



COMMENCEMENT

— 2026 —



FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2026
ST. ANDREW UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
HIGHLANDS RANCH



iliff
SCHOOL *of* THEOLOGY

The 121st Annual Commencement of The Iliff School of Theology

St. Andrew United Methodist Church
May 15, 2026 | 10:00 a.m.

Please silence your cell phone. You are welcome to take photographs, but please be aware of sightlines for others and also avoid using a flash.

*Please stand as you are able.

Prelude

Mark Zwilling, Director of Music and the Arts, St.
Andrew United Methodist Church

*Processional

Leading the Procession

Dr. Amy Erickson
Faculty Marshal
Assistant Director of the DU/Iliff Joint Doctoral Program
in the Study of Religion, Professor of Hebrew Bible

Student Marshals
2026-2027 Student Senate Co-Chairs

Welcome

The Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Bishop Henry White Warren and Elizabeth Iliff Warren
Professor of Africana Pastoral Theology

Greetings

Rev. Mark Feldmeir
Senior Pastor, St. Andrew United Methodist Church

*Hymn

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”
Music on page 14

Purpose, Vision, and Commitment Statement	Masters Students of the Year Purpose Statement - Iliff is a theological graduate school that nurtures passion, cultivates compassion, and encourages social and ecological justice around the world. Vision Statement - Iliff students and graduates are social justice activists, spiritual companions, religious leaders, and intercultural innovators in faith, secular, civic, and academic communities. Commitment Statement - The Iliff School of Theology educates persons to be leaders committed to interculturality, decolonialism, social justice, inclusiveness, and religious diversity.
Susan Schlessman Duncan Award for Outstanding Trustee Leadership	Sheila A. Baker-Johnson, Posthumously MDiv '04
2026 Theological Luminary Award	Barbara J. Kelley
Recognition of Milestone Graduates and Welcome to New Alumni/ae	Kat Harrell, MA Director, Annual Giving and Alumni/ae Relations
Student Presentations	"Moment in Sun"
Introduction of Commencement Speaker	The Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr.
Reading	"This is What You Shall Do" by Walt Whitman Gabrielle Yates, MDiv '26
Commencement Address	Dr. Robert Allan Warrior

Prayer Dr. Eric C. Smith
Associate Professor of Early Christian Texts and Traditions

*Hymn "Open My Eyes That I May See"
Words on page 18

CONFERRING OF DEGREES ON THE CLASS OF 2026

Authorization and Greetings Paula A. Redmond
Chair, Board of Trustees

Conferral of Degrees The Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr.

Presentation of Candidates The Rev. Dr. Cathie Kelsey
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty

Presentation of Diplomas The Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr. and Paula A. Redmond
Master of Arts
Master of Theological Studies
Master of Divinity
Doctor of Ministry
Joint Doctor of Philosophy in the Study of Religion

Investiture with Insignia of the Degree Dr. Pam Eisenbaum
Professor of Biblical Studies and Christian Origins

Dr. April M. Mack
Assistant Professor of Religion and Social Justice

Alumni/ae Association Gift Kat Harrell, MA

Charge to the Graduates Dr. Albert Hernández
Associate Professor of the History of Christianity

*Song “Draw the Circle Wide”
Words on page 16

*Benediction The Rev. Dr. Boyung Lee
Professor of Practical Theology

*Recessional

ROBERT WARRIOR BIOGRAPHY



Robert Warrior is the Hall Distinguished Professor of American Literature and Culture at the University of Kansas. He is an author and an enrolled member of the Osage Nation.

Warrior has served as a member of the elected National Council and its Executive Committee (2009-12), two times as a co-chair of the Program Committee (2007-8, 2014-15), and as a member of the Program Committee. Warrior was a member of the six-member steering committee and then acting council that founded the Native American and Indigenous

Studies Association. In 2010, he was elected NAISA's founding president and is now (with Jean O'Brien) serving as founding co-editor of NAISA's scholarly journal. He holds degrees from Union Theological Seminary (Ph.D., Systematic Theology), Yale University (M.A., Religion), and Pepperdine University (B.A. summa cum laude, Speech Communication). He has also served as an appointed official in the Osage Nation government and is a member of the committee responsible for maintaining the Osage ceremonial in-losh-ka dance in the Grayhorse district.

