous story ♪ ♪ Cast each false idol from its throne ♪ ♪ For Christ is Lord, and Christ alone ♪ ♪ To God all praise and glory ♪

- Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you call your church to witness that in Jesus Christ we are reconciled to you, and to each other. Help us so to proclaim the good news of your love. That all who hear it may turn to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, amen.

- Let us pray.

All: Open our hearts and minds oh God, by the power of your holy spirit, so that is the word is read and proclaimed, you might hear with joy, you say to us this day, amen.

- The first reading is taken from the book of Genesis. Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp," so he called that place Mahanaim. Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau, in the land of Seir, in the country of Edom. Instructing them, thus you shall say to my Lord Esau, thus says your servant, Jacob, I have lived with Laban as an alien and stayed until now. And I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves, and I have sent to tell my Lord in order that I may find favor in your sight. The messengers returned to Jacob saying, "We came to your brother Esau and he is coming to meet you "and 400 men are with him." Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. And he divided the people that were with him. And the flocks and herds and camels into two companies, thinking, if Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape. And Jacob said, "Oh God of my father Abraham, "and God of my father Isaac, "oh Lord who said to me, return to your country, "and to your kindred and I will do you good. "I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love, "and all the faithfulness that you have shown "to your servant, for with only my staff I cross this Jordan "and now I have come between two companies. "Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, "from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him. "He may come and kill us all, "the mothers with the children, "yet you have said, I will surely do you good "and make your offsprings as the sand of the sea, "which cannot be counted, "because of their number." So he spent that night there. And from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, 200 female goats and 20 male goats. 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 milch camels and their colts. 40 cows and 10 bulls. 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me "and put a space between drove and drove." He instructed the foremost. "When Esau my brother meets you "and asks you to whom do you belong, "where are you going, "and whose are these ahead of you, "then you shall say, they belong to your servant Jacob, "they are a present sent to my Lord Esau, "and moreover, he is behind us." He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau "when you meet him, and you shall say, "moreover, your servant Jacob is behind you." For he thought, I may appease him with a present that goes ahead of me. And afterwards I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me. Now Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming. And 400 men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. He, himself, went on ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times until he came near his brother. But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him. And fell on his neck and kissed him and they wept. Then Esau said, "Let us journey on your way, "and I will go alongside you," but Jacob said to him, "My Lord knows "that the children are frail and that the flocks "and herds which are nursing are a care to me, "and if they are overdriven for one day, "all the flocks will die. "Let my Lord pass on ahead of his servant, "and I will lead on slowly according "to the pace of the cattle that are before me "and according to the pace of the children "until I come to my Lord in Seir." This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Bless you, God.

Director: Page 834, let us stand and read responsively. (rousing organ music) ♪ Praise the Lord ♪ ♪ Praise Him all ye servants of the Lord ♪ ♪ Praise the Name of the Lord ♪ ♪ Blessed be the name of the Lord ♪ ♪ From this time forth and forever more ♪ ♪ From the rising of the sun ♪ ♪ To its setting ♪ ♪ The name of the Lord is to

be praised ♪ ♪ The Lord is high above all nations ♪ ♪ God's glory above the Heavens ♪ ♪ Who is like the Lord,  
our God ♪ ♪ Who is seated on high ♪ ♪ Who looks far down ♪ ♪ On the heavens and the Earth ♪ ♪ God raises  
the poor from the dust ♪ ♪ And lifts the needy from the ash heap ♪ ♪ To make them sit with princes ♪ ♪ With  
the princes of God's people ♪ ♪ God gives the barren woman a home ♪ ♪ Making her the joyous mother of  
children ♪ ♪ Praise the lord ♪ ♪ All glory be to you, oh God ♪ ♪ And to Jesus Christ our Savior ♪ ♪ Praise Him all  
ye servants of the Lord ♪ ♪ Praise the Name of the Lord ♪ ♪ As it was since time began ♪ ♪ Praise the Lord ♪ ♪  
Forevermore ♪

