

Elizabeth Propst:

Good morning.

Congregants:

Good morning.

Elizabeth Propst:

Welcome to Morning Prayers here in the Appleton Chapel.

Our speaker this morning is Roeshana Moore-Evans, the Executive Director of the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative.

Please rise as you're able and join me in our responsive psalm.

Vindicate me, O God,

champion my cause.

against faithless people;

rescue me from the treacherous, dishonest man.

Congregants:

For You are my God, my stronghold;

why have You rejected me?

Why must I walk in gloom,

oppressed by the enemy?

Send forth Your light and Your truth;

they will lead me;

they will bring me to Your holy mountain,

to Your dwelling-place,

Elizabeth Propst:

that I may come to the altar of God,

God, my delight, my joy;

That I may praise You with the lyre,

O God, my God.

Congregants:

Why so downcast my soul,

why so disquieted within me?

Elizabeth Propst:

Have hope in God;

I will yet praise Him,

my ever-present help, my God.

Choir:

(singing)

Roeshana Moore-Evans:

Good morning, community. I'm so grateful to be here with you all today.

My reading today is coming from John 21:15-17.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt. He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

May the Lord add a blessing to the reading of His most precious word this morning.

A couple of weeks ago, I was volunteering at a food kitchen with my teenage daughter when a fellow volunteer said to me, "These people are so lucky to have someone cook for them." By these people, she meant the community members who had come to the kitchen for a warm meal to eat. In response, I said to her, "We are the lucky ones and we should be so grateful for this opportunity to serve."

At that moment, I was reminded of my opening scripture in which Jesus commands us to show our love for Him by serving others. I also was reminded of the beloved community, a term that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. used to describe his vision of a world in which poverty, hunger, and hate do not exist.

Dr. King's son, Martin Luther King III, visited our campus last week. He spoke about his parents' vision of the beloved community and tied it to a conversation about love, specifically agape love, the greatest type of love, unconditional and selfless; the same love that led Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, a sacrificial love. This type of love could help end poverty, hunger, hate, and even racism.

As I begin my journey as the Executive Director of the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative, I am deeply committed to helping the University use its blessings and strengths to repair inequities caused by slavery and its persistent educational and social harms.

I will serve by facilitating the advancement of meaningful remedies that are visible, enduring, and grounded in sustained engagement with the Harvard community, descendant communities, and others.

Working together, I am confident that we will come closer to Dr. King's vision of the beloved community and fulfilling God's greatest commandment, to love one another as God has loved us.

My opening scripture is fitting for my work ahead, to show God's love by serving his people, my people. Thank you.

Father God, as I come before your throne of grace, I am grateful, Lord, for this opportunity to share Your word, to be in community with Your people, father God. I'm grateful, Lord, that we are going to be moved, Lord, to do your work, to fulfill Dr. King's vision of a beloved community.

Father God, I'm grateful, so grateful and the hymn this morning was generous, I mean, was significant for the work that that's ahead for us. Let us be generous in serving You. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Choir/Congregation:

(Singing)

Amen.

Elizabeth Propst:

Please rise as you're able and join in the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;-

Congregants:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;-

Elizabeth Propst:

... Thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Congregants:

... Thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Elizabeth Propst:

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Congregants:

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Elizabeth Propst:

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Congregants:

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Elizabeth Propst:

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Congregants:

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Elizabeth Propst:

Please join and are concluding hymn, In Christ There Is No East or West, number 341 in your crimson hymnal.

Choir:

(singing).

Elizabeth Propst:

Christ has 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 of love, on this day and on all days. May we be blessed, may we be a blessing. Amen.

Congregants:

Amen.