

(organ music)

- Good morning and welcome to this service of worship here in Duke Chapel. It's a special Sunday because today we begin the summer here in the chapel, and we welcome our summer choir under the direction of Ms. Donna Sparks. If you're in Durham for the summer, we invite you to consider joining our summer choir. There's information on that in the bulletin. Today at 5 PM there will be a free organ recital by Mr. Shane Dotey here on the Flentrop organ at the chapel. We welcome as our guest preacher today Bishop Joseph Bethea, the Resident Bishop of the South Carolina area of the United Methodist Church and good friend of Duke. A couple of years ago when Bishop Bethea was named the bishop, he was meeting with his pastors in South Carolina, talking to them about his dreams and hopes for the future of the church under his leadership. And after he finished this very inspiring address, he asked the pastors if any of them had any questions they would like to put to the bishop. And one of them, the first question was, "Bishop, can we have your Duke basketball tickets "when you're not using them?" Bishop Bethea said that our Lord has told us to give the coat off our backs but not our Duke basketball tickets. I tell you that, to show you that, he has his priorities firmly in line, and he has been a frequent visitor to Duke Chapel, and we welcome him back again. And now, let us continue the worship of God.

Choir: ♪ Praise ye the Lord of hosts ♪ ♪ Sing his salvation ♪ ♪ Bless his name ♪ ♪ Show forth His praise ♪ ♪ In His holy house ♪ ♪ Earth shall be glad ♪ ♪ All the earth now be joyful ♪ ♪ Christ may his glory be all o'er the earth ♪ ♪ All earth shall sing hallelujah ♪ (organ music) ♪ Crown Him with many crowns ♪ ♪ The Lamb upon His throne ♪ ♪ Hark how the heavenly anthem drowns ♪ ♪ All music but its own ♪ ♪ Awake my soul and sing ♪ ♪ of Him who died for thee ♪ ♪ And hail Him as thy matchless King ♪ ♪ Through all eternity ♪ ♪ Crown Him Lord of life ♪ ♪ Who triumphed o'er the grave ♪ ♪ And rose victorious in the strife ♪ ♪ For those He came to save ♪ ♪ His glories now we sing ♪ ♪ Who died and rose on high ♪ ♪ Who died eternal life to bring ♪ ♪ And lives that death may die ♪ ♪ Crown Him Lord of peace ♪ ♪ Whose power a scepter sways ♪ ♪ From pole to pole that wars may cease ♪ ♪ And all be prayer and praise ♪ ♪ His reign shall know no end ♪ ♪ And round His pierced feet ♪ ♪ Fair flowers of paradise extend ♪ ♪ Their fragrance ever sweet ♪ ♪ Crown Him Lord of love ♪ ♪ Behold His hands and side ♪ ♪ Those wounds yet visible above ♪ ♪ In beauty glorified ♪ ♪ All hail Redeemer hail ♪ ♪ For Thou hast died for me ♪ ♪ Thy praise and glory shall not fail ♪ ♪ Throughout eternity ♪

- You pour out your love upon us, O God. You give us eternal life. In gratitude and thanksgiving we come before You, offering our gifts, our prayers, our questions, our yearning to You. Accept what we offer as signs of our great thanksgiving for all that You do on our behalf. And during this time of worship, make us useful servants of Christ in bringing all Your sons and daughters to a greater sense of Your glory. Amen. Be seated.

- Let us pray. Open our hearts and minds, O God...

Congregation: 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.

- Our first lesson comes from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter one, verses 6-14. "So when the apostles had come together, "they asked Jesus, 'Lord, will you at this time "'restore the realm to Israel?' "Jesus said, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons "'which have been fixed by God's own authority. "'But you shall receive power "'when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. "'And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, "'and in all Judea, and Samaria, "'and to the end of the earth.' "And having said this, as the apostles "were looking on, Jesus was lifted up "and carried on a cloud out of their sight. "And while they were gazing into Heaven as Jesus went, "two figures stood by them in white robes and said, "'People of Galilee, why do you stand looking into Heaven? "'This Jesus who was taken up from you into Heaven "'will come in the same way as you saw Him go into Heaven.' "Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem "from the mount called Olivet, "which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath's day journey away. "And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room "where they were staying, Peter, and John, "and James, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, "Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, "and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. "All these with one accord devoted themselves "to prayer together with the women, "and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with Jesus' brothers." Here ends the reading of the first lesson. Thanks be to God.