- Be seated. This reading is taken from the gospel according to Saint Mark. Jesus went on with his disciples to the village of Caesarea Philippi and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist." And others, "Elijah," and still others, "One of the prophets." He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah," and he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. Then he began to teach them that the son of man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter, and said, "Get behind me, Satan, for you are setting your mind "not on divine things but on human things." He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, "let them deny themselves, and take up their cross, "and follow me. "For those who want to save their life will lose it, "and those who lose their life for my sake, "and for the sake of the kingdom, "and the gospel, will save it." For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them, the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father with the holy angels. This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise be God. (rousing organ music) (choir sings in foreign language)

- Let us recall in the story from Genesis, Jacob has been staying with Laban and he is preparing now to re-enter the promised land, and see his brother Esau again. Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp," so he called that place Mahanaim. Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, instructing them, thus shall you say to my Lord Esau, thus says your servant, Jacob, I have lived with Laban as an alien and stayed until now and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves, and I have sent to tell my Lord, in order that I might find favor in your sight. The messengers returned to Jacob saying, "We came to your brother Esau, "and he is coming to meet you, "and 400 men are with him." Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. And he divided the people that were with him and the flocks and herds and camels into two companies, thinking, if Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape. And Jacob said, "Oh God of my father Abraham, "and God of my father Isaac, oh Lord you said to me, "return to your country and to your kindred "and I will do you good, I am not worthy "of the least of all the steadfast love "and all the faithfulness that you "have shown to your servant, "for with only my staff I cross this Jordan. "And now I've become two companies. "Deliver me please from the hand of my brother, "from the hand of Esau. "For I am afraid of him, he may come and kill us all, "the mothers with the children, "if you have said, I will surely do you good, "and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, "which cannot

be counted because of their number." So he spent that night there and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau. 200 female goats and 20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 milch camels and their colts, 40 cows and 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. These he delivered into the hands of his servants, every drove by itself and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me, "and put a space between drove and drove, "instruct the foremost, when Esau my brother meets you, "and asks you to whom do you belong, "where are you going, and whose are these ahead of you, "then you shall say, they belong to your servant Jacob, "they are presents sent to my Lord Esau, "for moreover he is behind us." He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves. You shall say the same thing to Esau when you meet him, and you shall say, "Moreover your servant Jacob "is behind us." For he thought, I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me. And afterwards I shall see his face, perhaps he will accept me. Now Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming and 400 men with him, so he divided the children, among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with their children, and then Rachel and Joseph last of all. He himself went on ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times until he came near his brother. But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. Then Esau said, "Let us journey on our way, "and I will go alongside you," but Jacob said to him, "My Lord knows "that the children are frail, and that the flocks and herds "which are nursing are a care to me, "and if they are overdriven for one day, "all the flocks will die. "Let my Lord pass on ahead of his servant "and I will lead on slowly. "According to the pace of the cattle that are before me, "and according to the pace of my children, "until I come to my Lord in Seir." Thanks be to God.

- First there was The Donna Reed Show and then Ozzie and Harriet, Father Knows Best, The Brady Bunch, The Cosby Show and now the family show for the '90s, The Simpsons. The Simpsons has been condemned by school principals in Ohio, saying Bart Simpson is a poor role model. But we watch this show because we know that here is family Americana warts and all. Here is our family life as it is, not on Cosby but as it is. 'Cause let us face the truth about ourselves. We, the human family, we are in a mess. Most of the real damage that we do to one another, the lasting damage is done in family. I wonder if we've developed into a kind of nation of strangers, because we lack the resources to endure one another in close range. Here's a fantasy I have of Duke students making love, like dentists doing X-rays. Lead aprons, separate rooms, okay I'm ready to turn on the machine now. A year ago at baccalaureate I told about a conversation I had with a Duke sophomore. I had seen her on campus with a young man. I said, "Are you two dating?" No no no no, no we're not dating, we're seeing each other. Seeing each other, it sounds so Victorian, like people sitting in parlors with chaperones. We're seeing each other. And I said to her, "What is this that your generation "seems so paranoid about commitment, "about putting your money down on somebody?" She said, "Yeah we were raised by your generation." (congregation laughs) And it's true, I figure about half of us here came from marriages that failed. Spouse abuse, elder abuse, it's all in the family. Any law enforcement officer would tell you, that he or she would rather go into a bank robbery than a marital argument. I understand that more people are shot and killed in bedrooms than in bar rooms. The median age for marriage keeps rising, rising. And I think it's because many of you have seen people chewed up in the machinery of matrimony, you are cautious. It's tough, to be together. Now if you have been here for the past couple of Sundays, you know that we have been following the story of a family in a mess. Troubled family, our family, this is not The Brady Bunch, it's The Bible. It's a true story, if a not altogether inspiring one, this isn't Ozzie

