

Cheyenne Boon:

Good morning. Welcome to morning prayers. Today's service will begin with a responsive reading from the black Appleton psalter book. Song number 20, found on page 10, please rise in body or spirit to read responsibly by whole verse.

Cheyenne Boon:

May the most high answer you in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend you.

Congregants:

Send you help from the holy place and strengthen you out of Zion.

Cheyenne Boon:

Remember all your offerings and accept your burnt sacrifice.

Congregants:

Grant you your heart's desire and prosper all your plans.

Cheyenne Boon:

We will shout for joy at your victory and triumph in the name of our God. May the most high grant all your requests.

Congregants:

Now I know that God gives victory to the anointed one. Out of the holy heaven, God will answer with a strong and victorious right hand.

Cheyenne Boon:

Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of our God.

Congregants:

They collapse and fall down, but we will arise and stand upright.

Cheyenne Boon:

Oh God, give victory to our sovereign and answer us when we call.

Choir:

(singing)

Cheyenne Boon:

The words of Rumi, "We are the mirror as well as the face in it. We are tasting the taste this minute of eternity, we are pain and what cures pain both. We are the sweet cold water and the jar that pours."

I thought I might let you in on what is perhaps insider information about the Memorial church. And that is that there is no mirror in this robing room to my left. And this rather surprised me in the beginning. My first Sunday here, I sort of put on my robe and instinctually went to go find the mirror.

And when there wasn't one, I thought, "But how will I know if I look okay?" And this really preoccupied me for a while, because especially if you are here on Sundays, you will know that we wear quite a few vestments and it can be a bit complicated to make sure everything's just right. And so I had some real anxiety about this, and I started watching the other ministers and thinking, "Why aren't they looking for a mirror too? Aren't they worried about a crooked stole or a folded up collar?"

But after a couple of weeks, I wasn't really so concerned about the mirror anymore. And what I came to realize is that the way we were making sure we were ready before we went out to lead worship on Sundays was to simply ask other people. On Sunday mornings, we would have our conference and we would pray together. And something that was also happening was that someone might say, "Oh, you missed a button there." Or, "Oh, this is a little twisted. Can I fix it for you?" And we'd just sort of fuss over each other.

The reason we don't need a mirror is because we have people we know and trust in the room with us. At first, I needed to see for myself that I was ready, but now I just think, Lori and Matt and Calvin and Emmanuel and Alana, and even frequently, our guest preachers would never let anything happen to me, including being embarrassed by a crooked collar. And while it might be nice to look in a mirror on Sunday morning and confirm for myself that I'm ready to lead worship, that confirmation will never be anywhere near as important to me as putting on my vestments and having Reverend Emanuel look at me and beam in that way that he does and say, "You look very pastoral."

Rumi asks us to be mirrors for each other. And I think it can be sort of natural to present someone else with a picture of who they already know they are. But I'm more interested in how we might hold up mirrors that reflect the people we forget we are, beloved by our neighbors and by God. How can I hold up a mirror to you so that you might see yourself as I see you, as worthy and important and value?

And how can I see my own wholeness reflected back when I look at you? How can we get there together? And when we don't succeed, when our mirrors are scratched or foggy or held at the wrong angle, how can we also see ourselves reflected in the mistakes of the other? How can we remember what it is to not always rise to that occasion of loving other people as they want to be loved? And when we see our own shortcomings reflected in the actions of another, how might we find a way to reflect some grace back to them, to say, "Look in this mirror, you are forgiven." Will you pray with me?

Source of all, you have made each of us as a mirror and a face in the mirror, grant us the courage and the compassion to reflect something good back to our neighbors. Color the glass we hold with the abundant grace we have received from you. Help us to offer a vision of the other as you see them, whole and holy and loved, Amen.

Now, if you would please rise in body or spirits and let us pray together as 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, the power and the glory, forever and ever, Amen.

Cheyenne Boon:

And now let us sing Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound, number 299 found in your Crimson Harvard Hymnal.

Congregation:

(singing)

Cheyenne Boon:

As we go into this day, let us bless and keep one another. Let us make peace. Let us be at peace. May it be so, and may the church say, Amen.