

(silence) (upbeat organ music) ♪ Beautiful savior, Lord of all nations ♪ ♪ Son of God and son of man ♪ ♪ Glory and honor, praise, adoration ♪ ♪ Now and forevermore be thine ♪ ♪ Now and forevermore be thine ♪ (organ music) (hymnal singing drowned by instruments) ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ (hymnal singing) ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ (hymnal singing) ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ Amen ♪

- We seek grace and humility that we may see ourselves in the light of God's holiness and become aware of that which we have done, which blinds God's love and truth from us and from our neighbors. Let us make our corporate confession. Forgive us, oh Lord, for the sins that come to our remembrance when we turn to confession. We have been slacking prior and slow to witness. We have showed resentment and criticism. We have been irritable and impatient even over trivials. We have been self-indulgent and allowed words and feelings to get out of control. We have been quarreled and then slow to make it up. We have spread through it, fearing and depression through our depression. We have assessed the faults of others as worse than our own without due thought of our privileges and without knowledge of their hard way. Oh God, for whom our heart is laid open and bare, forgive us and help us to live as you would have us to live. Through Jesus Christ. And now, oh Lord, hear us as we bring to you our personal confession. Amen. God, both formed us and reforms us. Created us and recreates us. God's forgiveness and mercy releases us from the pains and paralysis of an unquiet conscience and frees us to become coworkers embodying the divine and holy and just love in this world. For this, we give thanks and rejoice. (hymnal singing) ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪

- The Old Testament lesson is found in the book of Ecclesiastes 3. For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven, A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to break down and a time to build up A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together. A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. A time to seek and a time to lose. A time to keep and a time to cast away. A time to lend and a time to sow. A time to keep silence and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace. What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also he has put eternity into man's mind yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live. Also, that it is God's gift to man that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in his toil. I know that whatever God does endures forever, nothing can be added to it nor and anything taken from it. God has made it so in order that men should fear before him. Let the congregation please stand for the reading of the Gospel lesson. From the Gospel of Matthew 7:24. And Jesus said, everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house up on the rock. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat up on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on the rock And everyone who hears these words of mine and

does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house up on the sand and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against that house and it fell and great was the fall of it. And when Jesus finished these sayings the crowds were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one who had authority and not as their scribes. May God bless unto us this reading of his work. (hymnal singing) ♪ Amen, amen. ♪

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

- And with your spirit.

- Let us pray. Oh, holy God, we bow before you, we are anxious, fearful, perplexed, downcast, lonely. We are your people who come to you searching for hope, comfort, vision, release. We are awed by the majesty of this world, the beauty of the changing seasons. We are grateful that you who created all that is and all that ever will be care for us. That you know us, that what happens to us is important to you. You have created us in your image. We are thankful for the special gifts which are ours, our freedom, our reason, our imagination, that you have called us to be coworkers with you. We worship you Lord of our spirits and our history. Hear us as we pray for those who are suffering, sustain those who are driven to despair by hunger, imprisonment, oppression, illness, grief. We pray for those who feel that life is closing in on them because of academic pressure, family pressure, financial pressure, those who feel ugly, unaccepted, rejected, unloved. Use us to be instruments of your healing love and your redemptive grace. We commit our lives to you this day, bless the work that is done in this university, so that all who labor and learn here may be responsible in the vocation to which they have been called. Give us grace to be united together in our work. To bestow honor upon those persons whose work is deemed less honorable by our society so that we will not forget our dependence upon persons whose humble duties make our lives more pleasant and other work possible. We pray that we may be loving and caring and just in all of our personal and institutional task and in all of our relationships. Hear us now, oh God, as we pray the prayer of Jesus. 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. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us out to temptation. Deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen. Those of us who have been called by Jesus to feed the hungry, see the right to food as a basic right. So it is appropriate that we are called to fast on this coming Thursday. The week before we celebrate our national Thanksgiving, a day when we remember our abundance. This is a symbolic act to remind us that we are bound in our humanity and in our love and through Christ to all our brothers and sisters who are starving. We are asked to contribute the money that we normally spend on food for one day to Ox fam. Last year, persons in this university contributed over \$6,000 on this one day of fast. If 400 boarding students agree to participate in the fast, the dining rooms will contribute a portion of money from their board for that day to the fast. The hunger task force needs help to get the necessary information to the dining rooms by

this Tuesday. Those who can help are asked to be in the basement of the chapel, right under where we are sitting at 1:30 today in the Y office, would you help? Also note the insert in your bulletin concerning the resolution declaring as a national policy, the right to food. You are asked to bring your letters in response to this request and place them in offering plate on next Sunday. We are pleased to have Dr. John O. Blackburn as our preacher today. I know of no person in the university who has a Lord genuine concern for all persons and all segments within the university. And he also had as the necessarily skills and ability which enable him to work, to humanize the structure of this university. And though he may not claim it, he is one of our best lay theologians. He also worships regularly with us in the chapel and he is the person who has said, he will build a trap door under the pulpit. So at the end of 20 minutes preaching, it automatically opens up and the preacher disappears. Welcome Jack to our pulpit.

