

- Sunday Worship Service, March 23rd, 1980, Duke Chapel. (serene organ music) (choir music) (classical organ music)

- This is the day in which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. And let us begin our worship this morning by confessing together how we have failed to love God and to love and serve our neighbors. Let us pray. God we come before you knowing we have tried to hide from you, from one another, and from ourselves. Somehow we have felt that by depending upon our own powers we can solve the problems of life. We have tried to escape by withdrawing from the difficult, the challenging, the crucifying experiences of life. We have become trapped in a meaningless realm of insignificant activities while we have avoided projects we should have done. We have strayed far from the fullness of life you have promised us. Forgive us for our self-centeredness, our proudness, our weakness, our blindness. Have mercy upon us that we may become your people anew. Amen. Let us confess in silence the ways in which we have personally fallen short of God's expectation. Amen. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and there is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. I declare to you, therefore, that in His name we are forgiven. And let us give thanks for God is good and God's love is everlasting.

Congregation: Thank you, God, (faint speaking). Thank you, God, for forgiveness. Thank you, God, (faint speaking).

- The Duke University Chapel Staff and the Duke University Parish Ministry Staff, welcome you this morning to our service of worship and call your attention to the following announcements which are not noted in your bulletin. The Durham CROP Walk will be held next Sunday afternoon, starting at one o'clock p.m. outside Duke's Wallace Wade Stadium. The 10 mile walk-a-thon, a project of the Duke University Parish Ministry, raises money to support the hunger fighting work of Church World Service and Durham's Meals on Wheels. Sponsor sheets and additional information will be available at a table outside the chapel following this morning's service. Also, at table outside, postal cards are available for you to write a brief message to members of the US House Appropriations Committee. This committee will be voting Wednesday on the appropriation to fund Selective Service registration beginning this summer. Please let these members of Congress know how you feel about this proposed program. Thirdly, Page Box Office will be open this afternoon, immediately following this service for those of you who would like to purchase tickets to the performance of Box, The Passion of Our Lord, according to Matthew. It's being performed next Sunday, March 30th, beginning at four o'clock p.m. by the Duke Chapel Choir Orchestra Soloists and the Durham Boy's Choir. And finally, I am pleased to present to you the preacher for this morning, Ms. Amanda Lee Barry, a Duke University junior, majoring in religion and psychology. We look forward to her message for today.

- Let us pray. Prepare us Lord, give us a clear mind that we may hear your word. Give us a submissive will that we may respond to what we hear. Give us an open heart, oh Lord, that we may respond to your word

with love. Amen. The Old Testament lesson is from Isaiah 43:16-21. Thus says the Lord, "Who makes a way in the sea, "a path in the mighty waters, "who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior, "they lie down, they cannot rise, "they are extinguished, quenched like a wick. "Remember not the former things, "nor consider the things of old, "behold I am doing a new thing. "Now it springs forth, do not you perceive it? "I will make a way in the wilderness, "and rivers in the desert, the wild beast will honor me, "the jackals and the ostrich. "For I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. "I give rivers in the desert to drink for my chosen people. "The people who I form from myself, "that they might declare my praise. The Epistle reading is from Philippians 2:1-11. "So if there's any encouragement in Christ, "any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, "any affection and sympathy, complete my joy "by being of the same mind, having the same love, "and being in the full accord with one mind. "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility. "Count others better than yourselves. "Let each of you look not only to his own interest "but also to the interest of others. "Have this mind among yourselves, "which is yours in Christ Jesus. "Who though he wasn't a form of God, "did not count equality with God. "A thing to be grasped but emptied himself, "taking the form of a human, the form of a servant. "Being born in the likeness of men, "and being found in human form, "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, "even death on a cross. "And therefore, God has highly exalted Him "and bestowed on Him the name which is above "every other name. "That in the name of Jesus, every name, every knee "shall bow in heaven and on Earth, under the Earth. "Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, "to the glory of God the Father." Here reads the end of the reading of the Epistle. (solemn organ music) (choir music) Will the congregation please stand for the reading of the gospel lesson? The gospel lesson is from the Matthew 5:43-48. "You have heard it said you shall love your neighbor "and hate your enemy, but I say to you, "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, "so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. "For He makes His son rise on evil and on the good, "and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. "For if you love just those who love you, "what reward have you? "Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "And if you salute only your brethren, "what more are you doing than others? "Do not even the gentiles do the same? "You therefore must be perfect, "as your heavenly Father is perfect." (solemn organ music) (choir music)

