

Audience:

(singing)

Kelly Woehl:

Good morning.

Audience:

Good morning.

Suzanne Blier:

I'm an art and architectural historian, and teaching this term several courses. One on the arts of the black world with my colleague Sarah Lewis. And we now have up an exhibition in the Harvard Art Museum and the other on Harvard Square, which is a history of our city and a call to civic engagement. In Matthew's Gospel 5:14, we read of Jesus' warning, "A city on a hill cannot be hidden." A city means its people and its buildings, and all those who come into it. John Winthrop in 1630 advised his fellow Puritans that their new community, which would be Newtown, which would later become Cambridge, would be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all the people are upon us, meaning that the Puritans must uphold their covenant with God once they arrived. When I see images today on social media and the news of ongoing bombings in the Middle East, Ukraine and elsewhere, I think of a shining city on a hill, and the call to all of us that the eyes of everyone and of the Lord are upon us.

I also think back to Matthew's gospel and recalling Governor Hutchinson of a city here in Cambridge and its relationship ultimately to Jerusalem. In the medieval era, Jerusalem was a model city. It was formed. If you look at the early manuscript from his period as a circle, its walls with a cross within it. It was divided into rough quadrants, each dedicated to a different culture and religion, Christians, Muslims, Jews. And it was very similar to this, that in Andalusia during this period, there was similarly a cross-currency between and a recognition of the importance of these cultural and religious differences. The same model of heavenly Jerusalem re-emerged in the era of imperialism, the expansion of Christian European colonizers to the Americas in the 17th century, in particular to Tenochtitlan is one example of Mexico City, Cambridge, Massachusetts is another. Cambridge like New Haven was shaped, its design is in the form of a cross inside a circle.

The center of that cross is Winthrop Park. And as you're walking up JFK Street, you actually walk up to this hilly area, which was the center of it. We also had wooden pilasters around the whole of the city. It was, in many respects, a model of heavenly Jerusalem, the first planned city in North America fashioned as a model for all of us to follow. In the year 2030, we will celebrate our 400th anniversary. My ancestors were part of this legacy. The wife of Governor Carver who landed on the Mayflower, Thomas Hooker who arrived in Cambridge and promptly left with a group of many of my other ancestors to found Connecticut and then move up the White River to Vermont. The wife of Charles Chauncy, the early evangelizing Harvard president, and the rigid Peter Bulkeley who lived here in Cambridge, and then co-founded Concord and reprised many of Matthew's Gospel ideas about a shining city on a hill.

What does this gospel reveal to us today? I come to it in part through Proverbs 25:28, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down without walls." This is in part about the people who populate our cities. It is also about self-control. And our leadership, a city, our global community is comprised of many individuals and leaders. And without self-control, we are indeed a broken city without walls and doors. A city in the end is no more than its people. Our university is also like a city,

and almost half of us do not know what we are free to say. That is new for me. This week I will submit a petition to city council to recognize the Massachusetts as their original land holders.

I do so with a fellow city resident, a member of this Massachusetts Group. As I walk into city hall, I will think of Matthew's Gospel of a city on a hill in full view of all around it. I also will think of John Hutchinson's and Bulkeley's related sermons of a shining city on a hill. And remember that ultimately we, the people and our leaders are who the city comprises. Harvard's University Museum remains racially divided. Our country and the world are at war. I hope that leaving here we can each take up the mantle to make this city our global city shine far more through light, humanity and wisdom. The eyes are upon us. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

Kelly Woehl:

Friends, I now invite you to rise in body or spirit to join us in prayer. Oh, wisdom on high, by you the meek are guided in judgment and light rises up in darkness for the Godly. Grant us in all doubts and uncertainties the grace to ask what you would have us do, that we might be saved from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your strength path, we may not stumble through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Audience:

Amen.

Kelly Woehl:

And if you would remain standing for our prayer as Jesus taught his disciples.

Audience:

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.

Kelly Woehl:

And now you'll join us in singing the Closing Hymn, Number 27.

Audience:

(singing)

Kelly Woehl:

May the Hope of God fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

MUSIC:

(music)