- I had hoped the introduction would make some reference to that 20 minutes. One of the risks of inviting an academic into the pulpit is that all of us are used to dealing precisely in 50 minute slices of time. You may have thought the construction in the chapel had something to do with putting in a new organ actually, it's that trap door. I might observe that over the life of the chapel, only Helen Crowell and Jim Clellan would regularly avoid being out of the basement. I've heard too many others who've run over 20 minutes. I'm now noting the time. The motto of the university, as most of you know, is "Eruditio el Religio". A statement of the aims of the university is reproduced on a bronze plaque in the main quadrangle. That plaque incidentally is not a large outdoor ashtray, it speaks of the eternal union of knowledge and religion. We are accustomed perhaps too readily to translate "Eruditio el Religio". as knowledge or learning and religion. One of my distinguished colleagues well versed in the study of Latin has pointed out that the phrase may equally well be translated Pedantry and superstition or perhaps some other less than flattering combination of terms. Let us though honor the intentions of our predecessors. Every self-respecting college or university had in that era a motto preferably in Latin though, Greek or ancient Hebrew might serve as well in impressing the uneducated with their ignorance. Let us grant that our predecessors indeed meant to say something like learning and religion and then they went and found the Latin words which best said it. I should like to take some liberties with the title of this layman's sermon and the motto and pose some questions in terms of learning and faith. Or since this is a Christian service of worship pose questions in terms of learning and Christian faith, though many of my observations should apply equally well to those of other monotheistic faiths. I do so with considerable trepidation, since there are those in this congregation and certainly on the campus, people who have devoted their professional lives to examining these questions in theology, philosophy or another academic disciplines. The degree of trepidation mounted as this day came closer and closer, I was driven to considering yesterday the virtues of 20 minutes of silent meditation. Then I reflected on the thought that the music is indeed so good we are so indebted to the choir, the organist. That the preacher of the day has a great deal of leeway if he can a bad indeed before the total losses of the service offset the gains. In any event I speak not as an expert, but as a layman. A would be Christian, a social scientist of sorts and one who has for a while a special respond responsibility for the affairs of this institution. Broadly stated the issue is what, if anything has Christian faith to do with learning or higher education in this last half of the 20th century. For many here the issue never arises. Duke University can be viewed as a thoroughly secular university. It admits students without regard to their religious faith or the absence of it. It appoints faculty members on the basis of excellence in fields of study without regard to their religious convictions, if any. It maintains academic academic freedom for faculty and students alike. My

observations then are addressed to those of you who may have accepted too readily the connection between faith and learning, or at least those of you who are willing to consider the connection. Look for a moment at faith in the Christian context, not faith as intellectual ascent through a series of propositions, but faith as commitment, as a way of life. One can of course or one cannot of course talk about faith in a way acceptable to all Christians, certainly not in 20 minutes or even in a lifetime. Look rather at some impressionistic statements. Thy will be done, love God with all your heart, love your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemies. Love those around you whether they love you or not, or whether they are especially lovable or not. Seek first the kingdom of heaven, lay not up for yourselves, treasures on earth. What shall it profit a man if he gained the whole world, the whole world of learning even, and loses his own soul? Losing one's life to save it. Take up your cross, follow me, Living for others, the man for others, Jesus is the man for others, abundant life, a new being love, peace, joy. Depending not on ourselves and our works, but on God's grace. Our inevitable failings and our involvement in imperfect or corrupt political, social, and our economic structures. God's judgment along with his grace and mercy. In as much as you have done it to the least of these, my brethren, you have done it also to me. The first shall be last. Our injunction to identify with the poor, the sick, the hungry, forgotten, the powerless of this world. Impressionistic statements, not a real reasoned theological statement to be sure, but words and thoughts that you know well and further, a willingness to use language and concepts quite alien to a modern secular technocratic, skeptical world. Sin, judgment, repentance, forgiveness, grace, redemption, newness of life. Now turn to the world of learning or higher education. How do we characterize it? The search for truth, free unfettered inquiry, The life of the mind, the examined life, the transmission and expansion of mankind's store of knowledge, new ideas, new ways of thinking, the knowledge explosion, incredible new discoveries in the physical sciences, from the tiniest sub-particles of the atom to the furthest reaches of the universe. Breakthroughs in biology undreamed of about a decade ago, the wide sweep of the humanities revealing in splendor and agony, the Heights and depths and breadths of human life. The maturing social sciences with their evermore elaborate and penetrating analyses of the social economic and political structures in which our lives are bound up. A more nearly complete history of man's past than has been available to any other generation. The deep insights into human life provided by psychology and psychiatry. In both realms of faith and learning there are of course, ideals never fully reached or reached for long in practice. In the realm of faith we continually find ourselves falling short. We move to center our thoughts and actions and feelings around ourselves, Not around Christ life and teaching or around the needs of others. We do take thought for tomorrow, we are anxious. We fail to love others, or we speak of loving others and do nothing about it. We think we are self-sufficient and fall into deep despair When we discover that we are not. Likewise in the life of learning, we turn too readily to a daily routine of preparing for another exam, seeking a grade, grinding out a paper, preparing the next lecture, writing a book or an article along with our genuine and exciting research and discovery of things really new. We fall all too readily into the pattern of academic gamesmanship and grantsmanship. A grant to pay for armies of research assistants, secretaries, graduate students, mostly to buy time to write the next grant proposal. Such as the state of the academic world that a year or so called scholarly output to use that abominable term in sheer volume would sink the Titanic without benefit of icebergs, in much or there is little goal. Precious years in the young lives of students which ought to be given over to learning in the preparation for a lifetime of further learning to personal growth and maturity are only partly well used. There is a student subculture, a subculture which has little to do with learning as many of you know, for are better than I. Now all this frantic activity to be sure is a relatively harmless way of

