

Order for the Opening of the Academic Year

This order follows the Benediction.

P: We are a people whom God has called to fulfill our baptismal vocation in this academic setting. As a new academic year begins, therefore, it is appropriate that we ask God's blessing upon it, as well as God's gracious aid in all of our endeavors.

A: Let us pray.

O God, you are the Giver of the gift of the mind, the Source and Revealer of all knowledge and truth, and the One who calls us to witness and to serve wherever we are.

1. Help us this year to study diligently and to grow in all that is worthy and good.
2. Support and strengthen us in the rigors of our studies. Assist us in doing well in them. Yet, ever remind us that your love — and our worth, therefore — transcend our performance.
3. Guide all who learn on this campus and all who teach, that together we may know and do what is good, as is your will.
4. Prompt, guide, and multiply the witness which we, individually and as a congregation, make for you on this campus. In particular, inspire and enable our manifesting your love for others, as your Son has made it manifest for us.
5. Bless all the Christian campus ministries; and by your gracious aid, keep us faithful to the Gospel, make us effective in the work to which you have called us, and in the midst of our differences, help us together to manifest the unity of the church, which is your gift and will.
6. Inspire all campus religious organizations to be respectful of one another and of people of other traditions and faiths, even as they actively are seeking to share the meaning, the joy, the values, and the direction which their own faith gives to their life and work. Help these organizations together to give a compelling witness to the importance — indeed, the integral character — of religion to human life. And enable and empower their showing too that religious commitment can be a factor which unites peoples and need not divide them.
7. Finally, bless all who are dear to us who are not with us in this place. Watch over and care for them and for our relationship with them. Especially while we are apart, keep us together in the bonds of friendship and love.

P: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, O Father, for his sake who died and rose again, and now lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

A: Amen.

Hymn: *Lutheran Book of Worship* #444, "With the Lord Begin Your Task"

P: We begin this academic year in the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Written by Lloyd Kittlaus, University Lutheran Church, Evanston, Illinois. The creation of this order was stimulated by "Opening of a School Year", in *Occasional Services: A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship*, pp. 243-245.

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