A new world is coming. The scripture lessons for today carry a theme of promise and hope. In Isaiah, a healthy shoot emerges from the people who were seemingly cut down by political upheaval, and there is hope of a new ruler to come. In his Letter to the Romans, Paul gives hope to the Gentiles who will be grafted onto God’s covenant people through Christ. Matthew’s Gospel reveals the radical message of John the Baptist, who calls people to repentance and offers baptism as a sign of cleansing and new life.
Gathering
Carillon

Prelude Music

Meditation on Beautiful Savior  
arr. Cathy Moklebust

Carillon for Advent  
arr. H. Dean Wagner

Greeting and Call to Worship

Old Testament Lesson | OT pages 602–603 in pew Bibles.

Isaiah 11:1–10

Lector:  This is the word of the Lord.
People:  Thanks be to God.

*Processional Hymn | UMH 729

O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines  
JERUSALEM

*Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance | In unison:

God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom; we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.

The minister speaks words of assurance.

*Peace | All exchange signs and words of God’s peace.

Minister:  The peace of Christ be with you.
People:  And also with you.

*All rise as able
Prayer for Illumination | In unison:

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming, nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalm 72: 1–7, 18–19

O God, impart Your just judgments | to the king,
Your righteousness to the | royal son.
May he judge Your | people rightly,
Your | poor with justice.
May the mountains raise up flourishing | for the people,
and the | hills, with righteousness.
May he work justice for the poor a- | mong the people.
May he save the vulnerable and crush | the oppressor.
May they fear You while the | sun endures,
and before the moon for all | generations.
May he be as rain that falls up- | on the mowing,
as rain that show- | ers the earth.
May the righteous thrive | in his days,
with abundant shalom until the moon | is no more.

Blessed is Adonai, God, the | God of Israel
who alone | performs wonders,
and blessed be His glorious | name forever.
May His glory fill the whole earth. A- | men, amen.

—trans. Ellen F. Davis

Romans 15:4–13

Lector:  This is the word of the Lord.
People:  Thanks be to God.

Gradual Music

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers  arr. Anna Laura Page

*Gospel Lesson | NT pages 2–3 in pew Bibles.

Matthew 3:1–12

Lector:  This is the word of the Lord.
People:  Thanks be to God.

Sermon

A Sermon on Sermons

Response

*Response Hymn | See hymn printed at the end of worship guide.

When a Prophet Sings of Justice  FREU DICH SEHR

*Advent Creed

We believe in one God, who is Creator,
maker of all we see and all we don’t see.
Who is Ruler of the universe: Source of all creation!

We believe in one God, who is Jesus Christ,
God from God, Light from Light, true God and true human.
He is one with the Creator;
the Word made flesh, our Messiah: Savior of all creation!
We believe in one God, who is Holy Spirit, 
Breath of God moving among us; 
Who is one with the Creator; one with the Christ; 
our Comforter and our Guide: Mentor of all creation!

—Lisa Frenz

Call to Prayer

Minister: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Minister: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People | The congregation responds to each petition:

People: Hear our prayer.

Offertory | Please sign and pass the attendance pads located in the pew at the center aisle.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

*Doxology

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Praise to God the Father sing, praise to God the Son, our King,

praise to God the Spirit be ever and eternally.

Thanksgiving

*Prayer of Thanksgiving
*The Lord’s Prayer | All are encouraged to pray the Lord’s Prayer in the language
of their choosing.

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.

Sending Forth
*Benediction

*Closing Hymn | UMH 203

Hail to the Lord’s Anointed

Closing Voluntary

Chaconne in G Minor

Carillon

Memorial Chapel Communion | Immediately following today’s worship
service, a brief communion service will be held in Memorial Chapel. Following
communion, the pastor will be available to offer prayers and anointing.

TODAY IN WORSHIP

Presiding Ministers
Racquel Gill .................. Minister for Intercultural Engagement, Duke University Chapel
Bruce Puckett ....................... Assistant Dean, Duke University Chapel

Preacher
William Willimon. .... Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry, Duke Divinity School
Lectors
Leslie Ballew ........................................... Divinity ’23
Laura Catherine Wilson ...................... Pastoral Assistant for the Congregation; Divinity ’26

Musicians
The Bell Ringers ............................... First Baptist Church, Henderson, N.C.
David Cole ............................. Interim Minister of Music, First Baptist Church, Henderson, N.C.
Robert Parkins ..................... University Organist, Duke University
Chad Fothergill .......................... Interim Chapel Organist, Duke University Chapel
Daniel Jacky ............................ Organ Scholar, Duke University Chapel
Michael Accinno ....................... Organ Scholar, Duke University Chapel
Mitchell Eithun ........................ Chapel Carillonneur, Duke University Chapel