and Harriet, this is Isaac and Rebekah. Poor big dumb older brother Esau. And the conniving schemer, upstart little brother Jacob. While still in the womb, these two twins had such a struggle that they threw Rebekah into the first case of pre-partum depression. And when she delivered these twins, one came out of the womb, punching the other's heel, and so they called him Jacob, which means grabber or heel, either designation fit Jacob. And then we're told Mom loved Jacob, Dad loved Esau, these were not model parents. Jacob took advantage then of Esau during a weak moment. Most of Esau's moments were weak moments, and duped him out of his inheritance and then he followed that up by dressing up in his brother's hunting clothes, with his poor father dying, blind, and went to his bedside dressed up in his brother's clothes and he got the blessing, and then he got the entire inheritance that should have gone to his brother Esau. And Esau hated Jacob for it and said, "When Dad dies, "I'm going to kill that little trickster." Is this Dallas? Mom, who'd remember unashamedly loved Jacob more than Esau caught wind of Esau's plan, she warned Jacob and had him high tail it out of town, telling her dying husband that she decided it was a good time for Jacob to go back to Uncle Laban and find a nice girl of their religion and race to marry. If you've come here this morning looking for helpful hints for happy homemaking, you will not find it in this story. But on the other hand at least you cannot accuse The Bible of being naive, romantic, papering over harsh human reality with sweet cliches, the way we do. We're listening in on life in a family. And it's a mess. Love mixed up with violence, deceit, envy, popcorn by the fire trips to Disney World, everybody's sitting on the front row at church in coat and tie, it's a mess. To be in such a family, it gets risky. Can't we just get through one Christmas vacation without a big fight? Don't start on me, Rebekah. Well there haven't been too many family reunions, not too many meetings since Isaac died and Rebekah passed on. Since Jacob slipped out of town with his older brother threatening to slit his throat. "What about your younger brother," friends used to ask Esau, "You never mention him." "My little brother is a shyster, "I hate his guts." Friends change the conversation. "How come you'd never go home for Christmas holidays," they ask Jacob. And he never replied. Now it's now been 10 chapters in Genesis and many years and now toward the end of the story Jacob gets a surprising command of God to go back home and make peace with his brother. It is a perilous risky journey that Jacob embarks on. But aren't all reunions risky after division? Homecomings after alienation? With so many cruel words exchanged and so much difference, will there be a meeting? That's the story placed in, that's the word placed in our minds and the story. How many of you know what it's like to walk that path that Jacob walks today? I don't think it's a path that we walk very often. With good reason, 'cause there's such risk. In my experience, most marital couples who separate eventually divorce. Most brothers and sisters who split up in a squabble over the family inheritance, they stay that way. 20 years ago, her parents had said, "If you marry a man of that race, "don't you ever walk in this door again." 20 years later, she heard that her father was dying of cancer, she called home. "Dad, do you want me to come back home?" And he said, "No." It's risky, it's a perilous path to such a meeting. No wonder that many never make it. And we doubt that Jacob would even have tried it, had he not been ordered by God. He couldn't have walked ahead had not there been a cadre of angels escorting him, are they escorting him, or are these angels pushing him? I love these angels in that story. That cadre of angels walking with him. Angels or no angels, Jacob is scared. He sends messengers on ahead of him, and he says, "say, Esau, wait a minute," "say Lord Esau "if you will receive me, without blowing my head off, "there will be oxen, donkeys, male and female slaves "in the bargain," I don't think we've seen this stance from Jacob until now. What a contrast with that once haughty self-assured schemer, conniver. If I find favor in Lord Esau's eyes, receive me. And then in utter fear and desperation, Jacob prays, he prays, he prays the longest prayer in the long book of