His academic and journalistic writing has appeared in a wide variety of publications, including *American Quarterly*, *PMLA*, *MLA's Profession*, *Interventions*, *News from Indian Country*, *Indian Country Today Media Network*, *Village Voice*, *UTNE Reader*, and *High Times*. In 2011, *The People and the Word* and he and two coauthors of *American Indian Literary Nationalism* were the inaugural recipients of the Beatrice Medicine Award for Scholarly Writing from the Native American Literature Symposium and Warrior has also received awards from the Gustavus Myers Foundation, the Native American Journalists Association, the Church Press Association, and others. Professor Warrior has lectured in a wide variety of places, including Lebanon, Guatemala, Mexico, France, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Canada.

MASTER OF ARTS

Lindsay Ambler
Concentration: Social Justice
and Ethics

B.A., University of Central Florida

Kaitlyn Rebekah Campbell
Concentration: Religion,
Trauma and Healing

M.Div., George W. Truett Theological Seminary
at Baylor University

Christina Maria Clark
Concentration: Religion,
Trauma and Healing

B.A., Colorado Christian University
B.A., Connecticut College

Emma Fellenstein
Concentration: Social Justice
and Ethics

B.A., Seattle Pacific University

Tiziana Severse
Concentration: Religion,
Trauma and Healing

A.A., Asheville Buncombe Community College
B.A., University of North Carolina at Asheville

MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

Lyse Fedjanie Barronville*

B.A., Boston University
M.S., Boston University

Robert Chamberlin

B.A., California State University, Northridge

Melissa Grohman

B.A., University of Houston – Clear Lake

William Seth Ratliff

B.S., East Tennessee State University

Jesse Peter Van Horne*

B.A., Metropolitan State University of Denver
M.L.A., University of Colorado, Denver

MASTER OF DIVINITY

Bry K. Brannan Concentration: Social Justice and Ethics	B.A., Pacific Lutheran University
Emily Bruno* Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., Colby College J.D., University of Alabama
Ryan McCray Ely** Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., DePauw University
SyLinda Lee Evans Concentration: Social Justice and Ethics	B.U.S., University of New Mexico
Matt Farris** Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.Phil., Miami University M.A., Miami University Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union
Mai Gross	B.A., University of California
Meghan Haefele-Tschanz Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., University of Colorado Boulder
Diane Morris** Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.S., Baldwin Wallace University M.S.W., University of Denver
Seth Allen Moon Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., University of Georgia

Isabel Marquez-Estrada Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	A.A., Dallas County Community College B.A., North Texas University B.S.A., Universidad Autonoma De Tamaulipas UAT
Luis Ivan Nazario Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., University of Phoenix
Raina Janel Olsen Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.S., University of Missouri Columbia M.S., University of Missouri Columbia Ph.D., University of Missouri Columbia
Jaclyn Perez Concentration: Social Justice and Ethics	B.A., Boise State University
Salix Dezrea Renan Concentration: Religion, Trauma and Healing	B.F.A., University of Oklahoma M.S.W., University of Pittsburgh
Ben Sides Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., Luther College
Haley Sommerfeld** Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	A.A., Brazosport College B.A., University of Texas at Austin
Matthew Utley** Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.S., Nebraska Wesleyan University
Catherine Vance Concentration: Professional Ministries in Context	B.A., University of Texas at Austin M.A., Texas A&M University M.F.A., Washington University in St. Louis

Caralyn Faith Ware B.S., University of Alabama at Birmingham
Concentration: Professional
Ministries in Context

Laura Gabrielle Minster Yates B.A., Naropa University
Concentration: Religion,
Trauma and Healing

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Vinnetta Golphin-Wilkerson B.A., Duke University
M.Div., Candler School of Theology

D.Min. Project: “Examining Resource Allocation Patterns: A Response to Church Decline”

Guthrie Lee Graves-
Fitzsimmons B.A., The American University
M.Div., Union Theological Seminary in the City
of New York

D.Min. Project: “Piloting a Program for Christian Legislators Opposed to Christian Nationalism”

Dorcia Earlene Johnson B.A., Missouri Southern State University
M.A., Pittsburg State University
M.Div., Iliff School of Theology

D.Min. Project: “The People Have Left the Building: A Story of Rural Church Numerical Decline and Congregational Abundance”

Jason Michael Miller

B.A., Case Western Reserve University
B.S.E., Case Western Reserve University
M.A.Ed., University of Phoenix
M.Div., Iliff School of Theology

