



BACCALAUREATE: A SERVICE OF BLESSINGS

Saturday, May 23, 2026 • 8 p.m.

Center for Faith and Life

Commencement

CLASS OF TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

Our Baccalaureate service includes prayers and readings from a variety of faith and spiritual traditions. Luther College is both rooted in a Lutheran Christian heritage and open to all expressions of faith through which we share mutual values of grace, compassion, and curiosity about our world. We affirm, celebrate, and support the spiritual diversity that enriches this community of faith and learning.

Please silence cell phones and other electronic communication devices.

Items in bold indicate assembly responses.

PRELUDE

Hózhó (Connor Chee b.1987)

Alexander Meszler, assistant professor of music and college organist

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Soli Deo Gloria

All stand and sing.

All 1. O God of bless - ings, all praise to
All 2. All praise for wis - dom, great gift sub -
Low Voices 3. All praise for proph - ets, through grace in -
Choir 4. All praise for mu - sic, deep gift pro -
High Voices 5. All praise for Je - sus, best gift di -
All 6. A bil - lion voic - es in one great

you! Your love sur - rounds us our whole life
 lime, Through words and teach - ers of ev - 'ry
 spired To preach and wit - ness with hearts on
 found, Through hands and voic - es in ho - ly
 vine Through word and wit - ness, in bread and
 song, Now soft and gen - tle, now deep and

through. You are the free - dom of those op -
 time; For sto - ries an - cient and know - ledge
 fire. Your Spir - it choos - es the weak and
 sound; The psalms of Da - vid, and Mar - y's
 wine; In - car - nate Love Song of bound - less
 strong, In ev - 'ry cul - ture and style and

pressed; You are the com - fort of all dis -
 new, For coach - es, men - tors, and coun - s'ors
 small To sing the new reign where might - y
 praise, In word - less splen - dor and lyr - ic
 grace, Priest, teach - er, proph - et in time and
 key, From hill and val - ley, with sky and

tressed. Come now, O ho - ly and wel - come guest:
 true Whose life of serv - ice brought us to you:
 fall; With them may we live your Gos - pel call:
 phrase, With all cre - a - tion one song we raise:
 space, Your stead - fast kind - ness with hu - man face:
 sea, With Christ we praise you e - ter - nal - ly:

So - li De - o glo - ri - a! So - li De - o glo - ri - a!

Assembly is seated.

INVOCATION AND PRAYER

Blessed be † God, who creates, loves, and sustains us and all of creation. Amen.

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 forth 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.

LITANY OF MISSION

Grounded in our identity and called by our mission:

We celebrate the liberating power of learning.

We exchange ideas and are transformed by our encounters:

We are a place of intersection.

We pursue truth, beauty, goodness, knowledge, and wisdom:

We are a community of learners.

We remain curious and encourage achievement as a collaborative pursuit:

We are committed to excellence.

We enrich hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits:

We strive to develop whole persons.

We commit ourselves to sustainability and justice:

We cultivate servant leadership.

We hone our passions and gifts to meet the needs of the world:

We explore faith, vocation, and values.

We seek to be a place where all know they belong:

We are an inclusive community.

We inherit values of faith, freedom of inquiry, and intellectual humility.

We are grounded in tradition.

We inspire and equip students to courageously serve the common good through a holistic education in the liberal arts.

We are Luther College.

HYMN

Luther College Hymn

All stand and sing.

E - ter - nal Fa - ther by whose hand the earth was formed, the
O, God the Fath - er, God the Son, and God the Spi - rit
Ten thou - sand times ten thou - sand join with o - ther thou - sands

world re - deemed, by grace by faith by word a - lone, your Ho - ly Church is
three in one: for all your gifts of grace and love so free - ly giv'n us
'round your throne. All bles - sing, hon - or, glory, and pow'r be un - to you in

made your own. Our Al - ma ma - ter ble - sses you: Sing So - li De - o Glo - ri - a!
from a - bove, our al - ma ma - ter ble - sses you! Sing So - li De - o Glo - ri - a!
this glad hour. Our al - ma ma - ter ble - sses you: Sing So - li De - o Glo - ri - a!

Assembly is seated.

SCRIPTURE READING
from the Jewish and Christian traditions
Isaiah 58:6–11

God says,
“Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your needs in parched places
and make your bones strong,
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water
whose waters never fail.”

POEM

from the Sufi tradition, by Shaikh Abu-Saeed Abil-Kheir

If you are seeking closeness to the Beloved,
love everyone.
Whether in their presence or absence,
see only their good.
If you want to be as clear and refreshing as
the breath of the morning breeze,
like the sun, have nothing but warmth and light
for everyone.