disposing of an arising gross national product or at least what was shortly before thought to be an arising gross national product. It uses few exhaustible resources, save reams of paper, does not pollute and gives employment to thousands. But with all these faults the modern university, we must say, we must affirm stands among the highest achievements of human culture. Let us now ask whether there is any visible connection between the life of faith and the life of learning. Is there anything really to the notion of "Eruditio el Religio". These may be quite different aspects of human life. So totally different in fact, that men of faith might have little learning and persons of great learning might have little or no faith. Can we not cite countless examples? Jesus the Christ was a man of little formal education if any, his followers who later shook the Western portion of the civilized world were simple, poor and uneducated folk not a single one of them had a PhD or even a bachelor's degree. Many of us know of poor, relatively uneducated and saintly persons whose lives of faith put us to shame. We also know highly educated men and women utterly without scruples of any kind, let alone religious faith or Christian faith. We see an abundance of well trained professionals, a moral self-centered, willing to overrun any one in sight to reach some ephemeral personal goal. In short, to use the language of the statisticians, faith and learning are not necessarily correlated. They may even be negatively correlated. Now, can we establish and connections between the life of faith and the life of learning. Colleges and universities, as we know them today had their origins in Christian medieval Europe. Christian at least in the cultural sense of the term. Are not faith and learning thus joined? More recently, most American private colleges and universities, including our own stem from the concerns of church groups. But this is not persuasive evidence perhaps only an historical accident. When there were time to develop this theme. The reverse may indeed be the case it may be argued that colleges, universities, and for that modern science and learning entirely grow out of the Christian soil of the west. But passing on, we note another possible point of contact between the worlds of faith and learning. Colleges and universities train person for careers and for service in the world. They uncover new knowledge much of which is sooner or later useful in applied ways. We could argue that the knowledge and training found largely in the universities, the colleges, the institutions of higher education provide the means of carrying out Christ injunction to feed the hungry or to come to the aid of the poor of the world in other ways. Indeed it is not too much to argue that the sheer massive scale of modern society and its problems require massive and organized efforts of mercy and compassion. Besides which individual efforts pale into near insignificance. We can largely reject this coupling of faith and learning at least at the most fundamental level. It takes an undue utilitarian view of learning. The world of learning is more than utilitarian, not only in training persons for works of mercy, but for all other kinds of uses to which modern society might wish to put the skills of those trained in the colleges and universities. Higher learning has its own autonomy and integrity or it should have. Our Judaic and Christian heritage regards all creation is good. Even if perhaps fallen the physical universe life, our bodies, our minds are all highly regarded. Learning like all other human activity is valued for itself. Suppose we try another approach. There are those humans of gigantic intellect whom from time to time, try to work out overarching systems of thought which embrace all fields of human knowledge and the Christian faith as well. One thinks readily in this connection of St. Thomas Aquinas with his great synthesis of theology, philosophy and the meager science of that era. That synthesis lasted hardly a century before it was under serious attack in the universities of Europe and is certainly not congenial to modern thought, nor has it been or hundreds of years. Suppose a modern Aquinas came along and managed to synthesize and integrate all human thought in the sciences, the social sciences and the humanities into a great system consistent with Christian theology. Surely this would be a kind of link