- Let us stand for the Psalm. ♪ Let God arise ♪ ♪ Let God's enemies be scattered ♪ ♪ Let those who hate God flee ♪ ♪ As smoke is driven away ♪ ♪ So drive them away ♪ ♪ As wax melts before fire ♪ ♪ Let the wicked perish before God ♪ ♪ But let the righteous be joyful ♪ ♪ Let them exalt before God ♪ ♪ Let them be jubilant with joy ♪ ♪ Sing to God sing praises to God's name ♪ ♪ Lift up a song for Him who rides upon the clouds ♪ ♪ Exalt before Him whose name is God ♪ ♪ In the holy habitation God is father of orphans ♪ ♪ And protector of widows ♪ (congregation sings) ♪ O God, when you went forth before your people ♪ ♪ When you marched through the wilderness ♪ (congregation sings) ♪ Rain in abundance, O God, you shed abroad ♪ ♪ You restored your heritage as it languished ♪ (congregation sings) (organ music) (congregation sings)

William: Be seated.

- The Epistle Lesson comes from the first letter of Peter, chapter four, verses 12-14, chapter five, verses 6-11. "Beloved, do not be surprised by the fiery ordeal "which comes upon you to prove you, "as though something strange were happening to you. "But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, "that you may rejoice also and be glad "when Christ's glory is revealed. "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, "you are blessed because the Spirit of glory "and of God rests upon you. "Humble yourselves, therefore, "under the mighty hand of God, that "in due time, God may exalt you. "Cast all your anxieties on God, for God cares about you. "Be sober, be watchful. "Your adversary, the Devil, prowls like a roaring lion, "seeking someone to devour. "Resist the Devil, firm in your faith, "knowing that the same experience of suffering "is required of the Christian community "throughout the world. "And after you have suffered a little while, "the God of all grace, who has called you "to eternal glory in Christ, will restore, "establish, and strengthen you. "To God, be the Dominion, forever and ever. Amen" Here ends the reading of the Epistle Lesson. Thanks be to God. (organ music) (choir sings)

- "When Jesus had spoken these words, "he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "'Father, the hour has

come. "Glorify thy son that the son may glorify thee. "Since thou has given him power over all flesh, "to give eternal life to all that thou hast given him. "And this is eternal life, that they know thee "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, "whom thou hast sent. "I glorify the honor, having accomplished the work "which thou gavest me to do. "And now, Father, glorify thou me in they own presence, "with the glory of which I had with thee "before the world was made. "I have manifested thy name to the men "whom thou gavest me out of the world. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, "and they have kept thy word. "Now they know that everything "that thou hast given me is from thee, "for I have given them the words "which thou gavest to me, and they have received them "and know in truth that I came from thee. "And they have believed that thou didst send me. "I am praying for them. "I am not praying for the world "but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine. "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, "and I am glorified in thee. "And now, I am no more in the world, "but they are in the world, and I am coming to thee. "Holy Father, keep them in thy name "which thou hast given me, that they may be one "even as we are one." I have read from the Gospel according to John, the seventeenth chapter and the first 11 verses. It is the word of God for the people of God.

Congregation: Thanks be to God. It's good to come again to this place. A place which holds so many fond memories for Shirley and me. For part of our life lived here. And I must say that, in response to Will's words, that being an Iron Duke is not quite commensurate with membership in the kingdom of God, though it's not far from the kingdom. And I have told this minister to the university that he must arrange, in the future, that the Bishop of South Carolina, his bishop, will have tickets to the ACC tournament. That will be a part of his assignment from his annual conference. It's good to be here; I've already seen many friends. And greeted many that I have worked with and glanced at others as this service has progressed. Please bow in a moment of prayer. Master, speak in thy servant hereth, waiting for thy gracious word, longing for thy voice that shareth, Master, let it now be heard. I am listening, Lord, for thee. What hast thou to say to me? May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen. What is eternal life? For many people, if not for most of us, eternal life is an endless existence which has its beginning when this life is over. Of course, it is thought to be a life much better than this life, than life in this world. Beginning, as I said, when this life is over but without termination. Indeed, for some, it is pie in the sky, when I die, by and by. And one must say that such views of eternal life are not altogether bereft of relevance to a host of people and conditions in our world. As a matter of fact, it is quite a powerful image, especially to those for whom life in this world is so often hard and difficult and filled with bitter experiences. I've gone to churches across this land, observed people in their worship, and for so many people, the religious life, the Christian life, is no more than an effort to guarantee a life that is better when this life is over. They look for and they search for and they long for an existence, a condition, that is different and better than conditions in this world. And if eternal life is indeed no more than an endless duration for what they experience day by day in this life, they would probably rather pass. Well, then, what is eternal life? Most proponents of the Christian faith are agreed that eternal life is indeed an endless existence in a future world. But in this Gospel according to John, while eternal life is spoken of as a future existence in concert with other proponents of the faith, John gives the concept an added dimension. And this added dimension seems to be the whole theme of this Gospel. As of it the writer wrote, "Now Jesus did many other signs "in the presence of the disciples which are not written "in this book, but these are written that you may believe "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, "and that believing you may have life, "life, life, in his name." It

