

(energetic organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (dramatic organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (organ music ends) (coughs) (up-tempo organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (organ music ends) (up-tempo organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (up-tempo organ music) (organ music ends) (coughs) Grace and peace to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We welcome you to this hour of worship at Duke University Chapel, and hope that each of you can be with us again in the very near future. Our preacher this morning is Mr. Harold Layton, Ph.D. candidate in the department of mathematics. Harold was selected as this year's student preacher by the Worship Committee of Duke Campus Ministry. This is a tradition which goes back for a number of years here at Duke and our campus ministry and we are proud to affirm that tradition again today. We extend a very warm welcome to Harold and to his family. The chapel choir, to whom we are eternally grateful for their celestial sounds, will be making a very special contribution to our service of worship today. 1985 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of Johann Sebastian Bach, thus we will be celebrating throughout this year his great musical contributions to the church. In a slightly different order of worship this morning, the choir will open the service with a singing of Cantata #65, for the season of Epiphany, "Sie werden aus Saba," much as Bach's own choir would've done during this time of year in Leipzig. We look forward to a year-long celebration led by our choir of the music of J.S. Bach. We are deeply saddened to announce this morning the death of Mrs. Ruby Willimon, the mother of Dr. William Willimon, minister to the university. Funeral services were held yesterday in Greenville, South Carolina. I'd ask your prayers for the entire Willimon family in their time of loss. And now let us lift our hearts to God as we worship together. Please stand. Let us pray. Almighty God, whose son, our savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world, grant that we thy people, illumined by thy word and sacraments, may answer readily the call of Christ. Set us free from the bondage of our sins and give us, we beseech thee, the liberty of that abundant life, which thou hast made manifest to us. Through Jesus Christ, our lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the holy spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen. (joyful organ music) (choir singing) (organ music ends) (coughs) (energetic organ and orchestra music) (choir singing) (choir singing) (choir singing) (choir singing) (choir member sings solo) (choir member sings solo) (whimsical orchestra music) (choir member sings solo) (choir member sings solo) (up-tempo orchestra music) (choir member sings solo) (choir member sings solo) (choir sings) (music ends) Let us pray together the prayer for illumination. 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 Deuteronomy, chapter 18, verses 15 through 20. The lord your god will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren. Him you shall heed. Just as you desired of the lord your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said let me not hear again the voice of the lord my God or see this great fire anymore, lest I die, and the lord said to me, they have rightly said all that they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die. This ends the reading of the first lesson. (contemplative organ music) ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice

the lord ♪ ♪ The lord, the lord is perfect ♪ ♪ It renews the soul ♪ ♪ The rule of the lord is sure ♪ ♪ It makes wise the simple ♪ ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice the heart ♪ ♪ The commandment of the lord shines clear ♪ ♪ It is right (murmurs) ♪ ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice the lord ♪ ♪ The fear of the lord is calling, enduring forever ♪ ♪ The decrees of the lord are true ♪ ♪ and all of them righteous ♪ ♪ They are more precious than gold ♪ ♪ More than abundant pure gold ♪ ♪ The way of the lord is sweeter than honey ♪ ♪ Than honey fresh from the comb ♪ ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice the lord ♪ ♪ My friend, your servant is guided ♪ ♪ In keeping them, there is great reward ♪ ♪ Who can know what my offense is? ♪ ♪ Wash me from my secret wrongdoing ♪ ♪ Halt, keep your servant from foolish pride ♪ ♪ Let it not rule over me ♪ ♪ Then shall I be whole ♪ ♪ and innocent of all my transgressions ♪ ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice the lord ♪ ♪ Let the words of my mouth, the thoughts of my heart ♪ ♪ Find favor before you oh lord, ♪ ♪ my redeemer and rock ♪ ♪ The statutes of the lord are just ♪ ♪ And rejoice the lord ♪ ♪

The second lesson is taken from the first letter to the Corinthians, chapter eight, verses one through 13. Now concerning food offered to idols, we know that all of us possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that an idol has no real existence, and that there is no God but one, for although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on Earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us, there is one God, the father, from whom all things are, for whom all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things and through whom we exist. However, not all possess this knowledge, but some through being hitherto accustomed to idols eat food that's really offered to an idol and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak, for if anyone sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols. And so by your knowledge, this weak man is destroyed. The brother for whom Christ died. Thus sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is the cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat. But I cause my brother to fall. This ends the reading of the second lesson. The gospel is taken from Mark, chapter one, verses 21 through 28. And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes, and immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit and he cried out, what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the holy one of God. But Jesus rebuked him, saying be silent and come out of him. And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him and they were all amazed so that they questioned among themselves, saying with authority he commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him. And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee. This ends the reading of the gospel. This morning, as I survey my life I find that I am in the middle of things. Neither young nor old. Neither idealist nor cynic. Neither liberal nor conservative. Pragmatist in politics, moderate in theology. And presuming to preach with neither the bold confidence of youthful enthusiasm nor the sure confidence of seasoned experience. In the midst of my life journey, in the transition from student to professional, in the dialectic of faith and skepticism, I find myself. My friends, you too surely know how you stand in the middle of things. Between birth and death.