May 24, 2020 – Easter 7 (A) Celebrating Graduation

As graduation season begins in the midst of closed school buildings and online learning, we encourage congregations to be creative in their approaches to honoring traditional spring rites of passage. Not only are high school seniors missing their moment to walk across a stage to receive a diploma, but many college seniors have also been sheltering in place and will never be back on their campuses to celebrate and say farewell to the friends they made during their higher education experience. Even our Episcopal seminaries are planning for digital graduation ceremonies this spring.

The Faith Formation Department’s Office for Youth Ministries and Young Adult and Campus Ministries have been curating ideas, resources, and liturgies to share across the Church with all of our faith communities. We hope that rural and isolated communities as well as program-sized parishes will find something that works for them. Our rituals and liturgies are designed for marking time through the liturgical year, for sharing our common story as Christian souls engaged in a mortal journey on Mother Earth. Let’s make sure that during this time of isolation in a pandemic, our rising seniors know that they are valued in appropriate and helpful ways.
A Prayer for Graduates
God of knowledge and understanding, you gave to the student Elisha a double portion of his teacher’s spirit: grant that all whose graduations we celebrate today may embody the best of their teachers’ heart, mind, and body, building on their knowledge and understanding, and putting to right and compassionate use all that they have gained from their time in school; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Teacher. Amen.

A Prayer for Schools and Colleges
O Eternal God, bless all schools, colleges, and universities [and especially _________], that they may be lively centers 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; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Find more resources, including worship bulletins, prayers and blessings, service videos, and more at https://lessonplansthatwork.org/celebrating-graduation. To share additional resources, email the Rev. Shannon Kelly, Director of Faith Formation and Officer for Young Adult and Campus Ministries, at skelly@episcopalchurch.org or Bronwyn Skov, Officer for Youth Ministry, at bskov@episcopalchurch.org.