seems to be the whole theme of the Gospel. Life. And there seems to be little or no distinction in John's gospel between life and eternal life. Jesus came that we may have abundant life. Jesus is the bread of life in this gospel. The Son gives life. Oh, and you are familiar with that great verse of scripture, "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, "that whoever believes in Him should not perish "but have eternal life." Life. Who believes in the Son has life. And who does not believe and obey the Son has not eternal life, shall not see life. Who hears my words and believes Him who sent me has life, has eternal life. You search the scriptures because you think from them you have eternal life. Yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. All in the gospel of John, life, life, life is the theme, life and eternal life, on and on. The theme is life and life eternal. And here in the Gospel Lection for today, in this so-called high priestly prayer attributed to Jesus at the Last Supper, Jesus proclaims eternal life, not so much as an existence into which we go when this life is over, but as a present reality. A present reality. And that's the added dimension. This is life eternal. Not something promised way off in some future. But this is life eternal, now, today. The present reality as well as a state which the righteous will attain when this life is over. Jesus, according to John, did not say, "This will be eternal life," though it will. Jesus uses the present tense. "This is..." Life. Life we are called to live today. And he tells us what it is. He tells us what it is. It is to know the true God and Jesus Christ whom God has sent. And that's the answer. What is eternal life? Eternal life is knowing God. Eternal life is knowing Jesus Christ. Now that verb, "to know," that verb "to know" has a variety of meanings and implications. In some sense, it's simply a matter of acquaintance. You know some things and you know some people. You've simply been introduced to them. But then on a deeper level, to know means to have personal involvement and personal experience, to become saturated, to become a part of. And in the biblical sense, that verb "to know" is more than mere historic knowledge of a subject, it's more than mere acquaintance with or awareness with what is taught about a subject, it's more, it's more. Minister went to visit a man in prison on the day before the man was tried for having committed a serious crime. And in the course of their conversation, the man said to the minister, "I believe everything you believe, Reverend. "I believe in God, I believe in the incarnation "and in the virgin birth. "I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ "and in the atonement required for salvation. "I believe in immortality, life after death, "the inspiration of scripture, "I believe everything that Christians believe. "You've got nothing on me, Reverend. "I've believed all these things since I was a child." But you see, the man was in prison, and the next day he was tried, convicted of committing a serious crime, and given a long prison sentence. Told that story to suggest that mere historical knowledge of Christ and the Christian faith, doctrine, teachings and all of these, while they are important, that's not enough. Knowledge at that level is not enough. Acquaintance with what is taught about God and Jesus Christ and on a doctrinal belief, all of that's important, but that's not enough. That's not enough. Group of college students was discussing what is the matter with religion. And they had picked to pieces, with all of the wisdom of the ages, the Church, the ministry, the faith, the creeds, and all the rest. When finally a student stood and said with a kind of finality, hopefully to settle the matter, he said, "Why, I don't think "there is anything the matter with religion. "I believe in God and practically everybody "believes in God." And the discussion leader, the discussion leader put two questions to the students. "How many of us in this room," he said, "believe in God?" Almost every hand went up. And then the leader said, "To how many in this room "is God a living reality?" Scarcely a hand went up. That's it. That's it. To know God, to really know God, is to experience God as a living reality. A living presence. It is to know God by living in a reverent, faithful, loyal, obedient relationship. Relationship in which we then continuously receive the life of God. Which is the power and the grace to live as God wants us to live. To do as God wants us to do. To know