Head Usher
James Ferguson ......................... Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel

Today’s Guest Preacher | Professor William Willimon served as the dean of Duke Chapel and professor of Christian ministry at Duke University from 1984 to 2004. He next served as the bishop of the United Methodist North Alabama Conference from 2004 to 2012. He then returned to Duke to teach in the Divinity School. He has taught in Germany, Singapore, New Zealand, and Australia in various seminaries. He is a trustee of Wofford College, Emory University, and serves on the Dean’s Committee of Yale Divinity School. Bishop Willimon is the author of over seventy books; more than a million copies of his books have been sold. His articles have appeared in many publications, including Theology Today, Interpretation, Liturgy, and Christianity Today. He is editor-at-large for The Christian Century. His book Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Leadership is used in dozens of seminaries in the United States and Asia. His sermon today relates to his recent book Listeners Dare: Hearing God in the Sermon.

Today’s Music | One of the largest youth handbell programs in the United States, The Bell Ringers of The First Baptist Church of Henderson, North Carolina have concertized and taken part in major handbell festivals from Florida to the Canadian border since their founding in 1969 by Dr. Philip Young. In addition to regular participation in the worship services of their own church, The Bell Ringers have made an annual appearance in Duke Chapel for over four decades. The ringers have performed for the North Carolina Music Teachers Association, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and the NC Federated Women’s Clubs. After nearly two decades under the baton of Mark Hopper, First Baptist’s Interim Minister of Music David Cole now directs the group, whose members range from seventh grade through college age. The church has several handbell ensembles who ring three sets of Schulmerich handbells and two sets of Malmark handchimes.
Today’s Offering | All of today’s checks written to Duke University Chapel will be used to support the Chapel’s Development Fund for Mission and Ministry. Send checks to: Duke University Chapel, Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708-0974. You are invited to give online at chapel.duke.edu/offering.

Today’s Flowers | Flowers for today’s worship service are given to the glory of God by the generosity of the Elizabeth Lucina Gotham Memorial Chapel Endowment.


Our Advent Pattern of Worship | The prophecies of Isaiah heard across the four Sundays of Advent in this lectionary cycle (Year A) are proclaimed to a waiting people. Placement of these powerful readings at the start of the liturgy foregrounds their pronouncements of dramatic reversals, in-breaking justice, and promised peace. Just as we expectantly watch doors while waiting for deliveries, for guests, or for loved ones, we hear Isaiah’s prophecies proclaimed at a physical threshold—that liminal space between the gathered assembly and the world that awaits the fulfillment of God’s covenants.

ENGAGE

University Prayer of Thanksgiving | Each week, we focus on a different campus unit, school, or department for whom to give thanks to God for their service and contributions to the wider university community and beyond. Today, we give thanks for Duke Divinity School.

Tour After the Service | Learn about the history, architecture, and life of Duke Chapel on a tour immediately following the service. The tour is free and lasts about forty-five minutes. Meet the docent outside in front of the Chapel.

Restrooms in Divinity School | Public restrooms are available in the Divinity School. To access them, exit the Chapel through the main front doors, turn to the left, and enter the Divinity School. Restrooms are along the hallway in the Divinity School.
Attendance Pad | This morning, worshipers are invited to indicate their presence using the attendance pad located on the pews at the center aisle. The purpose of this is to help the Chapel and Congregation better understand who worships with us on Sunday mornings. In addition, this registration will allow those who share a pew to greet each other by name.

Advent Lessons and Carols Dec. 8 | This year, the Chapel’s Service of Advent Lessons and Carols will be on Thursday, December 8, at 7:00 p.m. The Chapel’s Vespers Ensemble leads the music for the service.

Reality Ministries’ Live Nativity | Join Reality Ministries for a night of carols, Christmas treats, and their annual reimagining of the Nativity on Friday, December 9, at 6:00 p.m. at 916 Lamond Ave, Durham NC, 27701. This live, outdoor nativity features participants of various abilities. All are welcome.

Christmas Cookie Fellowship | Plan to stay after worship on Sunday, December 11, for a Christmas Cookie Extravaganza in the lower level of the Chapel. All are invited to bring holiday cookies or other treats, though all are welcome regardless of contribution. Donations may be placed in the Chapel kitchen prior to worship. Come and share some holiday cheer with other worshipers.

