

Elizabeth Propst:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

Elizabeth Propst:

Welcome to Morning Prayers here in the Appleton Chapel. Our speaker this morning is RuQuan Brown, Harvard College class of 2024.

Please rise in body and spirit for our responsive reading. Psalm 118, "Praise the Lord for He is good. His steadfast love is eternal."

Congregation:

Let Israel declare His steadfast love is eternal.

Elizabeth Propst:

"Let the house of Aaron declare: 'His steadfast love is eternal.'"

Congregation:

Let those who hear the Lord declare: "His steadfast love is eternal."

Elizabeth Propst:

"In distress I called on the Lord. The Lord answered me and brought me relief."

Congregation:

The Lord is on my side. I have no fear. What can man do to me?

Elizabeth Propst:

"Open the gates of victory for me that I may enter them and praise the Lord."

Congregation:

This is the day, praise the Lord, victorious shall I come through it.

Elizabeth Propst:

"I praise you for you have answered me and have become my deliverance."

Congregation:

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Elizabeth Propst:

This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our sight.

Congregation:

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us go forth and rejoice in it.

(music)

RuQuan Brown:

Good morning brothers and sisters.

Congregation:

Good morning.

RuQuan Brown:

How are you all doing? Good morning.

Congregation:

Morning.

RuQuan Brown:

There we go. My name is RuQuan Brown. I am Harvard class of 2024 and I'm delighted to be in front of you. I want to spend a couple of minutes with you and will spend a couple of minutes with you talking about creating a beautiful symphony, drawing a painting about love.

Love is a four-letter word, so then some might imagine that love is a very simple thing. Love, though, has been and will be for eternity a glue. A glue, not that you apply in school, or at work, or at home for arts and crafts, but a glue that mend generations together, a glue that ensures that father knows he's connected to son. A glue that enables a friend to feel that his friend is indeed family.

Love is a four-letter word, but it also requires so much action. Usually, in this country and in this world, when we read words, it requires no further action of us. And so in hearing love, in seeing love, in reading love, it can be really easy to do just that: see it, read it, hear it. I'm inviting you into an amazing kingdom, that is a kingdom of love, that calls me not only to experience the beauty of it, but also to partake in the furtherance of it.

Many of us would rather not have to love because it's something that requires sacrifice and listening and dying, something that is not easy. Now, I know growing up my parents told me, "Life will be hard until high school. Go to college and pick your own classes, and then life is easy for there." And unfortunately, that is not true for many of us, or probably any of us. And I'll be honest, that loving does not necessarily make life any easier. I mentioned that love is a glue, and I want to also mention that love is not only a glue that mends generations and brings family, and ensures that friends know that they're held, but it is also a glue that mends you to heaven.

There is a heaven that we can't experience today. Now, many of you are here because there's a heaven that will come tomorrow or maybe the next day. Who knows? And you're excited about that journey. But I have a beautiful reminder, again, that there's an opportunity to love today. Love seems to be the secret recipe or the secret ingredient to heaven. And if you don't have it and you don't know true life, many of you have flipped through your Bibles and have read that there are some really good things like faith and hope. But without love, it means nothing.

And so my call to action for you and I is to grow in our understanding of love because in that we will understand more about our God. John teaches us that God is love. Many of us have believed that we were worshipping a God, but there was no love. So then you're forced to ask yourself who indeed you

were worshipping. It's never too late. We've seen phenomenal stories of men like Saul turn to Paul in a moment's notice. There's no condemnation. There may be some conviction that you feel or that you sense, but remember, love is like glue. In the same way that I articulate this amazing, beautiful ingredient is the same way that you can and you should, I hope that you feel invited, encouraged to not only study hard and ensure that you get the job you want, to not only be hard on your kids and ensure that they become the young people that you desire they become, to not only be hard on yourself and ensure that you're living up to your standard or standard of your family or tradition, but that you find a way to include love in all of your doctrine.

Thank you. Actually, I'm going now to close this out. Let's pray.

Thank you, Heavenly Father, for waking us, for building us, encouraging us and molding us into your disciples. The text tells us that you will "know my disciples by the way they love one another." So encourage us, move us, push us and pull us to continue to or to embark on a journey of putting Thou first. In Jesus name, amen.

Congregation:

Amen.

Elizabeth Propst:

Please rise and bow your spirit for the Lord's prayer. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 trespassed 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.

Please join in our concluding hymn, Come, My Soul, Thou Must Be Waking, number 48 in your crimson Harvard Hymnal.

Christ says, "No hands in this world but your hands, and no voice in this world but your voice." So let our hands and our voices do the work of justice and love on this day and on all days. Amen.

Congregation:

Amen.