

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.”¹

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,”²
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.

¹ Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal, p. 317

² ibid