Genesis. Dear God, reconciliation remember was your idea. Save me from the hand of my brother, don't let him kill us all. Strange, isn't it? See Jacob, mister grabber, down on his knees begging and pleading with God like a baby. Besides, God, it was you who promised me, when you let down that ladder from Heaven to where I was sleeping. You promised to protect me, you promised to look after me, make a great people out of me. Ah yes, that sounds more like the old Jacob we know and love. Bargaining, pleading with God, holding God to account. He's begging one minute, he's bargaining the next. And this is so real, isn't it? I said these meetings are not without pain, they're messy. There's a dryness of the mouth, the sweating of the palms. No wonder we are usually content to stare at each other across these great chasms of race, our gender, our class, or politics. Though clearly commanded by God to make peace. (speaks in foreign language) Be reconciled. We don't risk many of these perilous meetings. Well here's the way we say it at Duke. We believe in multiculturalism, that means I got my culture and you got yours, stay out of mine, I'll stay out of yours. Good fences make good neighbors. A senior told me, just watch, freshman year, everybody first semester got your door open, everybody's in and out of rooms, all up and down the hall just one big happy family. But after rush, by second semester, the doors start to close. Until it's just me and my friends behind the locked door. It takes guts to come to such a meeting. And this escort of Heavenly angels with Jacob, I think signifies that this isn't just a family matter. No, God is mixed up in this. God's got a vested interest in this meeting. Homecoming I remind you, was God's idea, not Jacob's. Reconciliation is always a God's initiative and command, not ours. Meeting is the primary biblical agenda, and it is always God's meeting. And the presence of these angels I think suggest that God does not command what God does not enable us to do. So next day, Jacob sends on ahead of him 200 female goats 20 male goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams, 40 cows, 10 bulls. Some of you will have to explain this gender disproportion to me. And this is Jacob, I mean prayer is fine. It's fine, good, pray. But a few hundred goats and ewes will make reconciliation a bit easier for Esau to swallow. Jacob in a stunningly courageous act, even sends his wives and children on ahead of him, so if Esau is in a murderous mood the wives and children will find out about it first. Jacob prays, yeah but his motives, his tactics are still mixed. But Esau ran to meet him and he embraced him and they wept. Does that echo in your mind a later story, told by one of Jacob's progeny named Jesus, 15th chapter of Luke? There was a young son, younger son, just like Jacob. Just like Jacob wanted more than anything else his father's inheritance. His father gave it to him just like Jacob, he went out into the far country, he lost it. He comes back in rags starving. He has a little speech prepared for his father, but his father runs to meet him. And he embraces him. He falls upon him, he kisses him. He says, "My son, which was lost is now found, "which was dead is alive." Meeting. We're in a mess in our human family, we've done a better job historically of cutting our brother's throat rather than falling upon his neck and kissing him. Separated, alienated across great gaps of gender, race, economics, politics. Oh we blessed his diversity, but that's just another word for separation. And this old story dares to promise that God both commands and enables meeting. There is no gap so great, God cannot usher over that gap. While the story ends in a curious turn, as good old trusting Esau says to Jacob, "Now let's all put our things together "and we will now journey together." But Jacob begs often, says he's got something about nursing flocks he's got to attend to. And so we wonder after this dramatic meeting, wait a minute. Has Esau again been duped? Has Jacob really changed? Are they now back together or not? But that's the way it often is in families, or meeting. Among brothers, sisters, races, nations. It's a mess, it's always full of risk and peril and uncertain, there are no guarantees. Nothing is ever easy or too sure in life or in The Bible. But this old story promises. Even amid the mess, God both commands and enables meeting. (rousing organ music) ♪ Jesus, Lord, we look to thee ♪ ♪

Let us in thy name agree ♪ ♪ Show thyself the Prince of peace ♪ ♪ Bid all strife for ever cease ♪ ♪ By thy reconciling love ♪ ♪ Every stumbling block remove ♪ ♪ Each to each unite, endear ♪ ♪ Come, and spread thy banner here ♪ ♪ Make us of one heart and mind ♪ ♪ Gentle, courteous, and kind ♪ ♪ Lowly, meek, in thought and word ♪ ♪ Altogether like our Lord ♪ ♪ Let us for each other care ♪ ♪ Each the other's burdens bear ♪ ♪ To thy church the pattern give ♪ ♪ Show how true believers live ♪ ♪ Free from anger and from pride ♪ ♪ Let us thus in God abide ♪ ♪ All the depths of love express ♪ ♪ All the heights of holiness ♪ ♪ Let us then with joy remove ♪ ♪ To the family above ♪ ♪ On the wings of angels fly ♪ ♪ Show how true believers die ♪

