

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good Morning.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

Welcome to morning prayers. All who are able, please rise for our responsive reading found in your psalter, Psalm number 135. Hallelujah. Praise the name of the holy one. Give praise, your servants of the most high.

Congregation:

You stand in the house of the holy one, in the course of the house of our God.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

Praise God, for God is good. Sing praises to the holy name, for it is lovely.

Congregation:

For you, O God, have chosen Jacob for yourself, and Israel for your own possession.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

For I know that you are great, that you are above all gods.

Congregation:

You do whatever pleases you in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the deeps.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

You bring up rain clouds from the ends of the earth. You send out lightning with the rain. You bring the winds out of your storehouse.

Congregation:

You sent signs and wonders into the midst of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

You gave their land to be an inheritance, an inheritance for Israel, your people.

Congregation:

O God, your name is everlasting. Your renown endures from age to age.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

For you give your people justice, and show compassion to your servants.

Congregation:

Blessed be the most high out of Zion, who dwells in Jerusalem. Hallelujah.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

You may be seated.

Choir:

(singing)

Claudia Cabral:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Claudia Cabral:

In Shambhala, The Sacred Path of the Warrior, Chögyam Trungpa, the founder of Shambhala Buddhism writes.

"Usually, if we say someone is brave, we mean that they are not afraid of any enemy, or that they are willing to die for a cause, or they are never intimidated. The Shambhala understanding of bravery is quite different. Here, bravery is the courage to be, to live in the world without any deception and with tremendous kindness and caring for others. You might wonder how this can bring magic into your life. The ordinary idea of magic is that you can conquer the elements, so that you can turn earth into fire, or fire into water, or ignore the law of gravity and fly. But the true magic of reality is as it is: the earth of earth, the water of water, communicating with the elements, so that, in some sense, they become one with you."

In this reading, bravery is defined as being without deception, and magic as the truth of reality.

Before starting at Harvard, I began college at another institution. I ran, head first, onto the campus of this prior institution, club after club, activity after activity. I was trying to find what would make me want to wake up in the morning and get out of bed, only to be met with more frustration than success.

Not even halfway through my first semester of college, I received notice of my failing physics grade, just in time for freshman year parents weekend. There was pride and joy in showing campus to my parents, who never had the opportunity to attend college. But, I also could not deny the guilt and shame of not being as happy as I should be right now.

Inner conflict and confusion were defining themes in the year that followed, until I discovered that it was time to transfer out. This was a hard truth to face. How do I tell my parents, "Thank you for your encouragements and support, but I am not happy here."?

Simultaneously, amid the challenge, magic emerged from facing this harsh reality. I was no longer confused. I was still terrified, but now I knew what my next step would be.

Today, I stand before you as a final semester senior, with a new endeavor ahead, graduation and all that follows. Here is pride, joy, happiness, excitement, and curiosity. Here is also fear, anxiety, worry, uncertainty, and doubt. Whether you are also a senior in college, a soon to be senior, and/or you are facing transitions in life that require courage in the face of uncertainty, I ask you to be brave. To be without deception, so that you may experience the magic that comes from facing the truth of your reality.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

Let us pray.

Holy one, give us the power to be brave as we navigate uncertain waters, knowing that you are ever present. Amen.

All those who are able, please stand, as we recite the Lord's prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, saying,

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, forever and ever. Amen.

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

Now let us sing together, hymn number 285, Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah.

Congregation/Choir:

(singing)

The Rev. Calvin Jones:

As we leave this place, but never away from God's presence, may you have the courage to be without deception, and may you face the magic of reality. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.