SCRIPTURE READING

from the Christian tradition

Luke 10:25-37

An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

REFLECTION

Adrianna Tam, assistant professor of music

HYMN

Spirit, Open My Heart *All stand and sing.*

Refrain



Spir-it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of
liv-ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing
and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.

1 God, re - place my ston - y heart with a heart that's
2 Write your love up - on my heart as my law, my
3 May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of

kind and ten - der. All my cold - ness and
goal, my sto - ry. In each thought, word, and
friend and neigh - bor. As I live from day to

Refrain

fear to your grace I now sur - ren - der.
deed, may my liv - ing bring you glo - ry.
day, love will be my fin - est la - bor.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with all manner of good gifts: our selves, our time, our vocations, our passions, our provisions, and our possessions. Even as we gather tonight in celebration, we remain mindful of a world that still knows hunger, pain, violence, injustice, exploitation, and hardship. As you have blessed us with gifts, let us be a blessing to others. Spirit, open our hearts to the joy and pain of living. As you love, let us love, in receiving and in giving. Make us gracious and generous, ready to respond to those in need, to feed the world with your love, and to care for the good earth which you have given us. We dedicate ourselves and our world to your holy and life-giving care. Amen.

Assembly is seated.

OFFERING

During the music an offering is received in honor of the class of 2026, to benefit ministries or organizations that serve neighbors near and far. This year's offering will support the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, a global partner in addressing short and long term needs in areas of the world facing conflict and natural disaster. LDR is currently undertaking active relief and aid efforts in Gaza, Ukraine, Iran, and a variety of other international and domestic locations.

North

by Sleeping at Last, arr. George Chung
Senior Student Choir

We will call this place our home
The dirt in which our roots may grow
Though the storms will push and pull
We will call this place our home

We'll tell our stories on these walls
Every year, measure how tall
And just like a work of art
We'll tell our stories on these walls

Let the years we're here be kind, be kind
Let our hearts, like doors, open wide, open wide
Settle our bones like wood over time, over time
Give us bread, give us salt, give us wine

A little broken, a little new
We are the impact and the glue
Capable more than we know
To call this fixer upper home

With each year, our color fades
Slowly, our paint chips away
But we will find the strength
And the nerve it takes

To repaint and repaint and repaint every day
Let the years we're here be kind, be kind
Let our hearts, like doors, open wide, open wide
Settle our bones like wood over time, over time

Give us bread, give us salt, give us wine
Let the years we're here be kind, be kind
Let our hearts, like doors, open wide, open wide
Settle our bones like wood over time, over time

Smaller than dust on this map
Lies the greatest thing we have
The dirt in which our roots may grow
And the right to call it home

AFFIRMATION OF GRADUATES

Graduates, I ask you now to affirm your commitment to a life of faith and service as you move forward from this community into the world.

As you celebrate your achievements, do you give thanks for the many ways that this community, your family or chosen family, friends, and experiences of faith have offered you strength and support?

I do, with hope and gratitude.

As you consider the ventures that lie ahead of you, do you recognize the leading and embrace of God, by whatever name, going with you, before you, behind you, below you, above you, and within your heart?

I do, with hope and gratitude.

As you make choices about your new endeavors, will you offer your gifts, passions, and callings to the world, for the sake of the common good, through the recognition of our shared humanity?

I do, with hope and gratitude.

Assembly stands.

Families, chosen families, friends, and members of the Luther College community: Do you claim these graduates as siblings in the family of God, called forth into this world to share their gifts?

In love, we claim them.

Do you promise to support them, take an interest in their future, be with them in their celebration and sadness, and welcome them whenever they return to this campus, to their hometowns, or any other places where they have the opportunity to share and celebrate their Luther College experience?

In love, we support them.

Do you promise to faithfully remember them in your thoughts, prayers, and encouragements, placing their futures into God's loving hands?

In love, we pray for them.

Merciful God, we thank you for these students, who are blessed, beloved, and all bearing your divine image. You have nourished them in this community of faith and learning. Sustain them with promises of hope, forgiveness, and abundant life for the sake of the world. Continue to enlighten and uphold them by your Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, and the spirit of joy in your presence, now and forever. Amen.

Assembly is seated.

AN OFFERING OF BLESSINGS

Go with Us, Lord

The musical score is written for a four-part setting in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts on G4, moving to A4, B4, and C5. The lyrics 'Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and ev - ery com - ing day,' are written below the treble staff. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The second system continues the melody, with lyrics 'that in your Spir - it strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.' The piece concludes with a double bar line.