- Glory be to our Creator. That's what we're here for, to give glory to our Creator. To praise Him with joy. Joy in prayer, joy in song. The joy of Christians worshiping God together. In Paul's message to the Philippians, he asks that they complete his joy by being of one mind, if there is any encouragement in Christ. There is encouragement in Christ. First of all, the encouragement comes from the example that He set for us. Jesus came as a servant, as the scripture says. Though he was in the form of God, he didn't count equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. We don't have an image of the man as a king, Jesus didn't come in princely fashion to rule over a great empire on Earth. Instead, we see Him on His knees washing the disciples' feet at the Last Supper. In Luke 22:27, He says, "But I am among you as one who serves." He gave all that he had in life and in death. His life is an example of humility and love. His words and teaching are also encouragement. In His teaching, He was stern yet encouraging. Turn the other cheek and if anyone asks you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Feed my sheep. Love thy neighbor as thy self. There is more to Christ than just a good example and teaching. The encouragement comes from the relationship that we have with Christ as a result of His death and resurrection. He died for our sins that we may be forgiven. God's love for us is so strong that we are empowered by it. His incentive of love is not like any other incentive. It is not a payoff for doing the right thing. Instead, it comes from inside, a real desire

to do God's will. With the incentive of love, we make his will our own. And love, because there's no alternative, the incentive of love is the power that enables us to love one another. As we read in 1 John 4:12. "Beloved, if God so loved us, "we also ought to love one another." This is how we can respond to Christ's loving sacrifice, by loving one another. My youth minister once wrote an inscription to me in "The Good News for Modern Man," that read like this, "Know that all the love and power of the universe "is available within you." What is this power for? This encouragement in Christ. This incentive of love. It gives us the courage to love one another and to do what we are charged to do. Knowing that we have His love, we are able to take a risk. We can risk getting up in the Duke Chapel, opening up your thoughts in front of hundreds of people. We can risk sharing our love with a friend. We can risk giving everything we have for someone else. When I told my 14 year old brother that I was going to preach in the chapel, he wanted to know what I was going to preach about. I tried to explain to him in general terms, very simply, what it was that I was going to say. I told him it was about the encouragement in Christ for a loving community. After I struggled with the explanation, he responded with a grin saying, "Oh, you mean like in Psalm 133?" I had to admit, I wasn't familiar with the passage, but I looked it up. "Behold how good and pleasant it is "when brothers dwell in unity. "It is like the precious oil upon the head "running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron. "Running down on the collar of his robes. "It is like the dew of Hermon, "which falls on the mountains of Zion. "For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, "life for evermore." The first verse is so simple but it says it all to me. "Behold how good and pleasant it is "when brothers dwell in unity." It is good. And so we can try to dwell in unity, in a community of Christ, with His encouragement and the incentive of love, God's love. Paul told the Philippians to be a full accord and of one mind. To be of one mind is to be of one spirit. We become one by sharing with others in a community. Again, Paul said, "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, "but in humility count others better than yourselves." And the part of the sermon on the mount that was read this morning, Jesus said to love your enemies. That's a pretty strong command. It's not easy to love your enemies. It's not easy to love someone who's political or philosophical views are not like your own. And how about the guy who cheers for Carolina? Do I have to count him better than myself? We have to if we're going to be humble. Christ was humble, He lived a life of humility. He came to serve. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Another example is Saint Francis of Assisi. He gave up all his material possessions and devoted his life to serving others. He cleansed the wounds of a leper and gave his coat to the poor. He went hungry. He risked cold, disease, and fatigue for others. In humility he prayed this prayer. "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. "Where there is hatred, let me sow love. "Where there is doubt, faith. "Where there is despair, hope. "Where there is darkness, light. "And where there is sadness, joy. "Oh divine master, grant that I may not so much seek "to be consoled, as to console. "To be understood, as to understand. "To be loved, as to love. "For it is in giving that we receive. "It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. "And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life." We try to apply these examples of humility to our own lives. Do we humble ourselves to be of one mind, one mind in Christ, in the most obvious example in our role as Christians? Too often we use the role of Christians as a label, a trademark. You're like the man in the advertisement with the Dime Savings Bank of New York. We see this man standing with this big fancy car in front of his new house saying, "I found the better way." How many times do we as Christians look down on others because we feel we have found the better way? Even between Christians, it is dismaying to see it right here on campus. There are factions and competition between them. Can you open-minded Methodists count the strict fundamentalists as better than yourselves? Can you Baptists count the Catholics as better than yourselves? Or do we look at one another

