

Liturgy Affirming God's Promises at Passages in the Pilgrimage of Faith and Life: Graduation

Pastor: In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

Congregation: We give you thanks, O God.

P: Through the power of the Holy Spirit and your Word, you, O God, have called **Name(s)** unto yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and nourished them in the community of faith.

C: We give you thanks, gracious Lord.

P: A New Testament reading:

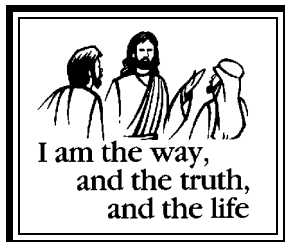
"But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian. For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

—Galatians 3:25-28

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

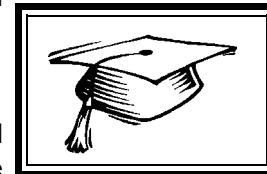
P: At the time of your Baptism you received a baptismal towel or garment as a reminder that in Christ we are clothed and covered with the love of God and the righteousness of Christ. Our having been clothed with Christ's forgiveness and love is also symbolized by the vestments worn in worship and in the funeral pall used to cover the coffin at the time of death. These symbols remind us that God's love and the presence of the Living Christ surround and sustain us through every passage in life's journey, through the unknowns of death and into all eternity in the fulness of God's Kingdom.



C: We give you thanks, gracious Lord.

Presentation of the Graduation Blankets to **Name(s)**.

P: Today we join with you in celebrating your upcoming graduation, one of many milestones in your pilgrimage through faith and life. Just as you received a garment at your baptism, so now at your graduation milestone, may you receive this blanket as a reminder of God's abiding and redeeming love. May it also serve to remind you of the love and support of your Philadelphia Evangelical Lutheran Church family and the Whole Church.



P: Let us pray.

C: Almighty God, we offer to you our thanks and praise on this occasion as we celebrate the life passage of graduation in the lives of these young people. We pray that in the waters of Baptism all your gifts will continue to sustain, lead and guide them this day and always. In Christ's Name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: "Borning Cry"

ELW # 732

P: Let us Pray. Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges and universities, that they may be lively places for sound learning, new discovery, and the pursuit of wisdom; and grant that those who teach and those who learn may find you to be the source of all truth; Lord in your Mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Lord God of our ancestors, we thank you for what you have done and will continue to do with our daughters and sons. Walk with them in life, and keep the evil one from obstructing their path. You see all and you know where the water is deep. Keep **Name(s)** from danger. Order their steps and guide their feet as they venture into a new chapter in life's journey. May the good work that you have begun in them be brought to completion at the day of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray,

C: Amen.

(We extend a special word of thanks to Philadelphia's Women of the ELCA for providing the blankets presented to our 2008 graduates.)