As I thought about what to say today, I noticed that most of what we say when someone goes on a trip is an imperative. Have a great time! Travel safely! Tell us all about it! Take us with you! These are commands, imperatives.

But what I really noticed is that we react very different than the way I see them responding to Biblical commands.

Someone says “have a good trip!” and people lift their eyes, and smile and walk a little taller.

One of the commands from the Bible I hear quoted most often is Sell all you have and give it to the poor. People slump and cower and shake their heads.

Travel safely! I really believe is heard as a blessing for good health; in some ways that haunting command from the sermon on the mount, If your hand or eye cause you to sin, cut them off. Is about healing, too, but the reaction is the opposite.

I hope commands from the Bible will bless you—and I hope hearing them as you head across the pond, will help us imagine Biblical commands differently, too.

For example, the first word to Abraham and Sarah when they receive the promise—and it’s the last word from Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is the simple command GO! No question biblically or historically God has a heck of a time getting people to go. . . though when a trip to Europe is involved we do it eagerly. One of my core convictions: God made passports to be used! It’s not merely that you’re going, you see, but that you’re so eager to go. So eager that many of you have sold all you have—or at least given it as collateral—in order to go.

We’re here to bless your going. . . and to pray for such eagerness and joy whenever God asks us to go.

For those who don’t get to go, another biblical command is LISTEN! Our conviction is that God is a God who speaks and there are few things more important than that we listen. And then we discover that listening is one of the most difficult things we’re ever called to do—and that’s even before they’re speaking Czech or Polish.

Until we get to listen to you. I have a hunch our eagerness to hear you is directly related to how carefully you are trained to listen. Listening to you we know that listening, while it is challenging, is privilege and gift and joy. I know I’m speaking metaphorically, but I’d give an
arm and leg to listen to you sing! I’d sell my backgammon board and my crossword puzzle
dictionary and all my mac and cheese to hear you sing. I know you’re going to sing concerts—I
hope you’ll some chances to sing spontaneously in cathedrals or cafes or street corners for that
matter. So you can watch the compelling and magnetic power of listening!

Another important command is REMEMBER. When Dr. Nessheim told me what you were
going to sing today he was describing the Agnus Dei. . . and said, “I think they’ll appreciate the
dissonance of the piece more after we’ve been to Auschwitz.” Art not only has the power to help
us express. It has the power to help us honor all that needs expressing. Frederick Buechner puts
it this way, “the most basic lesson that all art teaches us is to stop, look, and listen to life on this
planet, including our own lives, as a vastly richer, deeper more mysterious business than most of
the time it ever occurs to us to suspect. . . In a world that for the most part steers clear of the
whole idea of holiness, art is one of the few places left where we can speak to each other of holy
things. Requim helps us remember . . and blesses our remembering.

The obvious command right out of the psalm is, of course, sing! We’re here to bless your
singing. When Jesus summarized the commands in the word LOVE, he used that haunting word
ALL. It seems to me that the power of music has to be connected to the way it takes every part
of us to do it—body, soul, mind and strength. And to get harmony it takes neighbors, whose
voice is as vital and important as your own. Which makes singing so very close to the
commands of Jesus. So we’re not merely here to bless your singing, but that you clearly love to
sing. And to bless you because your song helps us remember that God loves the world.

Finally, is not the command of the Bible to LIVE. The irony of a cross cultural trip—like
learning or loving is that you give up the way of life you have known. To let it go—your way of
life, your view of the world will not fit in your suitcase—and to trust that God gives new life
this is, of course, the way of Jesus. We bless hope and trust that you will practice new life!

Now make no mistake—we’re not here to get full of ourselves for discovering obedience. We’re
here to celebrate how freedom in Christ can make even the imperatives joyful.

So we pray for your going and your singing, for our listening and our gratitude, for the power of
God calling us to love the earth and our neighbors and the privilege of discovery and learning
life.

Amen.

God, we thank you for song, and pray for harmony in all your world.
God we thank for your Gospel, and pray for truth,
We thank you for a wide and colorful, diverse world and pray for neighboring.
We thank you for listening and pray for understanding

We thank you for travel and pray for safety in the adventure, for joy in return, and for many discoveris of your good gifts in between.

We thank you for our choir and all who go with them, for nothing less than you love in their voices and steps, their learning and service, their memories and hope.

We pray all this in the name of Jesus, who promises yet again to be light for your world and your presence with us. Amen.

We join in the prayer of Good courage.

Go, sing, listen and love in peace.
CHOIR COMMISSIONING
Friday, January 11, 2013

Prelude
Welcome/announcements
Invocation

Hymn
“Let the Whole Creation Cry” ELW #876 vv. 1-2

Scripture
Psalm 148

From Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied, BWV 225 J. S. Bach
Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten 1685-1750 Sung in German

Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten,
Praise the Lord for his acts,
lobet ihn in seiner groen Herrlichkeit!
Praise him for his great glory.
Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn. Halleluja!
All that has breath, praise the Lord. Alleluia!
Psalm 150:2, 6

Reflection
Pastor Paul

“Agnus Dei”  Krzysztof Penderecki b. 1933

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest.
From the Requiem Mass

Prayers

Blessing
the prayer of Good Courage

ALL: O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we
cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but
only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Aint Got Time to Die” Spiritual
Arr. Hall Johnson, 1888-1970

CAMPUS MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRISON WORSHIP - Campus Ministry is sponsoring another worship service at the South Dakota State Penitentiary on Thurs., Feb. 14, 2013. If you are interested in attending, please see Carol in the Chapel office for the clearance forms. The forms need to be turned back into the chapel by 2-24.

COLLEGE RETREAT AT NESODAK - Love camp? Looking for an opportunity to get away? Come to NeSoDak Bible Camp for a retreat designed just for college students, January 19-20. Cost is only $30. Contact Brooke DeJong (bmdejong09@ole.augie.edu) or Jenna Frink (jlfrink12@ole.augie.edu) for more information. Deadline is Jan. 11th


Come Worship at Our Saviors on Sunday, January 20 at 11:00am!
Augustana Outreach Teams will be leading worship across the street at Our Saviors Lutheran Church on January 20. As a way of supporting this partnership between Augustana and OSLC, there will be no worship in the chapel on January 20. Hope you can make it!

Faith Fest is an overnight retreat event at Augustana for area middle schoolers, February 23-24. Are you interested in helping with this fun-filled, faith filled event?? Email Jenna Hyde to sign-up or for more information.
jahyde11@ole.augie.edu

Are you on an Outreach Team? Do you love Bible Camp? Come to a PIZZA PARTY on Sunday night, February 17, 8-10pm in the Back Alley. We'll visit with camp directors from across the country about opportunities to work at summer camp. Outreach team members will stick around after pizza for a workshop that helps us brush-up on our ministry skills.

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Weekday chapel will be held between the block classes at 11:45 am on Mon, Wed. and Fri.
Monday, 1-14 Morning Worship, 11:45 - Cathryn Carney, Sr. Spkr.
Wednesday, 1-16 Holy Communion, 11:45 - Pr. Ann
Friday, 1-18 Morning Worship, 1:45 am - Molly Kokesh, Sr. Spkr.
Sunday, 1-20 Morning Worship at Our Savior’s Luth. (Across from GSC) - no service at the Augie chapel that day
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