- Service of worship, January 28th, 1979. (organ music) ♪ Beautiful Savior ♪ ♪ Lord of all nations ♪ ♪ Son of God and Son of Man ♪ ♪ Glory and honor, praise, adoration ♪ ♪ Now and forever more be Thine ♪ ♪ Now and forever ♪ ♪ More be Thine ♪ ("Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!")

- Dear friends, we are always in the presence of God. Such awareness is fearful, for the presence of such love and justice, we become keenly aware of our unloving and our unjust Thoughts and actions. It is only as we are certain of God’s love that is ever waiting to forgive us, to restore us to wholeness, that we have the courage to acknowledge our sin and to ask for forgiveness. With such assurance, let us now make our corporate confession to God. Let us pray. Most holy and merciful God, we acknowledge an confess before the our sinful nature. Prone to evil and slothful in good, and all our shortcomings and offenses. Thou alone knowest how often we have sinned and wandering from Thy ways, and wasted Thy gifts, and forgetting Thy love. For Thou, oh Lord, have mercy on us who are ashamed and sorry for all wherein we have displeased Thee. Teach us hate our errors. Cleanse us from our secret Thoughts, and forgive our sins, for the sake of Thy dear son, and most holy and loving God, help us, we beseech Thee, do live in Thy light and walk in Thy wings, according to the commandments of Jesus Christ our Lord. And now, oh God, hear our personal confessions. Amen. Dear people of God, we are forgiven, so let us live in the fullness of God’s love, for us and for all creation. Let us give thanks, for God is good, and God's love is everlasting. Thanks be to God who creates us. Thanks be to God who redeems us. Thanks be to God who sustains us. Amen. Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Christ. We will continue our Jewish Christian dialogue this Friday, February the 2nd, at 8:30 PM at the Baptist Student Center. The focus of this conversation will be an understanding of what is the core of the Christian faith and of the Jewish faith. You will note in your bulletin that Dr. Deborah Partridge Wolfe, who preached here at the chapel in December, will return to the campus this week to participate in our theologian and residence program. At 8:15 on this Tuesday evening, January the 30th, she will give her major speaker address in Gross Kip Auditorium, talking about values and the human dimension in the future. We are especially pleased today to have the people who have been participating in the black student weekend join us for worship. And for you, who are here, to have opportunity to hear Dr. Thurman preach. Dr. Thurman, we thank God for your life and your witness, which many of us had only known through your writings. The pastoral prayer today has been shaped by your meditations. And for those of you who are interested, you will find at the desk, as you leave the chapel, a copy of the Listening Ear, a newspaper of the Howard Thurman Educational Trust, a publication we may receive if we send them our name and address. After the morning service, Dr. Thurman will greet those who want to speak with him here at the front of the chancel. Dr. Thurman, your presence among us has been one of grace and truth. We are, indeed, appreciative of your honoring all the commitments we made for you, even when, because of the cold we gave you, the doctor requested that you stay to your bed. We exalted in your presence as you recognize in each of us our unique humanity. We are challenged in your presence, as we see the personal peace, serenity, and power, which comes from your life of meditation and devotion. And we are loved in your presence as we are encompassed by God's loving spirit. For the university and the
Durham communities, I say a very simple thank you and God bless you.

