

Friends of Duke Chapel

December 2011



FRIENDS OF DUKE CHAPEL

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*Go, and
do thou likewise.*

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Duke Chapel's mission is keeping the heart of
the University listening to the heart of God.



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An Opportunity to Invest

By The Rev. Dr. Sam Wells, Dean of Duke Chapel

I want to say how grateful I am to all of you for investing in Duke Chapel. I don't say "giving": I say "investing." We can say we spend money, or save it, or give it away. But in reality each is a form of investment. To save money is to invest in our own future. To spend is to invest in our present needs. And to give it is to invest in a greater need than simply our own – the need of an individual, or the common good embodied in an institution.

The best way I can encourage you to invest in Duke Chapel is to say that I myself invest in Duke Chapel. Like so many of you, I invest my time, my heart, and my money. Why? Because Duke Chapel is not only a fine and good and beautiful institution, it is a highly strategic one. I want to honor the generosity and commitment of your investment by explaining why I think a dollar spent at Duke Chapel is as wise an investment as a dollar spent anywhere.

The center of the Chapel's life is worship. The liturgy, music, and preaching traditions here are vibrant. They constitute our best efforts to bring the treasures of the church's past into dynamic interaction with the opportunities and challenges of its present and future. Countless individuals and bodies of people look to our Chapel as a city on a hill, a place where all that is done is done with theological rigor, a high level of skill and preparation, and a deep faith commitment. Such places are rare. Keeping them sharp takes investment and care. That's what your money pays for.

A particular dimension of the Chapel's life is its musical – in particular its organ and choral – traditions. The kinds of music for which the Chapel is renowned are disciplined practices of study, formation, training, and rendition, and most require the additional discipline of teamwork and mutual understanding. Many places have fine instruments. Many places have outstanding musicians and singers. Many places have an integration of musical performance with the commitments and practices of the faith. Scarcely anywhere has all three. We do. That's what your money pays for.

The Chapel has a mission to the whole of the university, its administrators, faculty, and staff, its professional and graduate students, but especially to its undergraduate students. We can't just wait for students to

“I invest in Duke Chapel because I think these five areas are among the most valuable, most pertinent, and most strategic themes before the church and the world today.”

find us: we need to find them, and give them what isn't available elsewhere, for example classroom teaching on issues crucial to them and to us. Being imaginative and creative in student ministry is vital to the Chapel's ability to form the character of the next generation of leaders in world and church. That's what PathWays is about. That's what your money pays for.

Duke Chapel has a unique opportunity to exercise leadership in casting a new vision for interreligious

interaction in this country. We have both vibrant expressions of Christianity and healthy and receptive bodies of other faith communities. The Faith Council, set up in 2007, is already attracting attention and joining conversations on a national level. This work has immense potential for good, locally, nationally and beyond. That's what your money pays for.

On every single campus I have visited there's been a lively conversation going on about the mantra of service and concerns about social disadvantage. The Chapel's relationship with Durham, and with the West End in particular, is an attempt to model and promote the kinds of healthy relationships that foster mutual respect and learning. These are themes that are crucial to the renewal of civil society in our culture. The Chapel is, again, exercising leadership and creating a vocabulary in these areas. That's what your money pays for.

I invest in Duke Chapel because I think these five areas are among the most valuable, most pertinent, and most strategic themes before the church and the world today. How do we live before God? How do we voice creation's praise? Who will be our future leaders, and how will they lead? How will different faiths relate to one another? And, How will we address poverty and other forms of social difference? The Chapel is uniquely placed to address such questions. Your investment makes it possible to do so.

I write to thank you and to ask you once again to invest in Duke Chapel and so to join in seeking and embodying good answers to these pressing questions of our day. 🌿



LOOKING BACK

by PathWays Alumni

The following reflections by six alumni of the Duke Chapel PathWays program reveal the enriching experiences and the impact of the program on their undergraduate education. They also provide a sampling of the many challenging endeavors PathWays participants have undertaken in recent years.

Like a fine gem, the PathWays Program at Duke University has two stellar qualities: it is simple and beautiful. Looking back over my experience, the program was simple because the things we did as participants were unassuming in themselves, but led to wonderful results. We ate and lived together intentionally. We talked, but more importantly, we listened to each other. We served others. And ultimately, we grew together. We became more genuine, more contemplative, looking to put a thoughtful faith into practice. As I stay in touch with program alums, I continue to witness how PathWays has positively influenced them and their spiritual walk—and well, that is simply...beautiful.

Daniel DeVougas T '09 is a J.D. Candidate, Class of 2012, at Cornell Law School. After graduation, Daniel will work for a Washington, DC, law firm.



Imagine I will speak of PathWays for the rest of my life. In fact, I just spoke of it again today. PathWays led me down a path of faith and vocational discernment that I had never imagined possible. Without knowing it would be, it was the perfect introduction to many things I am currently doing with my life. For example, on the vocation end, my year as a teaching assistant at the Durham Early School taught me that I am in fact good at teaching children. At the encouragement of my supervisors there, I have found ways to integrate my life-long goal of practicing law with my love of teaching. I am currently part of a nationwide program called Street Law. As part of the University of Miami School of Law's chapter, I am teaching law to teenage mothers at a juvenile detention facility not just in Miami, but in Goulds, the neighborhood where I grew up. The location reminds me of many discussions with Dean Wells, Keith Daniel, and Abby Kocher about the importance of being part of your community. On the faith end, PathWays instilled in me a desire for community worship and daily prayer that I have not yet shaken, and hopefully never will. My experience with the fellowship has allowed me to embrace mindfulness and contemplative practices that so many religions have shared throughout the ages. I even helped found

the Insightful Mind Initiative, a law school group that provides students with a space in which to just sit and “be.”

Miraisy Rodriguez T '09 is a J.D. Candidate, Class of 2012, at the University of Miami Law School



Whenever I return to Duke's campus, I always find myself coming back to the Chapel, sitting in the pews, and letting my mind drift back to how that place shaped my life. I remember co-founding *Religio* years ago - a journal of Christian thought that continues to be published and to be a Christian voice on campus. I recall my favorite day of my four years in Durham: standing in the pulpit of a packed Duke Chapel and preaching God's word on a Sunday morning. Neither of these things would have been possible without the PathWays program.

When I was an undergraduate, I really struggled with the question of what I should do with my life. How should I best use the talents and gifts God has given me? Where was he calling me? Through participating in vocational groups and speaking with PathWays staff, I was able to be intentional about my life's direction. Many of my PathWays friends have gone on to pursue their calling as ordained ministers. At one point, I, too, was considering this path. After many in-depth conversations with a PathWays staff member, I was able to realize that ordained ministry wasn't my call (it isn't everyone's!). But PathWays taught me that ministry is everyone's calling. So as I've pursued my interests in the business world since graduation, my *job* as a strategy consultant involves creating value for my clients. However my *vocation* as a strategy consultant is to proclaim God's redemptive story in word and deed.

Andy Crewson T '09 lives in Washington, DC, and is a Business Consultant for Applied Predictive Technologies, a dual consulting/software company that specializes in data-driven business analytics.

