

(mid tempo organ music) (fast paced organ music) (fast paced organ music continues) (fast paced organ music continues) (fast paced organ music continues) (mid tempo organ music) (mid tempo organ music continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) (fast paced organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (light music) (choir continues vocalizing) (light organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing)

- In preparation for our confession, we ask for the grace to see ourselves in the light of God's holiness and God's intention for us, so that we may be cleansed of pride, which obscures the truth of who we are. Humans and the need of forgiveness, we know that from God no secrets are hidden, so let us now make our corporate confession. Let us pray.

All: Oh holy and merciful God, we confess that we have not always taken and lead ourselves with joy, the yolk of obedience, nor been willing to seek and do your perfect will. We have not loved you with all our heart and mind and soul and strength. Neither have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. You have called us to respond to the need of our brothers and sisters, and we have passed, unheeding, on our way. In the pride of our hearts and our unwillingness to repent, we have turned away from the cross of Christ and have grieved your Holy Spirit. Forgive us, we pray, amen. And now, oh Lord, hear us as we make our personal confession to you. Amen. One fact remains unchanging. God loves us as we are, and always will love us. And this love is a forgiving love which frees us from being chained to our guilt of the past. So let us give thanks and rejoice that we can move into the future as people who are forgiven, loved eternally, and ever becoming more loving Christians. Amen and amen. (light organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) ♪ Amen, amen, amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪  
(holds note)

- The scripture readings for this morning are from Psalm eight and Matthew six, 24 through 34. Oh Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the Earth? Thou who's glory above the Heavens is chanted by the mouths of babes and infants. Thou has founded a bullwork because of thy foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. When I look at thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established, what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou doth care for him? Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, and also the beast of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the sea. Oh Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the Earth? Will the congregation please rise for the reading

of the gospel? No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life. What you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food? And the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your Heavenly father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you, by being anxious, can add one cubage to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more cloth you, oh men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear?". For the gentiles seek all of these things, and your Heavenly father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day. Here ends the scripture reading. (mid tempo organ music) ♪ Glory to the father, and to the son ♪ ♪ And to the Holy host ♪ (choir singing and vocalizing) ♪ Amen, amen ♪

- The Lord be with you. Let us pray. Let us pray. Oh Holy God, we marvel at the beauty of the changing seasons, the excitement of our world of work and study, and the joys of our relationships with our friends and colleagues and exultation of our spirit, as we gather to worship you. Hear us now as we pray for persons who feel little joy or exultation in their lives. We pray for those who are grieving the loss of ones they love. For those who are suffering physical and mental pain and anguish. For those who are frightened by the expectations which are placed on them. For those who seek love and are rejected. For those whose future seems bleak and hopeless. For those who are carrying heavy burdens of guilt and are unable to accept forgiveness. For those who are torn by conflicting loyalties. For our whole world fractured by war and hunger and oppression. Oh God, we pray for all people who are seeking to serve you as they dedicate their lives to these needs and problems of your children, and all of your creation. Oh Holy God, we who worship you in this place have so much to give you thanks for. Hear us as we pray for ourselves, that we may be responsible and loving in the use of all that is ours. Our physical resources, our mental abilities, our abundance of the physical necessities, our gifts of hearing, of loving, and of caring. We give you thanks for your love and grace, which sustains us both in the times of joys and fullness of life. And we pray that we will not become self centered and trite. And we pray that this same grace and love will also sustain us in the time of pain and anguish and loneliness, so that we may not become bitter and callous and hopeless. We give you thanks for your care, which comes to us in unexpected and surprising ways, and pray that we may ever be open to receive these gifts and share these gifts which comes to us through others and to others. Hear us now as we pray the prayer of our Lord Jesus, who taught us how to love and give and pray.

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 and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

- At two o'clock this afternoon, in this chapel, there will be a memorial service for Carl Binamine, who was

killed last summer. After we affirm our faith together, it will be our privilege and our joy to hear one of the great men we have in this university. But first I want to say to you a very special welcome, to those of you who always worship with us, to those of you who have returned to the place that you worshiped in the university. And to those of you who are visiting us for the first time. We often give thanks to the choir, to the organist, to the people who bring the word, for what they contribute to our worship. But it's also important that we affirm and know that without this glorious congregation, our worship would be an empty show. And so as an affirmation of the importance that you mean to the worshiping community of this chapel and to the witness you make to this university and to this community, let us with joy stand and affirm what we believe. We are not alone. We believe in God.

