

Theresa Lungu:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Morning.

Theresa Lungu:

And welcome to morning prayers at Appleton Chapel. Before we start, a reminder that next week is Harvard's spring break, and we will not be having morning prayers for the whole of the week. Morning prayers will resume on Monday, March 20th.

Our speaker this morning is Rosie Du, class of 2023, and a core fellow here at the Memorial Church. Please rise as you're able and join me in the responsive reading, number 46 from the Appleton social bulletin.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Congregation:

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

Theresa Lungu:

In though the water is thereof, roll and be traveled. Though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

Congregation:

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

Theresa Lungu:

God is in the midst of her. She shall not be moved, God shall help her. And that right early.

Congregation:

The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

Theresa Lungu:

The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Congregation:

Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

Theresa Lungu:

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder. He burneth the chariot in the fire.

Congregation:

Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

Theresa Lungu:

The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Choir:

(singing).

Rosie Du:

Good morning, everyone.

Congregation:

Good morning. Morning. Morning.

Rosie Du:

Today's inspired text is from Alexander Chee's novel, the Queen of the Night.

When the Earth opens up under your feet, be like a seed. Fall down, wait for the rain. When I started college, I remember being a freshman who was full of fear and uncertainty about what was to come, and not wanting to make a misstep in the activities that I would do, or any of the decisions that I would make. College seemed to be something that would be very scary. But when I stumbled upon an NTD choir, I didn't know that that was exactly what I needed, and I didn't know what I was getting myself into.

Ed often says to look up while we're singing, and to sing to each other, which we more or less do, sometimes. But I don't think that I necessarily internalized this until sometime last year, where gradually I found myself during rehearsal actually doing what he wanted us to do, and looking up and singing to each other. And I realized that when I made eye contact with some other members of the choir, we just burst into smile, and it was something that was very wonderful and full of joy, and brought me peace and happiness in those small moments.

And perhaps it's because we spend so much time already together as a choir, and especially in fellows every morning: we've seen each other at some of our lowest bleary-eyed every morning, or sprinting across the yard to avoid being marked tardy. But we have indeed, because of our friendship and because of the community we've built in song, built something beautiful with each other as people, friends, and musicians. And we've been able to do so and make the music that we do and sing together, and trust that we will make a beautiful sound together. And I hold all of these memories to be very dear to my heart.

You choir has given me a sanctuary, when I have needed it the most. Singing beside you all has brought so much joy in my life. The early mornings have offered me moments of reflection and solace that we can give ourselves the compassion to let the world slow down, and that you don't necessarily need to know every step, and you can let go and it will be okay. That not knowing is a wonderful thing. And right across the corner is a wonderful person, a new experience, or another opportunity that we might not be able to see, but we could have faith that it will arise. Just as you choir arrived in my life when I didn't know that was what I needed.

It's easy to think that you have to go through life alone. But here in the music we make every day, and the memories that we share, I have learned a life worth living is one surrounded by those you love. And as my time here comes to an end, I'm holding all the memories I've made close to my heart. And I know that we still have two months, so it is too early to be this sentimental. But I will leave knowing that things have a way of falling into place, when you allow yourself to pursue things you love with people that you love.

Rehearsal after rehearsal, I've learned to embrace uncertainty. To know that from the most uncertain times, beautiful moments, will sprout and grow. Thank you so much for sharing the space and time, thank you, to listen to me this morning. And I appreciate you all and love you all so much. Thank you so much for coming, and have a great rest of your day.

Theresa Lungu:

Please rise as you're able and let us pray.

Creator of all people, in our amazing diversity of size, shape, color, and giftedness, guide us by your grace to recognize the beauty and fitness of all whom you have made in your own image. Amen.

And please join us in reciting the Lord's Prayer, saying:

Theresa and 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, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Theresa Lungu:

And please let us sing the hymn: City of God, How Broad and Far, number 260 in the Kingdom Harvard Hymnal.

Congregation/Choir:

(singing).

Theresa Lungu:

As we go forth unto this day, almighty God, receive us in this morning hour, as we offer ourselves over to you, for the blessings of this day. Amen.(organ music to end 00:18:40).