

A SERVICE OF COVENANT RENEWAL AND BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE

Student Orientation - Thursday, August 25, 2005

PRELUDE

*OPENING SENTENCES

Leader Praise the Lord!
People **Praise, O servants of the Lord,
Praise the name of the Lord.**
Leader Blessed be the name of the Lord
From this time forth and for evermore!
People **From the rising of the sun to its setting
The name of the Lord is to be praised.**

*HYMN "God Whose Love Is Reigning O'er Us" UMH 100

*LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Let us give our thanks for all of God's mercies.

O God, our Covenant Friend,
You have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives.
**We thank you for your loving care,
Which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.
We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have given us life and reason,
And set us in a world filled with your glory
**You have comforted us with family and friends,
And ministered to us through the hands of your sisters and brothers.
We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have filled our hearts with a hunger for you,
And given us your peace.
**You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.
You have given us a place in the fellowship of your spirit
And the witness of your Church.
We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have been our light in darkness
And a rock of strength in adversity and temptation.
**You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys
And the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.
We praise your holy name, O God.**

You remembered us when we forgot you.
You followed us even when we tried to flee from you
**You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.
For all your patience and overflowing grace,
We praise and bless your holy name, O God. Amen.**

PROCLAMATION

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God. Through baptism, we have entered into the new covenant of which Jesus Christ is the mediator. He sealed it with his own blood that it might last forever. On the one side, God promised to give us new life in Christ, the Source and Perfecter of our faith. On the other side, we are pledged to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us.

We come today to renew the covenant bonds that unite us to God and to each other. You have already had an opportunity to read and discuss the Conduct Covenant Statement of Duke Divinity School. We gather now in worship, as a community of baptized Christians, to celebrate the new life we live together as servants of a risen Lord.

The document you have been studying and discussing is not so much a list of rules to which you must assent, rather it is a declaration of who we are as a covenant community that has been

called to a life apart in Christ. The Conduct Covenant seeks to describe the transformed life we endeavor to live and the practices of Christian life you will encounter here. You are no longer strangers to us, but friends. We welcome you into this community of the baptized and pray that God will richly bless your work, worship and study while you are here with us.

Please know that there is nothing you have to sign today, nothing to which you must consent. There is only the call to celebrate what God had done for us. And now, as a community of faith preparing to be transformed by your ongoing presence with us, let us pause to remember and give thanks for the unity we share through our baptism into the body of Christ. Let us acknowledge with gratitude all God has done for us, in seeking us, saving us, and sanctifying us. Let us renew our commitment to our Lord Christ and his holy Church. I invite you to pray silently in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **Amen.**

BLESSING THE WATER

This water is the outward and visible sign of our inclusion into the body of Christ. As we come to touch his water, we offer thanks for the salvation, cleansing and new life that was given to us in our baptism.

Let us pray: Pour out your Holy Spirit, and by this gift of water call to our remembrance the grace that was declared to us in our baptism. For you have washed away our sins and you clothe us with righteousness throughout our lives, that dying and rising with Christ we may share in his final victory

All praise to you eternal Father, through your Son, Jesus Christ, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever. Amen.

You are invited to come forward to one of the stations, touch the water, and if desired, touch your forehead with a moistened finger. You may wish to mark yourself with the sign of the cross. The liturgist will say to each member of the community "Remember your baptism and be thankful." Then laying hands on each member, the liturgist will offer this blessing, "The Holy Spirit work within you, that having been born of water and the spirit, you may continue to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. Amen."

*HYMN

"A Charge to Keep I Have"

UMH 413

*WORDS OF BENEDICTION

The God of all grace who has called us to eternal glory in Christ, establish and strengthen you by the power of the Holy Spirit that you may live in grace and peace. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, **Amen.**

Let us share with one another the signs of our unity in Christ.

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

The Peace is shared. The people depart.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Liturgists: Rev Sally G. Bates, *Chaplain;*
Rev Connie Shelton, *Co-Director of Field Education/Church Relations;*
Rev Joey Shelton, *Co-Director of Field Education/Church Relations;*
Rev Cheryl Brown, *Director of Admissions;*
Rev Greg Duncan, *Associate Dean of Student Life;*
Ms. Sheila Williams, *Director of Financial Aid.*

Organist: Dr. David Arcus, *Duke Chapel Organist, Associate University Organist*

Special thanks to Dr. Warren Smith, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, for delivering the 2005 Conduct Covenant lecture.