with scorn because we all don't see things the same way? We are all sure that our way's best. But aren't we all on the same side? Aren't we all followers of Christ? Being in full accord and of one mind. Can we also do nothing from selfishness or conceit when speaking to those who do not know the loving community of Christ? Jesus said, "For if you love those who love you, "what reward have you? "Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "And if you salute only your brethren, "what more are you doing than others? "Do not even the gentiles do the same? "You therefore must be perfect "as your heavenly Father is perfect." If we as Christians salute only those who follow Christ, are we doing any more than anybody else? We lose the point if we boastfully tell others that we are better. The better way is to do as Christ taught, to love one another, to count others as better than ourselves, and to have one mind among us. In John 13:35, Jesus said, "By this, all men "will know that you are my disciples, "if you have love for one another." An evangelism of love is the most powerful. Trying to share in community with God's love is our incentive, our constant encouragement. None of us can boast that He is better, in this respect, for no one is perfect, except Christ. It doesn't take much to shatter our fragile human egos. I had an experience that taught me this. I was hardly expecting to be preached to over pizza, when I went out to dinner with a friend. But it's one sermon that I'll never forget. My friend told me in very plain terms that I didn't make a very good impression with people that I didn't know. He said that you can't just be friendly with the people that you know well, but you should treat everyone the way that you treat your friends. He told me, "You know, if you were concerned "with what's bothering other people, "you'll forget about yourself." He knew me pretty well. As a freshman, finding my way in the university, I was so worried about myself and the impression that I was making, that I was forgetting about others. It's so easy to do. Paul's challenge to the Philippians is a challenge to us today. With God's love we must count others better than ourselves and look to the interest of others to form a true loving community with one mind in Christ. Anyone who has found acceptance in a community knows the benefits of sharing relationship. If you have a family with whom you can really be at home, or if you have a special friend or a roommate that you could share your thoughts with, can really let it all out. Chances are they probably know you better than you realize. Or if you're a part of a group where your beliefs are respected, even shared. We know the benefits of being in a community where each side benefits from each other, giving and taking, a symbiotic relationship of sorts. Still, such a relationship is subject to human desires and whims. But imagine a community where the incentive is God's unconditional love for us. We love because He first loved us. We give what we can because He gave all that He had. His gift of love encourages us to share that love of Christ with others. Just as Edwin Markham said in this short poem. "He drew a circle that shut me out. "Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout. "But love and I had the wit to win. "We drew a circle that took him in." Being of one mind refers not only to sharing common ideas and beliefs but also to actions. If your mind is in Christ, it implies that both thought and action will follow. It is one thing to accept Christ's word and to profess belief in his doctrine, but quite another to put it to work. When Paul said, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus," he was not referring just a thought. By having a mind in Christ, it becomes an inherent part of the person. It is more than cognitive functioning, actions are implied. If our minds are in Christ, it will show in our lives. Acting in unity as one in Christ, let each of us look not only to our own interest, but also to the interest of others. This is a difficult challenge to accept. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Most people are willing "to take the Sermon on the Mount as a flag to sail under, "but few people are willing to use it "as a rudder by which to steer." Too often we use the label Christians without regard to the responsibility and obligations which are attached. We can't go out and flaunt the better way, we're supposed to be humble and consider others better than ourselves. We can if we know that we have

the incentive of love. The incentive of love cannot be ignored. God's love fills us with an enthusiasm that can't sit still. It's like yeast added to bread. It takes a small amount of dough and with enough warmth, it swells to many times its size. The incentive of love, God's love fills us so that we swell until we would burst into action. It lights a candle under us so that we might act upon this incentive. Viktor Frankl in his book "Man's Search for Meaning" talks about the meaning of love. He said, "Love is the only way to grasp another human being "in the inner most core of his personality. "No one can become fully aware of the very essence "of another human being unless he loves him. "By the spiritual act of love he is enabled "to see the essential traits and features "in a beloved person. "And even more, he sees that which is potential in him. "That which is not yet actualized, "but yet ought to be actualized. "Furthermore, by his love, the loving person enables "the beloved person to actualize these potentialities. "By making him aware of what he can be "and of what he should become, "he makes these potentialities come true." So we see here two ways in which love can be active in a community. First, it enables one to become aware of the very essence of another. By loving someone, we are able to know them better. By the act of love, we can know what can't be expressed in words. Love comes from the spirit and so it enables us to know each other on a spiritual level. This spiritual communication is important to a community which is one in the spirit. Second, love becomes active in a community by enabling us to actualize our potentialities, by making us aware of what we can and should become. This follows from communication. By knowing others, we can help them to better understand themselves. And then love gives us the support of strength, to realize our potentials. The love which enables us to know another person and to grow from this relationship, comes from God. With strength and encouragement from Christ, we can be humble in community by counting others better than ourselves. The incentive of love in Christ is the basis of loving Christian community. We acknowledge this love today in worship, in joy. So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind. Having one love. Being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility, count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but to the interest of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus. (solemn organ music) (choir music)

- Let us affirm what we believe. We believe in God, who has created and is created. 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 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, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us, we are not alone. Thanks be to God.

- The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And with your spirit.

- Let us pray. Holy God, we rejoice that you are our Creator, our sustainer, and the Lord of our life. We thank you for the beauty of our world, for the gift of friendship, for food, shelter, and clothing, for the opportunity to learn, for the freedom to think, and speak, and write, as we believe we should. Most of all, we thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ, through whom we are forgiven and to find hope and renewed strength for the challenges before us. And we pray for the healing power of the Holy Spirit among us. We pray that we might

be the vehicle through which the Spirit comforts and supports others. Enable us to mend what has broken between us in order that we might enjoy more completely the communion of saints. But as seek to know and enjoy community, do not let us forget the needs of the stranger who stands outside our circle of faith. Help us to reach out, not only to the helpless, but to the hostile as well. We pray these things because we confess that Jesus Christ means more to us than anything else in the world. Together, let us offer the prayer which He taught to us. 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, 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. (solemn organ music) (choir music) (serene organ music) (choir music) Holy God receive these gift we humbly pray to thy service. May they improve the life of the Christian community and this place and reach out with the good news. That healing and comfort may happen in our time. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. (solemn organ music) (choir music) Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be and divide with you now and forever. Amen. ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (serene organ music)