D.Min. Project: "The Theology of Eucharist in the Digital Media within the Episcopal Church"

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**Jason Alan Andrus

B.A., Brigham Young University
M.A., University of Washington
J.D., New York University

Dissertation: "Islamic Political Anti-Theology: A Discursive Practice of Contingency Beyond Sovereign Politics"

*Gregorio Peña Camprubí

B.Sc., University of Barcelona
M.A./M.Sc., University of Barcelona
M.Sc., Vrije University of Amsterdam

Dissertation: "Queer Spanish Catholicism: Miguel de Unamuno, Teresa of Avila, and the contemporary lived experiences of LGBTQ Spanish Catholics in Madrid, Spain"

*Clarence Wiley Davis

B.A., University of Detroit
M.Div., Harvard University
Th.M., Harvard University

Dissertation: "Faith and the City: Poverty, Public Policy and Political Black Theology"

**Sho McClarence

A.A., Joliet Junior College
B.A., Monmouth College
M.A., Oregon State University

Dissertation: "The Mystical and the Mundane: Queer Mystic-Spatial Illuminations Through the Exploration of Felix Gonzales-Torres's Contemporary Art "

Taylor Diane Muma

B.A., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
M.Div., George W. Truett Theological Seminary
at Baylor University

Dissertation: "Otherness and the Trinity: Toward a Critical Reimagining of Christian Divinity from a Postcolonial Ethos"

*Elyse Ila Pierce

B.A., Hamline University
M.T.S. and Certificate in Jewish Studies.,
Vanderbilt Divinity School

Dissertation: "'Ha-'adam 'afar min ha-'adamah': Human Religious Systems as Evolutionary Ecological Responses as expressed in American Reform Judaism"

*Degree awarded in August 2025;

**Degree awarded in November or December 2025;

Assisting in the distribution of diplomas is Laura Paris, Registrar

A reception honoring the graduates will be held immediately following the Commencement ceremony in the Fellowship Hall of St. Andrew United Methodist Church.

About Iliff School of Theology

Founded in 1893, Iliff School of Theology is a graduate school that cultivates compassion and justice through courageous imagination. Iliffians are activists, leaders, and innovators in diverse religious, secular, and academic communities.

Iliff is a gathering place for students from a variety of backgrounds, and together the students learn as much from classmates as they do from our internationally renowned faculty. Our programs are informed by current research, best practices, and innovative approaches to theology, and they focus on providing real-world applications for your work.

We offer degree and non-degree programs to support your career and academic goals in on-campus, hybrid, and online learning methods. We are here to support your growth with the following programs:

Degree Programs

- Master of Arts
- Master of Divinity
- Doctor of Ministry
- Joint Doctoral Program

Non-Degree Programs

- Graduate-Level Courses for Audit
- Iliff End-of-Life Doula Certificate program with the Iliff Death Care Collective
- Action Focused Learning Labs with the Institute for Religion, Politics, and Culture
- Many free events, lectures, concerts, and conferences.

LEARN MORE AT ILIFF.EDU

Contribute to class gift of 2026!



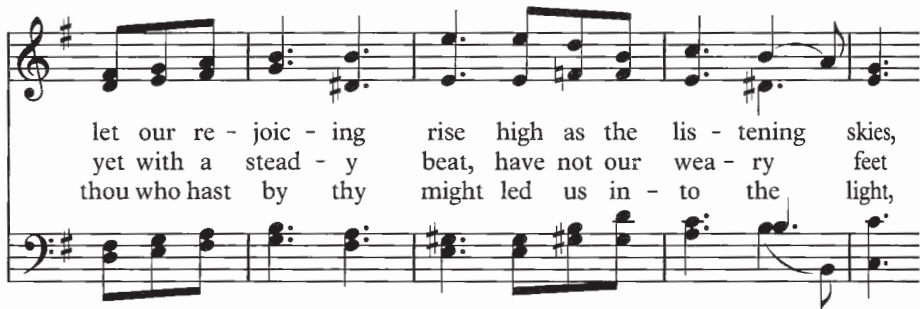
Lift Every Voice and Sing



1. Lift ev - ery voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring,
 2. Ston - y the road we trod, bit - ter the chas - tening rod,
 3. God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears,



ring with the har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty;
 felt in the days when hope un - born had died;
 thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;



let our re - joic - ing rise high as the lis - tening skies,
 yet with a stead - y beat, have not our wea - ry feet
 thou who hast by thy might led us in - to the light,



let it re - sound loud as the roll - ing sea.
 come to the place for which our fa - thers sighed?
 keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - tered;
Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met thee;

sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought us;
we have come, tread - ing our path thru the blood of the slaugh - tered,
lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get thee;

fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun,
out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at last
shad - owed be - neath thy hand, may we for - ev - er stand,

let us march on till vic - to - ry is won.
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
true to our God, true to our na - tive land.

