

The Lily Pad



"I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys." Solomon 2:1

AN HONORABLE GRADUATION

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.*

Proverbs 3:5,6

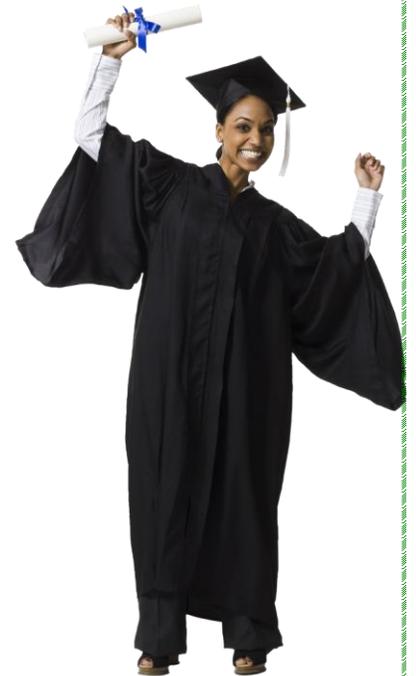


It takes a lot of hard work to graduate! Just ask those who have or will receive their various diplomas. It takes work and study and more work and study and more work and study.

Graduation is only one step in their continued studies. It is the beginning of continuing their education and spiritual growth that will move them to the next level of God's will for their lives. Likewise, you and I too are in the Lord's school that leads to spiritual growth and maturity. Do you want to graduate and receive the blessings that God has purposed for you in this life? Christians, we all are disciples or students of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's curriculum will be taught over the whole of our lives and our graduation will take place at the great judgment. Some will graduate with honors that glorify our Savior and others as 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 explains *will barely pass and they will suffer great loss*. Let each of us allow God to challenge us today and we can answer honestly, yes, I do want to graduate and bring honor to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6

May and June are months for preparing and experiencing transition. These months are when we start preparing for graduations. Countless eighth-graders, high schoolers, college graduates, and new confirmands, will mark this time of transition as a **new** beginning in their lives; a time to close one chapter in life's exciting journey and begin a brand new one. Perhaps you will be attending the graduation of a friend or family member and will have the joy of wishing that person God's blessing as they contemplate new and exciting possibilities for life.



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Graduation suggests that we have now been equipped and prepared for greater and more mature responsibilities than we have had and are ready to undertake our new mission. More will be expected of the graduate. Society looks to receive from that person higher contribution to the common good, *'to whom much is given, much will be required.'* Luke 12:48

The same might be said of Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church. This month we will continue to make bold and positive strides toward our own commencement – a transition into a new way of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of our own world. Everything in our illustrious past and everything we continue to learn is preparing us to take bold steps of faith into the numerous exciting possibilities God has in store for each one of us. Like the eight-grader, high schooler, college graduate or confirmand, God expects more of us; our community expects more of us; and by the Holy Spirit's power we will not turn away from our life's purpose, *for those who trust the Lord, will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings; they will walk and run without getting tired.* Isaiah 40:31

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.' Matthew 28:19-20

Pastor Clarissa L Martin



*In Christ we experience our wholeness,
we are a new creation.
As you have received God's grace,
go now and dare to reach out to others,
To help others reconcile and be made new.
And the presence of God, who is our Creator,
Redeemer, and Sustainer, will go with you, always.*