



2025

SPRING COMMENCEMENT



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO

Christ at the Center



OUR MISSION

Steadfast in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, Concordia University Chicago promotes academic rigor in its liberal arts and professional programs; grounds students in objective truth, integrity, and excellence; and practices faithfulness to the Confessional teachings of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as it forms students for vocations in church, family, and the world.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

CLASS OF 2025 SPRING COMMENCEMENT

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GUEST GUIDELINES

Health & Safety Protocols

- Food and beverage is not allowed inside Geiseman Gymnasium.
- Baby strollers and walkers must be parked in designated area when not in use to prevent blocking of aisles.
- Noisemakers are not permitted.
- For the safety of all guests, we ask that you please remain in your seat until the faculty and graduates have recessed out of the Gymnasium at the end of the ceremony.
- Immediately following the recessional, we kindly ask that graduates and their guests promptly clear the Gymnasium in order to begin preparation for the next ceremony.

Procession Guidelines

- Please silence all electronic devices.
- Unauthorized guest presence is not permitted near the stage. Ushers will respectfully ask those not permitted in the area to return to their seats.
- Guest photography is only allowed from the seating area. Please do not stand in aisles. Flash and tripod photography is also not allowed in the Gymnasium.
- Photographers from Grad Images will take pictures of each graduate. Photos will be posted online and access codes will be emailed to graduates. For more information, please call 800-247-3435 or visit GradImages.com.
- Balloons and signs are not permitted inside the Gymnasium. An usher will provide guests a ticket to check items before storing in a safe location until after the ceremony.

Commencement services are being livestreamed at CUChicago.edu/Live and will be available for on-demand viewing on the website.

Please silence all electronic devices.

In the unlikely event of an emergency, please take a moment to locate the exit nearest to you.

CLASS OF 2025

DOCTORAL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROCESSIONAL

The audience shall remain seated during the procession.

WELCOME

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

INVOCATION

Rev. Simeon Raddatz, BA '13

University Chaplain

SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 3:15-16

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

University President

Out of respect for each graduate, please hold your applause until the last graduate has processed across the stage.

2025 GRADUATES



For the full list of Doctoral Candidates and their Dissertations, please scan the QR Code to view online.

ALUMNI RESPONSE

Dr. Sarah Gordon, PhD '25

Leadership, Health & Human Performance

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOME

Jesse Muehler, BS '22, MA '25

ALMA MATER

All Concordia-Chicago alumni are invited to stand to be recognized before the singing of the *Alma Mater* (see page 3 for music).

CHARGE TO THE GRADUATES

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

University President

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Rev. Simeon Raddatz, BA '13

University Chaplain

DISMISSAL

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

RECESSIONAL

Following the recessional, light refreshments will be served for graduates and their guests outside under the tent.



ALMA MATER



Hail to thee, our Al-ma Ma-ter! Hail to thee, Ma-roon and Gold!



Here we stand, thy sons and daugh-ters, Think-ing back to days of old:



Days of joy and hap-py meet-ings, Days of friend-ship and of love.



As we stand be-fore thy Pil-lars, Hail! Con-cor-dia! Hail!

CLASS OF 2025

EdS/MASTER'S COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROCESSIONAL

The audience shall remain seated during the procession.

WELCOME

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

INVOCATION

Rev. Simeon Raddatz, BA '13

University Chaplain

SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 3:15-16

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

University President

Out of respect for each graduate, please hold your applause until the last graduate has processed across the stage.

2025 GRADUATES



For the full list of EdS and Master's Candidates, please scan the QR Code to view online.

ALUMNI RESPONSE

Jessica Perry, MAT '25

Middle Grades Education, Language Arts;
Secondary Education

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOME

Jesse Muehler, BS '22, MA '25

ALMA MATER

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CHARGE TO THE GRADUATES

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University President

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University Chaplain

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Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

RECESSIONAL

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CLASS OF 2025

BACHELOR'S COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROCESSIONAL

The audience shall remain seated during the procession.

WELCOME

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

INVOCATION

Rev. Simeon Raddatz, BA '13

University Chaplain

SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 3:15-16

CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

University President

Out of respect for each graduate, please hold your applause until the last graduate has processed across the stage.

2025 GRADUATES



For the full list of Bachelor Candidates, please scan the QR Code to view online.

ALUMNI RESPONSE

Troy Pratley, BS '25

Secondary Education, History Education

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WELCOME

Jesse Muehler, BS '22, MA '25

ALMA MATER

All Concordia-Chicago alumni are invited to stand to be recognized before the singing of the *Alma Mater* (see page 3 for music).

CHARGE TO THE GRADUATES

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

University President

LORD'S PRAYER

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BENEDICTION

Rev. Simeon Raddatz, BA '13

University Chaplain

DISMISSAL

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs and
Chief Academic Officer

RECESSIONAL

Following the recessional, light refreshments will be served for graduates and their guests outside under the tent.

BACHELOR'S COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY SPEAKER

Reverend Craig Muehler, BA '84 CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)



Rev. Craig Muehler, a retired U.S. Navy captain, serves as the director of the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces. He began serving in that position in August 2014 after retiring as deputy chaplain of the U.S. Marine Corps in July 2014.