Draw the Circle Wide

Draw the cir - cle, draw the cir - cle wide. Draw the

cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one stands a-lone, we'll stand side by

side. Draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the

wide. Draw the cir-cle wide, draw it wid-er still. Let this

be our song: no one stands a-lone. Stand-ing side by side,

draw the cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. Draw the

WORDS: Gordon Light
MUSIC: Mark A. Miller

DRAW THE CIRCLE
Irr.

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2
wide. Draw the cir - cle, draw the cir - cle wide. Draw the

cir-cle, draw the cir-cle wide. No one stands a-lone, we'll stand side by

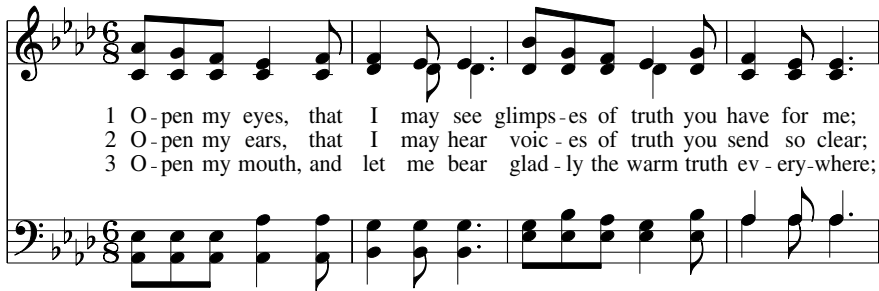
side. Draw the cir - cle, draw the cir - cle

div.
wide. Draw the cir-cle wide, draw it wid-er still. Let this
div.

be our song: no one stands a-lone. Stand-ing side by side,

to repeat *Repeat as desired*
draw the cir-cle, draw the cir - cle wide. Draw the

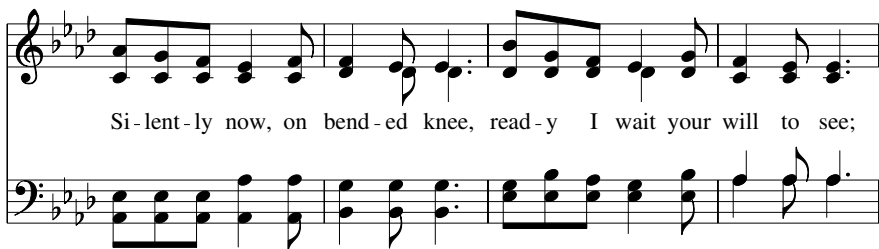
Open My Eyes, That I May See 480



1 O - pen my eyes, that I may see glimps - es of truth you have for me;
 2 O - pen my ears, that I may hear voic - es of truth you send so clear;
 3 O - pen my mouth, and let me bear glad - ly the warm truth ev - ery - where;



place in my hands the won - der - ful key that shall un - lock and set me free.
 and while the mes - sage sounds in my ear, ev - ery - thing false will dis - ap - pear.
 o - pen my heart, and let me pre - pare love with your chil - dren thus to share.



Si - lent - ly now, on bend - ed knee, read - y I wait your will to see;



o - pen my eyes, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 o - pen my ears, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 o - pen my heart, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!

Special thanks to the staff members with roles in preparing for Commencement:

Alisha Eno, Executive Assistant to the President; The Rev. Dr. Diane Bogues, Associate Dean of Students; Rhonda Eaker, Interim Program Manager, University of Denver/Iliff School of Theology Joint Doctoral Program in the Study of Religion; Indira Reyes, Administrative Assistant to the Dean's Office; Laura Paris, Registrar

Acknowledgements

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“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

Text by: James W. Johson.

Tune by: J. Rosamund Johnson.

United Methodist Hymnal.

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“Open My Eyes That I May See”

Text by: Clara H. Scott,

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“Draw the Circle Wide”

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Tune by: Mark A. Miller.

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“We Advocate Freedom”



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