Kasey Shultz (CAS’17)

One thousand, three hundred, fifty-one days ago on Matriculation Sunday, I came to the chapel for the first time for worship and sat in the third row of pews, under the window of Martin Luther, trying to ignore the dull ache in my chest that had taken up residence ever since my parents had left the night before to fly back to Seattle. Nervous and alone, I started wondering what I had gotten myself into. But then, the ethereal sound of the choir filled this space, resonating against the stone walls and washing over me in waves. We sang the same hymns I had sung since childhood and I was wrapped up in the familiar, comforting rhythms of liturgy. That ache in my chest evaporated, the nervousness fled, and I knew I was home.

In the four years since then, I have spent many hours here, singing and praying, studying and meditating, laughing and eating, questioning and listening. Located at the heart of campus, the chapel has also been at the heart of my four years here at BU. It has introduced me to new friends and ways of thinking about faith and vocation while grounding me in a community of believers that was always there to support and encourage me. In the midst of a cohort of people from various faith traditions and backgrounds, I was challenged to define my faith and to lay out a vision of what I believe—my own personal credo.

For one thing, my time at the chapel has helped me to realize that I believe people are inherently good, but also that we make mistakes—like, a lot of mistakes. I believe that God’s love for us is so vibrant and pure that it wipes all those mistakes away.

I believe that all people are connected to each other and that we need to honor that connection by taking care of and respecting one another.

I believe in the baptism of rain on a fall day and the communion of food shared with friends.

I believe that science and religion complement each other, that God speaks into our sciences and blooms into our empty spaces, and that the Holy Spirit lives in gusting winds and tranquil waters, in babbling toddlers and freely shed tears.

I believe that worship requires a community, and community requires forgiveness, and forgiveness requires grace.

I believe that doubt is the strongest form of faith and that no person or tradition can fully comprehend the complex, paradoxical, and timeless nature of God.

I believe that we are called to welcome those who have been rejected, to speak for those who have been silenced, and to lift up those who have been oppressed.

I believe that prayer is a conversation, worship is a relationship, and scripture is a promise.
Above all, I believe that God loves—a love that is freely given. A love that we can never avoid, or escape, or ignore. A love that changes us and a love that frees us. A love that moves us to believe. A love that welcomes us home. Amen.