As director of LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces, he is the chief liaison to the more than 160 LCMS chaplains serving in all branches of the military active and reserve, and the Civil Air Patrol. His responsibilities include recruitment of chaplain candidates, endorsement for military duty, denominational training and education

for ministry within the armed forces, maintaining updated records on all pastoral acts performed by Lutheran chaplains, and ministry support for the families of LCMS chaplains within the military, active and reserve, and the communities in which they live.

A native of Springfield, IL, Muehler grew up in South Dakota and Missouri. He received his bachelor's degree from Concordia University Chicago in 1984 and his Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1988. He earned his Master of Theology in pastoral counseling from Trinity International University in Deerfield, IL in 2001.

In 1986, he was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy theological student program and attended the Naval Chaplaincy School and Center. After his ordination in 1988, he became part of the Navy Chaplain Corps, serving as a chaplain in the reserve while also leading St. John's Lutheran Church in McClusky, ND as its pastor.

Muehler was called to active duty in 1991, serving honorably until his retirement in 2014. While active, he served in postings around the United States and internationally, including two deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a highly decorated veteran, including the Legion of Merit (two), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (two), the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two), the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two), the Joint Meritorious Unit Award and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Commendation.

Rev. Muehler and his wife, Kristen, are the proud parents of four children; Seth, Jesse, Faith and Hope. They are a family who is centered in Christ and focus on living out His love through their vocations. Rev. Muehler and three of his children hold degrees from Concordia-Chicago.

ABOUT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Concordia University Chicago, a university of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), traces its beginnings to 1864, when Addison Teachers Seminary was dedicated and classes were begun in a three-story building in Addison, IL. Designed to educate men to become Lutheran school teachers, the seminary was chartered by Zion Lutheran Church in Addison (now in Bensenville, IL).

Shortly after the turn of the previous century, the expanding seminary had outgrown its Addison campus, and on October 12, 1913 a new facility named Concordia Teachers College in the University's present River Forest location was dedicated before crowds of more than 30,000 people.

In 1938, Concordia became a coeducational institution and, in 1957, Concordia's first graduate program in education was established. By the early 1970s, the single-purpose institution expanded its mission of educating teachers and graduates for church professions by adding a liberal arts program.

To reflect its broadened range of programs, the institution's name was changed from Concordia Teachers College to Concordia College in 1979. As more graduate programs and liberal arts majors continued to be added, the college changed its name in 1990 to Concordia University. In 2006, the University officially became known as Concordia University Chicago, reinforcing the University's presence and programs in the greater Chicagoland area and providing recognition regionally, nationally and globally.

True to its heritage, Concordia-Chicago continues to be a leader in educating teachers both for the Church and for the world. Concordia-Chicago is among those private colleges in Illinois that graduate the largest

number of educators annually. The University's College of Business, College of Education, College of Health, Science & Technology, and College of Theology, Arts & Humanities offer concentrations in a wide variety of fields at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. Professional learners also benefit from various accelerated degree offerings relevant to today's employment landscape.

For more than a decade, combined graduate and undergraduate enrollment has exceeded 5,000 students. The University now enrolls more than 1,000 doctoral students and more than 300 international students.

Since 2010, Concordia University Chicago has been named as a College of Distinction and a Christian College of Distinction in recognition of outstanding student engagement, teaching and academic excellence in undergraduate education. The University is now recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution. In addition, a number of faculty members have been named Fulbright Scholars and taken part in the related international exchange. The prestigious Golden Apple Foundation has recognized more than 30 College of Education students as part of its scholars program, and 22 alumni have received Golden Apple Teacher Awards for their exemplary work in the classroom.

In 2019, Dr. Russell Dawn was installed as the institution's 12th president. Today, he leads the University under the primary tenets of truth, freedom and vocation. To date, more than 43,000 graduates form the long line of maroon and gold alumni. With deep roots in the LCMS, vocation, faith and service remain the foundation of a Concordia University Chicago education today.

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE CABINET

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

President

Dr. Eli Hestermann

Vice President for Academic Affairs
Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Jamie Kowalczyk

Vice President for Strategic Operations and
Chief of Staff

Mr. Randall Barfield

Senior Vice President of Finance
Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Jeffrey Hynes

Senior Vice President for University Advancement
Foundation President and CEO

Mrs. Kathryn Gebhardt, BA '96

Vice President for Student Success
Dean of Students

ACADEMIC DEANS

Dr. Lynn Hunnicutt

Dean, College of Business

Dr. Maja Miskovic

Dean, College of Education

Dr. Suzanne Walsh

Dean, College of Health, Science & Technology

Deaconess Kristin Wassilak, BA '86, MA '96

Dean, College of Theology, Arts & Humanities

BOARD OF REGENTS

Mrs. Michelle Kazmierczak, JD, Chair

Rev. Matthew Zickler, Vice-Chair

Mr. John Blakkan

Rev. Dr. Allan Buss

Rev. Dr. Seth Clemmer

Dr. Russell P. Dawn

Dr. John Krause

Dr. Kyle Knoepfel

Dr. Gerhard Munding

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Mr. Jeff Schwarz

Mr. Frank Simek

Deaconess Jennifer Siukola

Mrs. Virginia Terrell

Mr. John Thielke, BA '92

Dr. Alison (Maas) Witte, BA '05



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