All: Who has created and is creating, who has come in the truly human Jesus to reconcile and make new. Who works as us and others by the Spirit. We trust God, who calls us to be the church, to celebrate life and it's 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 and death, and life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen and amen.

- And welcome Dr. Davies.

- Let us pray. May the words of my mouth and the mediation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, oh Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen. Our text is seen is Psalm eight at verse six, and in the gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 12, verse 15. He hath put all things under his feet, and in Luke, for a man's life dependeth not on the abundance of his positions. In 1964, at the end of one of my classes, when I had been lecturing on the New Testament, one of my students asked, "Why do you get so excited about the Bible? "After all, what importance has it "for this modern, secular society?" That was the first time that I had ever been asked by anyone, let alone a theological student, to justify my discipline in Biblical scholarship. To defend the importance of the Bible, not on cultural or historical grounds, which would have been very easy, but on pure religious ones. I knew then that I was moving into a new world, which questioned familiar assumptions. Today I want to share with you some of the answers that I have tried to give to that question. What is the role of this sacred book in our secular society? First, what does the phrase 'the secular society' mean? 50 years ago it would have been easy to define it something like this. The word secular comes from the Latin (speaks Latin), meaning the time of the age, or the spirit of the age. A secular society is one bound in by the spirit of its age, confined to itself and content with this world. And this meaning still remains. But in our generation, the term 'secular society' has gained a wider sense. Perhaps the chief mark of our age has been the fantastic development of applied science. That is the growth of technology. The ability of man to control the forces of nature by his intelligence and his mechanical skill. I need not label the obvious. The term 'secular society' for us is a description of our scientifically conditioned world. Now, this modern secular society has certain characteristics. It can be technically very efficient. It is international. It is as evident in Japan as in America. In Vietnam as in Brazil. It spreads, it seems, uncontrollable, and it brings untold wealth and benefits for us all. It is not surprising, therefore, that the secular society has been highly confident. The achievements of science have been so spectacular that nothing seems beyond its reach. It seems to be the open sesame to the good life. The great successes of technology have produced in some the conviction that we have now come of age, we can stand on our own feet. The primordial notion that we

need the help of a divine being or of divine beings, or need appeal to another world, to adjust the balance of this, is impetuous. Our problems will ultimately be solvable, if at all, not primarily at least through the ancient religious traditions. Even the so-called higher religious, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, belong to a stage of human evolution which is past. They can largely be discarded. And much in the history of religion is primitive and is reactionary. In many of its forms, religion has been callously on the side of privilege, on the side of ignorance and superstition, rather than on the side of knowledge and of truth. A French philosopher has urged that God has been a restrictive force in human history. Our immoral problems are to be best solved by scientific research and technology and the advancement of science. In short, there has come about a profound revolution which we call secularization, on a world wide scale. In Niche's words, this secularization assumes that all the Gods are dead and we must be mature enough to go on from there, leaving all the dead Gods behind us. The attitudes and institutions of our society are more and more determined not by religious beliefs and movements, but by the pressures and demands of the techniques of mechanization and of production. And yet, there has recently been a change. The term 'secular society' has come to suggest to many something not all together desirable. Many find it even frightening. Even in its heyday, some of the most intelligent students, in the universities and elsewhere, rejected it and dropped out. But even more, there is now an emerging general recognition that the secular society generates its own peculiar problems. Extremes of poverty persist despite its benefits. Congestion jams its speed, and pollution its abundance. The rich are getting richer, the poor poorer. The manipulation of nature. We now see in lights unforeseen and perhaps unforeseeable problems and disruptions of our very existence. There is a growing disenchantment. To use an overworked cliché, there is a failure of nerve. Because of the results of this scientific society, and this of course is intensified by the cosmological, the biological, and above all, the psychological knowledge, which we are increasingly discovering. We are discovering that we are puppets, apparently at the mercy of forces that we cannot control. Now one result of this has been a new openness to what the old religious traditions have to say. Recently we have seen an emerging interest in eastern as well as western religions. The search for the sacred has inched its way back in the last decade. In unfamiliar, diverse, and even bizarre ways. In such a period, what has this old book, the Bible, to say to our secular society? First we ask what we mean by the sacred book of the Bible. The word sacred is synonymous with the word Holy, and we normally speak of the Holy book or of the Holy Bible. In its root meaning, the word Holy suggests something that is apart, apart from everyday life. Something appropriated for strictly religious use. The Holy is the nonsecular. A Holy place like this chapel is that space which is set apart from ordinary commerce, and used for the approach to the divine. Now in this sense the Bible is not a Holy book. It is not a sacred book. We have much to learn from the Jews. They hardly ever use the term 'Holy Bible'. When they refer to what we call the Old Testament, they speak of the law, the prophets, and the writings, which have very much to do with everyday life. The Bible deals with the most ordinary, worldly, secular things. It describes war. The conquests and defeats of nations. It deals with human love and lust. It speaks of poverty and riches, of justice and injustice. It is a disturbingly, even coarsely, secular book. It is we Christians who have called it Holy and set it apart, perched on a pulpit, or removed to an altar. It is much healthier not to speak of the sacred book, or the Holy book, but of the book, the book we use in sermon, because it is in the very midst of our daily living. Now in what ways does this book confront our secular age? I'll only mentioned two ways. Very briefly. One positive, and the other negative. First then, the positive. The Bible says yes to the secular age. This secularization in certain aspects is to be welcomed. Our mastery over nature can be beneficial. It is under the blessing of God. In Psalm eight we read, "Thou hast given him