- Let us pray. Prepare our hearts, oh Lord, to accept your word, silence in us any voice but your own, that hearing, we may also obey your will, in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. The Old Testament lesson is from the second chapter, verse three, and the third chapter, verses 11 through 13 of Zephaniah. Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land who do his commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps, you may be hidden on the day of the wrath of the Lord. On that day, you should not be put to shame because the deeds by which you have rebelled against me. For then, I will remove from your midst your proudly exalted ones. And you shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain. For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lonely. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel. They shall do no wrong and utter no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall pastor and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Here ends the reading from the Old Testament. Amen. (organ music) ♪ Holy, Holy, Holy ♪ ♪ Holy is the Lord ♪ ♪ Holy, holy ♪ ♪ Holy is our God ♪ ♪ He who always liveth ♪ ♪ Evermore the same ♪ ♪ Heaven and earth He ruleth ♪ ♪ Come and praise His name ♪ ♪ Holy, holy ♪ ♪ Holy is the Lord ♪ ♪ Holy, holy ♪ ♪ Holy is our God ♪ ♪ Glorious and beloved ♪ ♪ Is the One adored ♪ ♪ Holy, holy ♪ ♪ Holy is the Lord ♪ ♪ Will the congregation stand for the reading of the Gospel lesson? The Gospel lesson is from the fifth chapter of Matthew, verses one through 12. Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain. And when he sat down, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, "for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, "for they shall be filled. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, "for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, "for they shall be called sons of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted "for righteousness sake, "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you, "and utter all kinds of evil "against you falsely on my account. "Rejoice and be glad, "for your reward is great in Heaven. "For so men persecuted the prophets who were before you." Here ends the reading from the Gospel. All praise and Glory be to God. Amen. (organ music) (choir singing)

- Drop Thy still dues of quietness until all our strivings cease. Take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of Thy peace. Yay, Though I walked through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and they staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Thou anoints my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Surely goodness... and mercy... shall follow me... All the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord... forever... Forever. Amen. Before I read two things that I would like for you to hold in mind as a background for our thinking together, our mediation really, I wish to take this moment to express my appreciation for all of the little and big courtesies by which my days have been surrounded since coming here. Both as a expression of your goodwill and an expression of the kindness of your hearts. Despite the fact that you could not control the weather, my organism knows that you did the best you could with what you had. It is good to remember that God has not left himself without a witness in our spirits. There is a spirit in us that contains our spirit, that provides the secondary consolations which float the big anxieties, that sustains the effort beyond the calculated endurance that makes the case for the good impulse, when the rational judgment sends the mind spinning in the opposite direction. It is good to remember that God
has not left himself without a witness in our lives. There is at work in life much that seems so circumstantial that the release of explanation can come only in the great word of the noncommittal, coincidence. Even the most cursory examination of what may be regarded as the most ordinary life shows that at many points, startling things have occurred that altered the entire direction of one's life. Some chance word heard at a critical moment, some single encounter along the way, a paragraph tucked away in an ordinary book, a stray thought out of nowhere finds a cuddling place in the mind, and there begins to live and breath, and reproduce its kind until something emerges as a new outlook, a different way of thinking. It is good to remember that God has not left himself without a witness in our lives. Despite all the wanderings of our footsteps, despite all the ways by which we may have sought to circumvent the truth within us, despite all the weaknesses of our spirits and of our minds, despite all the blunders by which we may have insulated ourselves from our fellows' approval unworthy of the love, the trust, the confidence, by which again and again our days are surrounded, despite all these things, it is good to remember that God has not left himself without a witness in our spirits and in our lives. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. This is the timeless utterance, the password that relaxes the angel with the flaming sword who guards the entrance to the Holy of Holies. No man can be happy in Heaven if his brother is in Hell. If the light that is in you be darkness, what a darkness it is. The tempter carried him to the pinnacle of the temple, and he said, "If you are God's son, "or if you are God's son, "or if you are God's son, "or if you are God's son... "jump... "and you won't get hurt." That is in the background of our thinking. Our lives are surrounded by what seems to me to be a structure of dependability in the very nature of life, that there is an order, there is a ground that is rational, that supports, sustains, that breaths through, that bottoms existence. And the degree to which an individual seems to understand this by brooding over the stubborn and, sometimes, unyielding and recalcitrant aspects of nature of the world, until the rational principle that seems to be working his mind becomes one with the rational principle that is at work in the whole structure of nature and the universe, when these flow together, then it seems to the man who is thus visited, that he stands outside of the normal operation of antecedent and consequence of reaping and sewing. And the insistence of my mind this morning is, that if by brooding over the external world, of nature... the mind of man seems to be illumined by the secret that is there which is one with the secret in his own mind so that he can use the raw materials of nature, on behalf of an expression of his own will and intention, when this is his experience, he seems to himself to be standing outside of the operation of any moral law whatsoever. Our history illustrates this. Brooding over the world external to ourselves until at last we were able to extract what seems to be to us the secret of atomic energy. And this secret, we harnessed and we put it at the disposal of the decisions of the mind and the judgements of history as we interpreted it. And as an expression of the way by which we could extricate ourselves from that which seem to threaten and to destroy, we became the instrument through which this kind of atomic energy could be released on the children of man. And our knowledge gave to us the delusion that we, ourselves, were immune to the moral and ethical consequences of our behavior. When the energies of life that are part of an expression of the creative life of God are used on behalf of that which destroys and lays waste, that does not heal and cure and make secure, when this happens, mankind experiences the rath of God. When the same energies brooding over the sickness and the illness, and all of the other ways by which life seems to have gone awry, when these energies become creative expressions of the intent and the benevolence, and the kindness, and the grace, and he love of God, then we experience the love of God. There is something about... the mind... that causes the individual as he seeks and experiences the understanding of the world external to himself that makes him feel that he is immune to the
operation of moral law. If I can get the secret, then I can stand outside of the relentless operation of antecedent and consequence of reaping and sewing. Sometimes when I’m very young I feel this way. In my early days in San Francisco, there was one young fellow in our church who was sure that his parents were a little out of date because they felt that he drove the family car with too much recklessness. And one day when they were chiding him about it, he said, "Accidents come to those people "who do not know how to drive. "Every Kurd in Northern California knows my name." And then one day he met a Kurd who had not heard about him, and I went to visit him in the hospital. This is one of the perils. If I’m young, If I’m innocent... then I am immune to the operation of the relentless logic of antecedent and consequence, of reaping and sewing. I stand outside of it because I’m innocent. If I’m a good man... I have given the nerve center of my heart to God. And I’m committed to following the path of Jesus Christ. Then standing within that kind of holy and cosmic immunity, I ought to be able to do what someone who is not involved in that kind of process to do with recklessness. There’s something that is very illusory about goodness in the religious experience, a naive feeling that there’s something about goodness that can good itself through the world. That the good man is immune to the operation of the laws of life, the logic, the structure of dependability that is inherent in the nature of existence. I have described this at some point. But when I moved out to San Francisco from Boston from Washington rather, one of my very good friends, who is a dean of a medical school, wanted to be sure that on the hazardous undertaking of which I was engaged, that my health was good, my organism would support the enterprise. So, he asked me to come down to the hospital for examination, and he did his part, and he sent me to X, and X did his part, and Y, and L and M. Each one did his part. And then on Friday, after this had begun on Monday, he invited me to his office and sat me down in the chair. He sat at the desk with the manila folder. He looked at this report, and he looked at me and said, "Mm-hm, mm-hm." And then he held the report in his hand, and the time stood still for a moment, and then he put it down and said, "Mm-hm." And he went all the way through the manila folder, and then he looked at me and he said, "You are in pretty good shape for a man of your years." But he said, "You are getting a little too heavy." And he talked to me rather learnedly about what the extra weight would do to my heart and to my blood pressure and parts of me that I have not heard or Thought about. And then I looked at him. He was not as tall as I, about five feet, oh, six or four inches, and he weighed about 225 pound. (congregation chuckles) Now listen very carefully. He Thought that his body knew that he was a doctor. His body did not know that he was a doctor. His body knew precisely what my body knew, that he was storing up more caloric units than he was burning up, and hence became the storage spaces called the bulges. (congregation chuckles) Now, that knowledge... was an immunity. He didn't know he Thought this. That we are bound by a structure of dependability in life, that there is an order that expresses itself in all manifestations of creation, and ultimately, it expresses itself in the hunger of