God is to live in a vital relationship, a living fellowship with God. And it has to do, it has to do not so much with the quantity of life, it has to do with the quality of life. The quality of life. And it makes a difference. It makes a difference. It calls us out of this world so that while we live in this world we are not of this world. In that vital relationship with God, we have the grace and the power to live a different life, to march to a different drummer. It makes all of the difference in the world. But it is the free gift of God, the free gift of God, to those who believe and who make the total commitment. Dale Honey has a book called, "The Inside Story," in which he tells the story of 31 persons, their faith journeys. And one of them is the story of Buddy Scathier, who runs a shoe repair shop in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She said that when you walk into that shop, there is a kind of light and joy and spirit that you begin to feel when you first walk in. She walked in and she said, one day, and he said to her, "What can I do for you today?" And she said, "Well, I don't have any shoes to be fixed "today, but I've just come to talk with you "about the uniqueness of this place. "There's something about this place, "a joy and a freedom and an atmosphere of love "that's different." And he said to her, "Well, I've heard that, "I've heard that said by many people who come here." And she said, "Why do you believe it's so?" And he said he remembered the day, he remembered the day... He said so many people had come in earlier, and they seemed to have something that he didn't have, and he said to them, "I profess the Christian faith. "I believe in the Bible, I believe in prayer "and daily Bible study," he said, "but you seem "to have something I don't have. "And I want that something." And someone suggested to him one day that he give his life to God without reservation, and he would come to know God. It was nine years later, he said, but he remembered the day, he remembered the day that he said, "God, you can have all there is of me "to do with me what you will." And he said, "I came to know God. "I came to know God, and that knowledge "is ever-growing and ever-increasing. "It's brought joy to my life. "It's made this shoe shop a place of peace, "a place of serenity. "Not only that," he said, "but it sustains me, "it has sustained me when life has been hard, "such as the time when I lost my daughter. "My ever-increasing knowledge of God. "Giving myself over and over to God "and letting God's life live in and through me "is what makes this place what it is, "and it's what makes my life what it is." To know God is eternal life. Not some state of being which we will ascend to when this life is over. Not will be; to know God is eternal life. A life totally committed. Not something we hope to get when we die. It's life we have now, life that may be ours today. And when we have it, we live in that quality of existence, day by day in the presence of God, doing his will. And when the end comes, to die will simply be going home. This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Amen. (organ music) (congregation sings "In Thee Is Gladness")

William: The lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

- Let us pray. Be seated. How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord. Here you put a song in our hearts and give us lips to praise your name. The ordeals that we face in our lives are nothing compared to the blessings you have in store for your people. So if we be cast down, let it be because we seek to follow your way and not because of the burdens of our own selfishness. You have sent Jesus Christ into the world to make yourself known, and he has called us and named us as your chosen people. So by your strengthening spirit, help us to face boldly the task assigned to us, give us courage to translate confession into acts of reconciling love. Make us unafraid to follow the example Christ set before us, and to be encouraged by his constant

intercession on our behalf, submitting our lives to you, Yoked in harmony with what you command us to do, make all our acts an outburst of praise to your name and all our thoughts to be in tune with the harmony that you seek among us. We yearn to be filled with the embracing presence of your spirit. We yearn for a present taste of eternal life. With our senses dulled by decisions that demand our attention, focus us on what you want us to do. Give us discipline to determine your desire, and equip us to fulfill your demands. Our hands droop at times when they should reach out to support others. Our knees become weak when our feet seek your straight path. So by your spirit jar us out of our listless ways. Enliven us with your quickening power. Chasten our wrong choices by your judgment. Replace our schemes with your design. Deliver us from undue need to control our own destiny and from anxiety when our fate is uncertain. May this time of worship be for us preparation to be responsive to the council of your spirit, and thereby led to new ventures of faith. O God, secure in your love we pray for ourselves, and we pray for others, that in all our deeds your will may be done in us and in our world. Amen. Let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God. (organ music) (choir sings) (congregation sings "Praise God From Whom All Blessings")

- Gracious God, we praise your name, particularly for the gift of your Spirit which comforts us, prods us, and enlivens us for the taste of eternity that you have put in our minds and for your presence with us we give thanks, offering our gifts to thee, praying as we have been taught, Our Father...

Congregation: Who art in heaven, hallowed by 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. Amen. Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with us and remain with us now and always. Amen. ♪ Amen ♪ (organ music) (congregation sings)

William: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

Congregation: Thanks be to God. (organ music)