- The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

- Let us pray. With all our heart, and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord saying Lord in your mercy hear our prayer. For the church throughout the world that it may faithfully proclaim the gospel of Christ and that all Christian people may be united in truth, live together in your glory, and reveal your love. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For those who do not yet believe, for those drawing near the light of faith and for those whose faith has dimmed, that they may come to the knowledge of your truth. Lord, in your mercy.

Congregation: Hear our prayer.

- For the leaders of the nations, that they may govern with wisdom. And that they may encourage peace and justice among their people and among all nations and peoples. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For the city of Durham, and those who live, study and work here, the rich and the poor, the elderly and the young, men and women, that they may know your good will for all, Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For families broken, and family members estranged, that they may be reconciled. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For those who are poor and oppressed, for those unemployed and destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, that they may find courage and comfort in your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For the aged, the infirm, the sick and the suffering, that they may be delivered from their distress. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- For all who have died in the communion of your church, and for those whose faith is known to you alone, we give you thanks. May we be faithful like those who have gone before us and bring us at last the joy of your heavenly kingdom. Lord, in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

- Eternal God, ruler of all things in Heaven and Earth, accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen. With gladness let us present the offerings of our life and labor to the Lord. (rousing organ music) ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ How lovely ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ To all the nation ♪ ♪ Is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ ♪ To all the nation ♪ ♪ Is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ (overlapping singing) ♪ Throughout all the lands their glad tidings ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ Gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ Of Peace ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ To all the nations ♪ ♪ Is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ ♪ To all the nations ♪ ♪ Is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ ♪ To all the nations ♪ ♪ Is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ (overlapping singing) ♪ The nation is gone forth the sound of their words ♪ ♪ Throughout all the lands their glad tidings ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ How lovely are the Messengers ♪ ♪ That preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ Preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ ♪ Preach us the gospel of Peace ♪ (rousing organ music) ♪ Praise God whom all blessings flow ♪ ♪ Praise Him, all creatures here below ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host ♪ ♪ Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪

- Let us pray. Almighty and gracious God, we give you thanks for your goodness to us, and to all whom you have made, you have given us life that we may love and serve you, and though we have resisted your purpose and misused your gift, you have not left us in our sin, but have sent your son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. We thank you that for us he became human and that by dying on the cross and rising from the dead, he has saved us from death and brought us to new life. In gratitude for all your mighty acts, we offer you ourselves and all that we have, in union with Christ's offering for us. By your holy spirit, make us one with Christ, one with one another, and one in ministry to all the world. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray, saying.

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 glory forever.

- The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of The Holy Spirit be with you all, amen. (soft organ music) ♪ Amen ♪ Amen ♪ Amen ♪ Amen ♪ Amen ♪ (rousing organ music) ♪ God of grace and God of glory ♪ On thy people pour thy power ♪ Crown thine ancient church's story ♪ Bring its bud to glorious flower ♪ Grant us wisdom, grant us courage ♪ For the facing of this hour ♪ For the facing of this hour ♪ Lo, the hosts of evil round us ♪ Scorn thy Christ, assail his ways ♪ From the fears that long have bound us ♪ Free our hearts to faith and praise ♪ Grant us wisdom, grant us courage ♪ For the living of these days ♪ For the living of these days ♪ Cure thy children's warring madness ♪ Bend our pride to thy control ♪ Shame our wanton, selfish gladness ♪ Rich in things and poor in soul ♪ Grant us wisdom, grant us courage ♪ Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal ♪ Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal ♪ Save us from weak resignation ♪ To the evils we deplore ♪ Let the gift of thy salvation ♪ Be our glory evermore ♪ Grant us wisdom, grant us courage ♪ Serving thee whom we adore ♪ Serving thee whom we adore ♪ (fast-paced organ music)