I II

Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and ev - ery com - ing day,

that in your Spir - it strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.

Words of blessing from the Jewish tradition:

May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.

May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

Be who you are—and may you be blessed in all that you are.

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's light shine upon you, and may God be gracious to you.

May you feel God's Presence within you always, and may you find peace.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Words of blessing from the Islamic tradition:

O God,

give us light in our heart

and light in our tongues

and light in our hearing

and light in our sight

and light in our feeling

and light in all bodies

and light before us

and light behind us.

Give us, we pray,

Light on our right hand

And light on our left hand

And light above us

And light beneath us.

O Lord,

Increase light within us

And give us light

And illuminate us.

I II
Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and ev - ery com-ing day,

that in your Spir - it strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.

Words of blessing from the Hindu tradition:

Let us be united;
Let us speak in harmony;
Let our minds apprehend alike.
Common be our prayer,
Common be the end of our assembly;
Common be our resolution;
Common be our deliberations.
Alike be our feelings;
Unified be our hearts;
Common be our intentions;
Perfect be our unity.

Words of blessing from the Buddhist tradition:

May all beings be filled with joy and peace.
May all beings everywhere,
The strong and the weak,
The great and the small,
The mean and the powerful,
The short and the long;
May all beings everywhere,
Seen and unseen,
Dwelling far off or nearby,
Being or waiting to become:
May all be filled with lasting joy.

Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and every coming day,

that in your Spirit strong and true our lives may be our gift to you.

Words of blessing from the humanist tradition:

May we know peace of mind and peace of heart.
May we have wisdom for the crossroads, for choices that are hard.
May our homes be filled with love, laughter, and friendship,
And when our minds are breaking and our legs are weak,
May the kindness of others lift us, and hold us in the storm,
As they carry us through to a calmer shore.

Words of blessing from the Christian tradition:

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus.
The God of hope fill you
with all joy and peace in believing,
that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.
The God of all grace
bless you now and forever.

The first system of musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a first ending bracket (I) over the first two measures and a second ending bracket (II) over the next two measures. The lyrics "Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this and ev - ery com - ing day," are written below the treble staff.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff contains the lyrics "that in your Spir - it strong and true our lives may be our gift to you." The system concludes with a double bar line.

HYMN

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

All stand and sing.



All 1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
Low voices 2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
High voices 3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.
Harmony 4 "I the Lord will bless and keep you, and give you peace.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.
I the Lord will smile up - on you, and give you peace.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.
I the Lord am your Cre - a - tor, Sav - ior, Com - for - ter, and Hel - per.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."
Go, my chil - dren, I will keep you, and give you peace."



SENDING

And now, go out into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

Soli Deo Gloria! Thanks be to God!

Assembly is seated until students and faculty have recessed.

RECESSIONAL

Prelude and Fugue in G, BWV 541 (J.S. Bach 1685–1750)

Tara Rajanesan '26, organist

Senior students will recess from the CFL to the Luther Bell. They are each invited to ring it in honor of their Luther College experience. Families and guests are invited to meet and celebrate students at a reception held at Bentdahl Commons.

PARTICIPANTS

Presiders: Brad Chamberlain, president; Melissa Bills, director of college ministries and college pastor

Speaker: Adrianna Tam, assistant professor of music

Worship leaders: Annika Benson '26, Thea Bentley '26, Emilee Burcham-Scofield '26, Cora Ellingworth '26, Maria Hendrickson '26, Siri Hokanson '26, Sophie Klein '26, Emma Lee '26, Dao Duy Bao Nguyen '26, Samuel Scheffler '26, Luran Schwake '26, Korpo Selay '26, Grace Stone '26, Kristian Stordalen '26, Kieran Ulbee '26, Adelee Wrightsman '26

Musicians: Senior Student Choir; Alexander Meszler, assistant professor of music and college organist; Mark Potvin '01, assistant professor of music; Adrianna Tam, assistant professor of music; Caleb Burke '28, tuba; Sirianna Hokanson '26, percussion; Mari Mineck '26, trumpet; Jeanette Pelletier '26, bells; Tara Rajanesan '26, organ; Carly Schettler '28, horn; Eva Stadlander '26, bells; Kristian Stordalen '26, piano; Karson Trujillo '26, trumpet; Alex Van Surksun '26, bells; Eli Vorvick '27, trombone; Audrey Zielstra '26, percussion

CREDITS

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“Luther College Hymn,” J.W. Ylvisaker, class of 1921, Luther College president 1948–62.

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