

Congregation:

[inaudible 00:00:00].

Rohan Press:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Rohan Press:

Welcome to the Appleton Chapel here in our Memorial Church for our daily service of Morning Prayers. Our speaker this morning is Franz Lepionka of our very own Memorial Church grants committee, of which I had the pleasure of serving alongside them in this past May, so it's a distinct pleasure to have you here this morning. I invite you, please, to rise and join in the singing of our responsorial psalm, which is Psalm 136 in your Black Psalter. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"O give thanks unto the God of gods: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

"O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"To Him who alone doeth great wonders: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

"To Him by that wisdom made the heavens: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

"To Him that made great lights: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"The sun to rule by day: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

"The moon and stars to rule by night: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

"Who giveth food to all flesh: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Congregation:

"O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for His mercy endureth for ever."

Rohan Press:

You may be seated.

MUSIC:

I thank you, heavenly Father.

Through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

You kept me safely through the night.

And brought me to the morning light.

Be with me through this day, I pray.

And keep me safe from Satan's sway.

That all I think or do or say.

Please only you, my strength and stay.

Into your hands I now commend.

My body and soul until life's end.

Your angel keep me safe from harm.

Until I rest in Jesus's arm.

Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.

Franz Lepionka:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Franz Lepionka:

I forgot to print out my notes, so I handwrote them. But thanks to my wonderful partner in life, Jen, she said, "Write them large, and write it with lots of space." So, hopefully I won't trip over my own words. Two Sundays ago, I sat in the pews beyond this chapel, and contemplated a lookward south. Before service began, I wandered to my 103-year-old grandmother, leaving my grandparents' home to reside in an elder care facility. Her home, down the street from my childhood home, a home I will sell a week from today while I reside in her house. I'm going home to sell home.

University of North Carolina and Harvard alumnus Thomas Wolfe wrote, "And you can't go home again. Perhaps this is our strange and haunting paradox here in America, that we are fixed and certain only when we are in movement. At any rate, that is how it seemed to young George Webber, who was never so assured of his purpose as when he was going somewhere on a train. And he never had the sense of

home so much as when he felt that he was going there. It was only when he got there that his homelessness began." So poignant for me today, to think on a character whose name translated to English means weaver, and to think on the meaning of home.

And will I, after Friday next, be homeless in Beaufort, in the Sea Islands, in the Lowcountry, in South Carolina? A land my family for generations called home. According to Pat Conroy, another Southern writer, a fellow Beaufortonian, and schoolmate of my father, "The most powerful words in English are, 'Tell me a story', words that are intimately related to the complexity of history, the origins of language, the continuity of the species, the taproot of our humanity, our singularity, and art itself." Mr. Conroy had a famously complicated home life and experience with going home, so I will take his advice to tell a story, and warp and weft a Beaufort tapestry for you about family and going home.

From 17th century Jamestown to 21st century Beaufort, my family traced an arc of displacement, enslavement, and rebellion, to the extent we participated in ripping apart the tidy fabric of American history. No matter how small, no matter how large, acknowledging that past is a cross we must bear, a cross my parents and their friends, and my family and my friends bore as they strove and wove back together all that is good about America by rearing us children with love, compassion, honesty towards all, and the strength to bear that cause. Strive to do right, strive to do right.

Thus my home, my childhood home in Beaufort, in the Sea Islands, in the Lowcountry, in South Carolina, filled with art, family communiques, a Harvard gown hanging in a shuttered closet, and book after book, is more than material possessions, square footage, or development opportunities. It is a reliquary of memories, memories I will carry away when I leave that house the last time. Memories locked in my heart and soul. The key unlocking those memories and lessons, my desire to share those lessons and love with you. And those memories will also live on in everyone who ever stepped in that house of love, and forever enriched the community and the home I leave.

Forever will I miss the Beaufort River whispering to sea, but I revere the churlish Charles, and never excuse my chosen Northern residence. My home is here, where life is cherished, liberty secured, and happiness an honored pursuit. My home is here in Cambridge, where I believe all the world comes together to treasure each of us. And if it does not, then we will strive to make it so, starting in this space of grace in Harvard Yard. That said, I will never forget those angels that, when I look what was once homeward, were and are the loved ones who pushed me ever forward. And this one was for my father, for his love of Chapel Hill, Harvard, the stories of the South, and for his persistent hope. Thank you.

Rohan Press:

I invite you, please, to rise for our prayers. Wise and loving God, you bear us for joy. In humility, you show us wisdom. Enfold us at this hour with the knowledge born of love. Awaken within us the desire to know rightly, and the will to live justly, with grace and generosity.

And now, let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying, "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, for ever and ever, amen."

Congregation:

"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, for ever and ever, amen."

Rohan Press:

Please join in the singing of our concluding hymn, hymn number 81, Lord of hopefulness, Lord of all joy.

MUSIC:

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy.

Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy.

Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray.

Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith.

Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe.

Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray.

Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindliness, Lord of all grace.

Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace.

Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray.

Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm.

Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm.

Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray.

Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Rohan Press:

The Lord give us the strength to bid farewell to the homes of our past with grace, and to find an ever renewing sense of home in the fellowship that we have in front of us here and now today. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.

[inaudible 00:16:39].