between faith and learning that might settle our question. We should be dubious of such an endeavor. Certainly it is a task beyond the boundaries of any one human mind to know, but a small fraction of what is now known. Even with that possible there is no assurance that what we know could be brought together into any reasonable relationship with Christian faith or any other faith. If any such synthesis were possible, it would be tied to the science and worldview of the present age. If Christian thinkers have learned anything in the last 1900 years, they ought to have learned not to invest too heavily in the science technology or worldview of any given age. When the church came to grief in its efforts to science Galileo or in its struggles with Darwinian or Freudian thought it had got, unfortunately it's theology mixed up with an obsolete science. It is regrettable that Christian thinkers invested so much in the science, the worldview, or for that matter of the social order of any one time or place so much so that subsequent embarrassments arose quite unnecessarily. Experience suggests that today's well supported working hypotheses will be tomorrow's outmoded views. Wisely then, Christians have long since discarded the notion for the most part that someone is going to come up with an overarching systematic integration of human knowledge and Christian faith. Perhaps one last approach to the question of the relationship of faith and learning. Some have tried to argue that Christian faith takes up where learning and knowledge leave off. That is we move into the world of belief when we run beyond the borders of the things we know. Unfortunately, this line of thought doesn't get us too far, for one thing in a world of ever expanding knowledge it implies that the realm of faith is not only around the edges of what is known, but the world of faith is always retreating. More importantly, it violates our Faith's notion that God is indeed the God of all things the known and the unknown. What we tentatively call the material world and everything else. We would rather believe as Christians that God's concern grace and redemptive work are found at the center of human activity and not somewhere out on the fringes. How then can we begin to relate our faith as Christians and our task says members of a learning community? For one thing, the connection must be there if only because it is in us. Faith may appear to be one dimension of our lives and learning another dimension. But these dimensions must still somehow be unified within each one of us for it is we who think and learn and discover. And at the same time, we grope for faith and repent and seek forgiveness. Though, the truth, as we see it in our learning dimension may be partial and fragmentary, that truth must somehow in ways beyond our understanding be consistent with God's truth. If we believe God takes human life seriously and human institution seriously enough to be concerned with this world as it is and as it might become, we cannot think otherwise. So there is at least one link right in us, in each one of us. What does all this mean here and now at Duke in 1975? Does it mean a chapel standing physically at the center of the campus? Yes, of course, but the chapel can become merely a museum or a tourist attraction. Thank God, it is for many of us much more than that. It means a lively campus ministry. It means a divinity school, not just for the professional training of leaders in institutionalized religion, not just a parasite on the other intellectual resources of the university, but a school in active dialogue with all branches of learning. Beyond these and of much more importance it means a presence, present communities of faithful persons constantly putting the larger issues of life before us all, constantly asking whence we can, where are we going? What are we learning for? Asking of all the disciplines the embarrassing questions about implicit assumptions in "secular" learning. If the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is not at the center of our lives at least a nagging principle, then some other gods or idols or values or whatever we choose to call them will be. Self, power, wealth, fame, nation, class, science, technology, or even learning itself. Or a sense of meaningless despair, a mindless vacuum, which not only destroy the possibilities of loving, caring,

fulfilled lives, but renders vulnerable to every passing fancier cause. Indeed an education which is not raised ultimate issues of meaning insignificance is not a complete education. The minority communities of faith in our midst then have much at stake in preserving the freedom of the university and the temporal autonomy of the life of learning. The university has its privilege position so that it may impart stand aside from human society in order to speak critically about human affairs. Freedom of inquiry like other freedoms has been won at much cost and like other freedoms will be missed most sorely only after it has been lost. The communities of faith within the university have obligations to affirm the goodness of human life in the world, including the life of the mind. They must remind us of the limits to human knowledge. of human goodness, of the depths of evil within us, as well as the heights of good and the evil uses to which our discoveries may be put. They keep us from making idols of learning science, technology, humanity itself. They keep reminding us that we are more than students, teachers, researchers, or administrators. That we are humans and that all of our human institutions however good in themselves stand under God's judgment and mercy. They remind us as our idols collapse one by one that only through faith and hope do our human lives now and in the future have any ultimate significance at all. Amen. (organ music) (hymnal singing) ♪ Amen ♪ (hymnal singing) ♪ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow ♪ ♪ Praise him, all creatures here below ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Praise him above up ye heavenly host ♪ ♪ Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪ ♪ Amen ♪

- Oh Lord, from whom we receive all and upon whom we are ever dependent. Accept this offering of ourselves before you for the service of all persons. Use we pray our being and our doing, our gifts and our goods for your glory and the wellbeing of your creation. Amen. (organ music) (hymnal singing drowned by the musical instruments) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all now and forever. ♪ Amen ♪ (hymnal singing) (organ music)