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## Invocation

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**Commencement Invocation**  
**July 24, 2020**  
**Elyse Nelson Winger, University Chaplain**

Beloved graduates, families  
faculty and friends

Today we literally gather sea to shining sea

We are apart: distanced by a pandemic that scattered our community  
across the country and around the world

Yet now we join together in spirit  
to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2020

On this Quad we imagine you now  
regalia-clad, ready to take this stage and take on the world  
wherever you are, we are cheering you on because this world needs you now.  
You are called, as an ancient prayer affirms, to  
“ventures of which we cannot see the ending,  
by paths yet untrodden,  
through perils unknown.”<sup>1</sup>

But you will not go it alone.  
You have the courses that challenged you  
the teachers that mentored you  
the friendships that strengthened you  
You have what it takes to “go out with good courage,  
not always knowing where you go,”<sup>2</sup>  
but trusting that wisdom will guide you  
and loved ones support you

Let us give thanks  
for the years we have shared together at Illinois Wesleyan  
and may you know that every gift, every talent  
you have been able to cultivate here  
you are now called to bring into this world  
longing for creativity,  
yearning for justice,  
ready for you.

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<sup>1</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal, p. 317

<sup>2</sup> ibid