



Athletics Commencement Service

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

2:00 p.m.

Anderson Chapel

NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

A Brief History of North Park University

North Park University's (NPU) roots began in an Evangelical Covenant Church basement in 1891, where music, religion, language, and business classes gave Swedish immigrants the education and skills to prosper in a new nation. With an offer of free land in Chicago, the school moved from Minneapolis to the North Park neighborhood.

Old Main, the first building on campus, was completed in fall 1894 and housed all departments of the school. In the 1920s, pilots used the cupola atop Old Main as a landmark to find Orchard Field (now O'Hare International Airport), as it was the tallest point on the city's North Side.

North Park has since expanded and adapted its educational mission to the changing times. At various points, it included a seminary, academy, junior college, four-year liberal arts college, and—since 1997— a university.

In recent years, much time and many resources have been invested in renovating campus facilities, including the construction of the Brandel Library in 2001, the Holmgren Athletic Complex in 2004, the Helwig Recreation Center and Sawyer Court student residence in 2006, and the Nancy and G. Timothy Johnson Center for Science and Community Life in 2014; the acquisition of the Park North student residence in 2005; and the renovation of the Campus Green in 2003, Burgh Hall in 2008, Ohlson Hall in 2009, Sohlberg Hall in 2011, Anderson Hall in 2012, and Hanson Hall in 2018.

The 2017 adoption of the Chicago-based curricular and co-curricular programs collectively identified as Catalyst advanced the university's distinction for city-centered learning.

Mission

The mission of North Park University is to prepare students for lives of significance and service through education in the liberal arts, professional studies, and theology.

Aspiration

North Park University will be distinguished as the nation's leading city-centered Christian university during the coming decade and beyond.

Core Values

- Christian – We nurture Christian faith while welcoming students from all faith traditions.
- City-centered – We engage Chicago as our dynamic place of learning and service.
- Intercultural – We embrace and value all people, educating students for the complex global cultural tapestry.

Educational Ideals

Reflecting the core values that shape our distinctive learning community, students at North Park University experience an education that:

- Affirms learning in all its forms—in the classroom and beyond—as a gift, a joy, and a sacred obligation
- Encourages dialogue as a means of learning where open inquiry, integrity, and civility guide our life together
- Seeks to form and transform the whole student (intellectually, socially, and spiritually)
- Values each student for who they are and will become

North Park University Presidents

David Nyvall, 1891–1905

A. W. Fredrickson, 1905–09

David Nyvall, 1912–23

Algoth Ohlson, 1924–49

Clarence A. Nelson, 1950–59

Karl A. Olsson, 1959–70

Lloyd H. Ahlem, 1970–79

William R. Hausman, 1980–86

David G. Horner, 1987–04

David L. Parkyn, 2006–17

Mary K. Surrige, 2018–present

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Academic Regalia

Today's academic attire is a legacy of the Middle Ages. While defining status, they kept wearers warm in the period's drafty and unheated stone buildings. In modern times, the attire is no longer protective but is still worn to signify the wearer's degree.

Unadorned bachelor's gowns are the simplest in design, master's gowns have half-sleeves, and doctoral gowns are distinguishable by their velvet facing and three velvet chevrons on the sleeve. The velvet may be black or reflect the color of the wearer's degree.

You will notice some faculty are more colorfully attired. These gowns have traditionally denoted degrees from European universities, where each institution prescribes its regalia. In recent years, however, American institutions have increasingly departed from black and adopted more colorful garb for doctoral degrees.

The academic hood's size and velvet trim color reflect the wearer's degree and the institution from which they earned it. At North Park, both graduates and faculty wear hoods. The degree colors commonly found at North Park are:

Apricot	Nursing
Brown	Fine Arts
Dark Blue	Philosophy
Drab	Business Administration, Economics, Management
Gold	Science
Green	Medicine
Light Blue	Education
Peacock Blue	Community Development
Pink	Music
Purple	Law
Scarlet	Theology or Divinity
White	Arts and Letters

Academic Mace

A common symbol in modern academic processions, the mace symbolizes the institution's academic mission when used in academic processions.

The mace North Park University uses encompasses three symbols representing its educational mission.

1. The torch reflects the school motto, "In Thy Light Shall We See Light."
2. The growth metaphor calls attention to the holistic intellectual, emotional, and spiritual maturity the university seeks to nurture in students.
3. The threefold nature of the mace's composition (the three stand legs, layers, and flames) represents the trinity of the Christian tradition and three components of the university's academic program (liberal arts, professional studies, and theological education).

ORDER OF SERVICE

Processional	Trumpet Flourish Sharon R. Peterson, University Organist	Leon Nelson
Welcome	Mary K. Surridge, President	
Hymn	“Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (page 5)	
Invocation	Rev. Dr. Terence Z. Gadsden, Campus Pastor and Athletic Chaplain	
Charge	Pastor Gadsden	
Conferring of Degrees	President Mary K. Surridge and Provost Francisco X. Gaytán PROVOST GAYTÁN Madame President, on behalf of the faculty of North Park University, I have the pleasure to present the members of the graduating class of 2026. These students have been approved by the faculty of North Park University for graduation, and we now present them to you for conferral of their degrees. PRESIDENT SURRIDGE You have been diligent in your studies and have attained the requirements stipulated for your respective academic degree. You have affirmed the mission and spirit of this university. With the affirmation of the faculty, by authority of the Board of Trustees, and in exercise of the powers granted by the State of Illinois, as president of North Park University it is my privilege to confer on you the academic degree which you have attained, with all the rights, privileges, and honors appertaining to that degree. PROVOST GAYTÁN You may present yourselves for your diplomas.	
Benediction	Pastor Gadsden	
Recessional	“A Trumpet Fancy” Sharon R. Peterson, University Organist	Leon Nelson

GRADUATES

Eden Baker

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Ethan Condit

Bachelor of Science in Business

Reagan Dailey

Bachelor of Science in Business

Isabella Frohwirth

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

Salyssa Garcia

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

Samuel Jackson

Bachelor of Science in Business

Elijah Johnson

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

Rylan Kawakami

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Kathryn Keehn

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

Kayla Lorenz

Bachelor of Arts in Art and Bachelor of Science in Business

Garon Maxon

Bachelor of Science in Business

Jackson Nuese

Bachelor of Science in Business

Katherine Patton

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Joseph Perona

Bachelor of Science in Business

Zachary Price

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

Kayla Sapolu

Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Sydney Snyder

Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science

Enzo Vertucci

Bachelor of Science in Business

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Thomas Chisholm

William M. Runyan

Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther; there is no shad - ow of
Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest, sun, moon, and stars in their
Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth, thine own dear pres - ence to

turn - ing with thee. Thou chang - est not; thy com - pas - sions they fail not.
cours - es a - bove join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness,
cheer and to guide, strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row:

As thou hast been thou for - ev - er wilt be. Great is thy faith - ful - ness!
to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.
bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

Great is thy faith - ful - ness Morn - ing by morn - ing, new mer - cies I see. All I have

need - ed thy hand hath pro - vid - ed. Great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord un - to me!



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