dominion over the works of thy hands. "Thou hast put all things under his feet." God himself has done this. The benefits of technology are to be enjoyed. The prophets of the Old Testament did not bleat for a simple past in the desert before the complexities of civilized life in Canon had come. They accepted cultural and technological change as a challenge to their moral integrity. It is not for us Christians to yearn for what we imagine to have been a simple past. To long to go back, to say, to the days of the early church, to the middle ages, or the reformation of the 19th century. It is for us to recognize the gifts of God in the marvelous achievements of the human mind in our day. In fact, the Bible is not only not the Holy book, it proclaims a faith which is highly materialistic. Christianity is probably the most materialistic of all the higher religions. It is not for nothing that communistic materialism can be regarded as a Christian apparition. The essence of the Christian faith is expressed in the first verses of the first gospel. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and God was the word, and the word became flesh, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. The word became flesh. One aspect of this might be rendered, the divine has become secular. The word, the reason of thought, of principle, behind and in the universe, has become incarnate in Jesus Christ. It has taken his flesh. This means that all human flesh can become the vehicle of the divine. Everything that helps human flesh is to be welcomed. Everything that destroys, or tends to destroy that flesh, is to be opposed. In this sense, we celebrate secular achievement when we celebrate Christ. For example, the notion that it is possible to save souls, as if they could be isolated from their environment, as if they were not in the flesh, is a Christian apparition. But what of the negative aspect of the Bible's encounter with a secular age? The Bible has said that technology may be and is a good servant, but a bad master. It declares that the secular good that it is is not enough. In certain ways especially, and there are many which I cannot deal in this one sermon, the Bible puts a question to our secular society. We saw that all the secularists, there often seems to be no need to refer to anything beyond or outside this world. For explanation of it, for authority, or for salvation. But the Bible confronts us with a very strange people, the Jews. Ben Gurion thought that the Jews had created God. The Jews themselves most of them believed that they encountered a living God, who claimed ultimate allegiance. This living God of Israel cannot be contained within the confines of our control, but rather controls us and our destiny. The Bible compels us to face the mystery of the people of God, in its Jewish and in its Christian form. It speaks, in the words of John Wesley, of a traveler unknown, someone beyond, someone behind, someone before, someone outside this world, even though he is in this world, who has called into being the people in this world who cannot be explained simply in terms of this world. I say that the Bible is not a Holy book. That is, it is not separated from our daily life. Let me now equally emphatically say that by confronting us with the mystery of the people of God with the fact of the Jews and of the church, it points us to the Holy. Now what do we mean? The most probable origin of all our religious life seems clear. As we walk this Earth, we become aware of the mystery, a strange mystery, which terrifies us and fascinates us at the same time. To this mystery of our existence we have given the name the Holy. And it is our awareness and often the response to this holiness which alone makes us truly religious. Where there is no mystery, no wonder, there can be no religion. How shall we know this mystery, which we experience in ourselves, in our families, in our societies, and in the world around us? How shall we approach it? It is to this question that the Bible, in the end, addresses itself. All the great prophets and Priests of Israel agreed that the Holy mystery can only be approached and understood in moral terms. The way to approach the Holy is to do justice. But there is more than justice, and later in the New Testament, we find that in the fullness of time, the mystery appeared, concentrated in the face of a man, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In him the mystery is made known. He himself is Israel pointing us to the Holy. Now the