the heart. And once it is clear to me that the hunger in my heart, which if I listen with great care, becomes for me the whisper of the voice of God. That this hunger and my experience of the orderly structure in which I am grounded as a part of God’s creation will flow together. And the tempter carried him to the pinnacle of the temple. And the tempter said, "If you are God's son... "jump. "Nothing will happen to you. "God will take care of you. "He will give you his angels charge concerning you. "They will bear you up on their wings, "lest you dash your foot against a stone." And the master's reply, you remember? It is written, Thou shall not tempt God, tempt God, tempt God, to destroy you. "If I go up to the pinnacle of the temple "and jump, even Though I am the son of God, "even Though I came forth out of the womb of time "to demonstrate and manifest the part "of the creative redemptive energy of God, "nevertheless, I am not immune. "So if I go to the pinnacle of the temple
and jump down, "the possibilities are I will break my neck." Son of God to the contrary, not withstanding, because this world is grounded in a structure of dependability. It is a part, not only of the law and the order of God. It is a part of the love of God. Therefore I shall have no fear of today or tomorrow. I shall not shrink from the relentless operation of the order by which my days are surrounded. I am committed to this... that the light that is in me remain light. If the light in me becomes darkness... What a darkness... What a darkness. Thou shalt not tempt God. Our words are ended, our Father. Be... Very close to them, and guide them, that they may be true... to the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and for us, oh God, our Father... Our Father, this is enough, enough. Amen. (organ music) ♪ Holy Spirit, truth divine ♪ ♪ Dawn upon this soul of mine ♪ ♪ Word of God and inward light ♪ ♪ Wake my spirit, clear my sight ♪ ♪ Holy Spirit, love divine ♪ ♪ Glow within this heart of mine ♪ ♪ Kindle every high desire ♪ ♪ Perish self in your pure fire ♪ ♪ Holy Spirit, power divine ♪ ♪ Fill and nerve this will of mine ♪ ♪ By you may I strongly live ♪ ♪ Bravery bear, and nobly strive ♪ ♪ Holy Spirit, right divine ♪ ♪ King within my conscience reign ♪ ♪ Be my law and I shall be ♪ ♪ Firmly bound, forever free ♪ ♪ Amen ♪

- Let us affirm what we believe. 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 and its fullest, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. The Lord be with you. (congregation prays) Let us pray. We give you thanks, oh God, for our joys. The joy in being alive, the joy in new and renewed friendships, the joy in reestablished and reconcile lives, the joy in the day's work and the night's rest. The sheer joy of being loved, of caring, and being cared for. We yield to you, oh God, our confusions, the chaos of our minds and spirits, the tensions which tame your glory our of our lives. We yield to you, oh God, our concerns for the world. We are exposed to buts that cast down and depress us, and so little that uplifts and expires. War, and the threat of war, the long loneliness and the death watch which seems to stalk our culture and fill our civilization with dry rot, the hunger, the suffering, the pain of oppression of our brothers and sister. All this and more than our tongue can say and our heart can feel, and our mind can think. We yield to your judgment and your justice, and your love. Hear, oh God, our prayers for ourselves. Where our hearts are heavy with sorry and misery, be present to heal, to bless, to relieve. When our friends are difficult because of misunderstanding and losses, be present, oh healing God, to bless and renew. When the thread of our years unwinds near the end of the spool, when the failing powers of mind and body accent the passing days, be present, oh eternal God, to reassure, to make steady and confirm. When our well ordered plans fall apart in our hands, be present to replenish, to create and redeem. When faith in our brothers and sisters wallows in the mud, when through disappointment and failure, through flattery, all seems lost, be present, oh holy and loving God, to revise, to renew, and to reassure. Hear us now, as we pray the prayer of the one who knew all the pain and sorry, and terror, and glory of being human. Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. By 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. Amen. (organ music) ♪ Oh Redeemer divine, our sole hope of salvation ♪ ♪ Eternal light of the earth and the sky ♪ ♪ We kneel in adoration ♪ ♪ Oh Savior, turn on us Thy loving eye ♪ ♪ Oh Savior, turn on us Thy loving eye ♪ ♪ Send down on us the fire of Thy grace, all consuming ♪ ♪ Whose wondrous might ♪ ♪ Whose wondrous might ♪ ♪ Dispersed
the powers of hell
And rouse our slumbering souls
With radiance, all illumining
That they may waken your mercy to tell
That they may waken your mercy to tell
Oh Christ bestow your blessing
On us, we implore Thee
Who here are gathered on penitent knee
Accept the hymns
Accept the hymns we chant
Thine everlasting glory
And these Thine gifts we return unto Thee
And these Thine gifts we return unto Thee
And these Thine gifts we return unto Thee
We return unto Thee
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Hallelujah, hallelujah
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Hallelujah, hallelujah
Hallelujah, hallelujah
Hallelujah
Amen
We give you thanks, oh God, for your abundant love and pray that you will accept this offering, a symbol of our lives, which we dedicate to your service. We pray in the spirit of Jesus, our Christ. Amen. (organ music) (choir drowned out by organ music) The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all from this day, forever more. Amen, amen Amen, amen Amen Amen Amen Amen (organ music)