Choral Evensong Next Sunday | Next Sunday, December 11, at 4:00 p.m., the Chapel will hold a service of Choral Evensong. Following the Book of Common Prayer, the liturgy draws upon stirring choral and organ music of the English cathedral tradition, led by the Chapel’s Evensong Singers.

Young Adult Gathering | University graduate students, other young adults, and their partners are invited to dinner and Bible study on December 12, at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel kitchen, located in the lower level of the Chapel. Come for a light supper and good conversation. This fall, the group will explore the Book of Exodus. Please contact laura.wilson@duke.edu for additional information.

Back Pew Collection | When the birth of a baby is anticipated, families stock up on diapers. This Advent, in anticipation of the celebration of the birth of Jesus, please help the Diaper Bank of North Carolina replenish their stores. The Diaper Bank provides these necessary items to families living in poverty. Please bring diapers for infants, toddlers, and adults and/or feminine hygiene products to the back pew on Sundays, December 11 and 18.
**Zoe Empowers Gift Market** | Christmas gifts can make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children. Sundays, December 11 and 18, there will be an alternative gift market for Zoe Empowers, a global mission partner that empowers vulnerable children to move out of poverty and become independent in three years. When a gift is purchased, the giver will receive an attractive card or bookmark telling the recipient that a gift that matters is empowering a child in Africa. Please stop by the table in the narthex following worship or contact congregation@duke.edu for online options.

**Christmas Open House** | The annual “Duke Chapel by Candlelight: Christmas Open House” will be on Wednesday, December 14, from 12-noon to 2:00 p.m. It’s a chance to see the splendor of the Chapel decorated for the Christmas season. Take in the sights, and listen to music for Advent and Christmas! Admission is free, and free parking is available for the event in the Bryan Center Garage.

**Christmas Eve Services** | The Chapel will hold Christmas Eve services at 2:00, 5:00, 8:00, and 11:00 p.m. We will also have a Christmas Day service at 11:00 a.m. For details, see chapel.duke.edu/christmas.

**Sunday Morning Classes** | Sunday morning Christian Education classes are available for all ages. These classes are offered from 9:45–10:45 a.m., with coffee and refreshments provided at 9:30 a.m. Classes meet in the lowest level of the Westbrook building. New participants are welcome at any time. Please contact congregation@duke.edu for additional information.

**Wee Praise:** Music and movement for children ages 0–3 with parents or caregivers in person in room 0011 Westbrook.

**Godly Play:** Spiritual formation for children ages 4 through 5th grade in person in room 0050 Langford.

**Youth Bible Study:** Youth in 6th–12th grades will explore Exodus in person in room 0015 Westbrook.

**Advent Study:** Adults will discuss the angels of Christmas in 0013 Westbrook and over Zoom.

**Adult Forum:** On December 11, The Rev. Colin Yuckman, Director of Digital Learning Formation, Duke Divinity School will discuss “Is Free Will Obsolete in the Age of Surveillance Capitalism?” in 0012 Westbrook and over Zoom.
1. When a prophet sings of justice like broad rivers
   flowing free, let me clearly see the vision of an
   earth that might yet be: God’s intention, human dreams,
   righteousness like mighty streams, waters teeming
   with salvation to wash clean the whole creation.

2. When a gospel speaks of hunger for the Word and
   for the bread, let me hear how with each feeding of the
   loaves and fishes multiply in a Eucharist,
   of sharing, in a sacred meal of caring,

3. When an old song can remind us of how simple
   selfish selves set free, freed from pomp and circumstance,
   free to join in Christ’s own dance, turned ’round right, and
   in the turning, your own will for us discerning,

4. As you grant us better insight with the vision
   of alteratives; stripped of empty act and talk
   we may take a humbler walk, justice, kindness
   no abstractions, but made real in words and actions.
ACCESSIBILITY

Large-print hymnals and worship guides are available at the visitor relations desk. Hearing assistance units are available at the AV console in the rear of the Chapel. Please let us know if you need other accommodations by approaching a minister or usher, or email us at dukechapel@duke.edu.

LET’S KEEP IN TOUCH

We would like to get to know you. What are your questions? What is your story? Take a moment to fill out a brief form, and a Chapel minister or other staff member will contact you soon. Scan the QR code or visit chapel.duke.edu/connect.

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The Congregation at Duke Chapel joyfully welcomes all persons regardless of age, race, class, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other distinction and invites membership and participation in all of its ministries.

Please email congregation@duke.edu to receive the weekly eNews.

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#FindSanctuary