secularists too certainly find life mysterious. There are secular poets, artists and thinkers, on this campus and elsewhere, who are profoundly aware of the mysterious. Very often they put us to shame by their sensitivities and their human concerns. We Christians need them. We should not define ourselves over/against them at any time. But the vision they have is mysterious in its own terms, and within its own limits. And man himself will be sufficient for it. Now here the Bible issues its challenge. Through this book, and through the mystery of Israel and the church, and of the Christ who is Israel, we are confronted in our pilgrimage with one beyond us, outside us, who claims to be our creator and our redeemer. We are challenged to discover ourselves as human in an encounter with and in response to this human figure, Jesus of Nazareth, who is the personal mystery of God in the flesh. Now all this means that the Bible challenges us with a question. What is the true nature of our human existence? Can we be satisfied within the confines of this world? Do we need more? A personal relation with and a conscience dependence upon the ultimate mystery, who is the God and father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Human technical and ever achievement, we are to welcome. But will they ever, even in their most enhanced and refined forms, satisfy? Let me use a very simple analogy. A man and a maid get married and set out on their life together. They buy a house, they supply it with all the modern utilities. But in itself, it cannot be a home until there be established within its walls a personal relation of trust. So is it with our universe. We may indeed find that we are able to provide ourselves with all that we need, although we are not quite so sure of this as we once were. But without the dimension of dependence of personal trust on an ultimate mystery, we cannot make this world our home. To be at home without God is impossible. An English poet expressed this in these words. "We have hands that fashion and heads that know, "but our hearts we lost how long ago? "In a place no chart nor ship can show, "under the sky's dome. "For men are homesick in their homes, "and strangers under the sun. "And they lay their heads in a foreign land "whenever the day is done." The fact is that the Bible reminds us that if we betray God, we betray, no, we are betrayed, by everything. This then is the challenge of the Bible to a secular society. It proclaims the reality, the necessity, of the living God, Holy, righteous, and loving. And the necessity of the practice of his presence in our lives. As an ultimate suckle in a world which proclaims the death of God as an outvoted, primitive overhand. That this suckle brings with it its ultimate demand. I would also proclaim that that demand I cannot enlarge upon in this sermon. The Bible then speaks to us. It welcomes the positive aspects of our secular society. But it sets before us two questions. Do we know the reality of the presence of God in our lives? And do we acknowledge the mystery of his commandment? His infinite suckle and his infinite demand. The Bible is not an anchor to the past, to the primitive. It is not the sanction for our selfish status quo. It is a spur, a challenge, to our new creation in God. Amen. In the name of the father and of the son, and of the Holy ghost. (light organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (choir singing and vocalizing increases) (light organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing softens) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (light organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) ♪ Amen ♪ (light organ music continues) (mid tempo organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (mid tempo organ music continues) ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ (choir singing and vocalizing) ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ (holds note) ♪ Amen ♪

(holds note)

- Oh Holy and loving God, we offer you these gifts, symbols of our lives. Guide those who are responsible for the use of them, that they may express your love and concern for the well being of all of your creation. And we offer you our lives. Use them that your loved work may be expressed through us in the ordinary and the routine of our living. All this we pray, and the spirit of Jesus, the Christ. Amen. (mid tempo organ music) (choir singing and vocalizing) (mid tempo organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) (choir singing and vocalizing continues) (mid tempo organ music continues) And now may the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all this day and forever more. ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (choir vocalizing) ♪ Amen ♪ (choir vocalizing) ♪ Amen ♪ (light music) (choir vocalizing) ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (bright organ music) (bright organ music continues) (bright organ music continues)