

(organ music) (organ music) (Pachelbel's Canon) (harp music)

- Welcome to Duke Chapel. We have been brought to worship through the music of Karen Havinghurst who is our guest musician joining the Duke Chapel Summer Choir for today's service. Although it's hard to speak of Miss Havinghurst as a guest since she is a frequent artist here in the Chapel and we thank her for her contribution in today's service. Last Sunday our preacher was the Reverend Jake Smith from Asheville, North Carolina, a member of the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church, and today our preacher is the Reverend Judy Smith, pastor of Edgerton Memorial United Methodist Church in Selma, North Carolina. Although Duke Chapel is an interdenominational place of worship, we enjoy a strong relationship with both conferences of the United Methodist Church here in North Carolina and we feel privileged to have both of these distinguished preachers as guests in our pulpit over the past two weeks. We're glad that you're with us today here in the chapel. Let us fill this great church with praise as we continue our service. ♪ Praise ye the Lord of hosts ♪ ♪ Sing his salvation ♪ ♪ Bless his name ♪ ♪ Show forth his praise ♪ ♪ In this holy house ♪ ♪ Praise ye the Lord of hosts ♪ ♪ Sing his salvation ♪ ♪ Bless his name ♪ ♪ Show forth his praise ♪ ♪ In this holy house ♪ ♪ And shall he come ♪ ♪ Oh ye heavens now be joyful ♪ ♪ Christ with his to be heard ♪ ♪ All earth shall sing alleluia ♪ (organ music) (indistinct congregational singing)

- Oh eternal God, Who has taught us to keep all Thy commandments by loving Thee and our neighbor, grant us the grace of Thy Holy Spirit that we may be devoted to Thee with our whole heart and united to one another with pure affection. Through Jesus Christ our Lord Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the same spirit, one God forever and ever, amen.

- Let us pray. Open our hearts and minds, oh God, by the power of Your Holy Spirit so that as the Word is read and proclaimed we might hear with joy what You say to us this day, amen. The first lesson is taken from the Second Book of Kings. One day Elisha went on to Shunem where a wealthy woman lived who urged him to eat some food. So whenever he passed that way, he would turn in there to eat food. And she said to her husband, "Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God "who is continually passing our way. "Let us make a small roof chamber with walls "and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp "so that whenever he comes to us he can go in there." One day he came there and he turned into the chamber and rested there. And he said to Gehazi, his servant, "Call this Shunemmite." When he had called her, she stood before him and he said to him, "Say now to her see, you have taken "all this trouble for us. "What is to be done for you? "Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king "or to the commander of the army?" She answered, "I dwell with my own people." And he said, "What then is to be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son "and her husband is old." He said, "Call her." And when he had called her, she stood in the doorway. And he said, "At this season when the time comes round, "you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, oh man of God. "Do not lie to your maidservant." But the woman conceived and she bore a son about that time the following year as Elisha had said to her. This ends the reading of the first lesson. ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪

And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ All creatures who live ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ On the earth are the Lord's ♪ ♪ All creatures who live ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ On the earth are the Lord's ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ All creatures who live ♪ ♪ On the earth are the Lord's ♪ ♪ Are the Lord's ♪ ♪ All creatures who live ♪ ♪ On the earth are the Lord's ♪ ♪ For who can rightly ascend ♪ ♪ The hill of the Lord ♪ ♪ And who may stand in his house ♪ ♪ To stand in his house ♪ ♪ The pure in heart and hands ♪ ♪ The pure in heart and hands ♪ ♪ Such shall be called of God ♪ ♪ Who are his hands ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ The earth is the Lord's ♪ ♪ And the fullness thereof ♪ ♪ Alleluia ♪ ♪ Alleluia, Alleluia ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (organ music) (indistinct congregational singing)

- The Gospel lesson is taken from Luke. Now as they went on their way he entered a village. And a woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care "that my sister has left me to serve alone? "Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, "you are anxious and troubled about many things. "One thing is needful. "Mary has chosen the good portion which shall not "be taken away from her." This ends the reading of the Gospel. ♪ Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart ♪ ♪ Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art ♪ ♪ Thou my best Thought, by day or by night ♪ ♪ Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light. ♪ ♪ Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word ♪ ♪ I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord ♪ ♪ Thou my great Father, I Thy true son ♪ ♪ Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one. ♪ ♪ Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise ♪ ♪ Thou mine Inheritance, now and always ♪ ♪ Thou and Thou only, first in my heart ♪ ♪ High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art ♪ ♪ High King of heaven, my victory won ♪ ♪ May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun ♪ ♪ Heart of my own heart, whatever befall ♪ ♪ Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all ♪

- The Epistle lesson is taken from Paul's letter to the Colossians. And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning every one and teaching every one in all wisdom, that we may present every one mature in Christ. For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me. This ends the reading of the Epistle lesson.

- Let us pray. By your presence, Lord, bless and inspire all that is said and heard. Take my words and make them thine. Grant to us the ability to understand and the strength to act upon that which we know is true. This I pray in Christ's name, amen. My paternal grandmother raised a large family and lived and died with many firm convictions. One of her convictions was that things were either right or they were wrong. They were either good or they were bad. There was no middle ground. There was no in between, no gray area.

And I like to think that the world she lived in was less complex than the one that we know today and that there were not as many voices clamoring for attention as we know today. And yet in my better moments I doubt that that is true. The apostle Paul writing to the church at Colossae was aware that the Christians there were struggling to survive. Not physically perhaps, but spiritually. There abounded in that city teachers and preachers of many different faiths, those who obviously believed that a simple faith and trust in Jesus Christ was not enough. There were those who sought to inmesh Judaic and pagan practices and doctrines with the fundamental truth of the good news, the gospel of Christ, and the result was a severe ascetic morality and a diminishing of the glory of Christ and the freedom of the Christian life. Redemption was offered but it was not compatible with the Christian gospel, for it consisted not in the forgiveness of sins mediated through Christ and his passion and resurrection, but of a higher knowledge coupled with legalism. It was an attractive heresy that small church struggled against. A heresy that attacked the adequacy and unique supremacy of Christ. A heresy that belittled his redeeming work done in the flesh. Hence the apostle's great concern that they continue in the faith, the hope of the gospel which they had heard, stable and steadfast, not shifting from it, this gospel of which Paul had become a minister. I think one major fear has dogged my steps ever since I reached the age of accountability and some awareness of the world around me. And perhaps it is your fear too. I have always been afraid that the advance of years would bring in their wake an inability and an unwillingness to grow mentally, would bring a fixity of opinion so that old concepts and beliefs never had any new light cast upon them. A fear that mental exploration and spiritual seeking would stop. Perhaps it is this fear that has helped to create in people in every age a kind of restless seeking for that which gives meaning to life. Adopting and then casting off new and strange philosophies, a striving to find a fixed foundation upon which to rest the weight of our life. And if we are not careful, we waste the greater part of our years because we are deaf to that old, unchanging message of the church, that in Jesus Christ and Him alone there is fullness of life, freedom, and hope. That in Jesus Christ the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and to reconcile to Himself all things. Our death.