

Don't Stop Believin'

Our Journey is Just Beginning



Chatham High School Baccalaureate

June 15, 2021 • 7:00 pm

What is a Baccalaureate Service?

A Baccalaureate Service is a chance for graduating seniors, parents, family, and friends to recognize, acknowledge, and celebrate, at this particular moment, God's presence in our lives. It is a chance to prayerfully reflect on the past four years and joyfully give thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us. Since there are many different religious traditions represented in the senior class, the CHS Baccalaureate is an Interfaith Service which incorporates prayers, sacred scripture, songs, symbols, and rituals from the traditions that are represented by the committee members.

The term "baccalaureate" is derived from two Latin words, *bacca*, or "berry," and *laureus*, "laurel," which might refer to the wreaths of laurel with which new graduates were crowned in European ceremonies of the medieval period. The Baccalaureate service has long been associated with the commencement exercises of schools in the United States.

How long has this been a tradition in the Chathams?

The tradition of a Baccalaureate Service began in the 1980's with a combined effort of Chatham Borough High School and the Chatham Interfaith Council (CIC). As the CIC grew and the Borough and Township merged high schools, this tradition continued. In the mid 1990's, when the Youth Interfaith Council (YIC) became more defined and organized, the service was then passed on to the YIC.

Who plans the service?

The YIC invites two graduating seniors from each faith community in the Chathams to serve on the planning committee. They then invite seniors from other faiths to join the team. The students are empowered to work together with faith leaders and members of the YIC to create a service each year that is unique and meaningful to them.

Our 2021 inspiration:

This year's theme is "***DON'T STOP BELIEVIN' - Our Journey is Just Beginning.***" As we emerge from a global pandemic and are on the verge of stepping into our futures, we found inspiration in the classic song by Journey. While acknowledging the sometimes monotonous and crushing nature of everyday life, the song injects a message of positivity and hope, and urges us to remember that we are each unique and special in our own ways, with the power to break free from what holds us down, to explore places we've never been. As we journey on, let's hold on to that feeling.



"Don't stop believing...
Doesn't matter how you call your God.
Be it Allah or Buddha or The Living.
In times of misery you can hold to the rod
Or any other helping thing—don't stop believing."

- Anna Osipova

PRELUDE *Don't Stop Believin'* Journey

WELCOME Lauren Clark
St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church

PRESENTATION OF THE BACCALAUREATE TEAM

CALL TO WORSHIP Lucas Reasons
Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township

One: We gather tonight giving thanks to God and with appreciation for the people who have believed in us.

All: God guides us on the journey of life.

One: We celebrate the graduates' accomplishments despite the many challenges they faced.

All: God guides us on the journey of life.

One: We look forward to continuing to follow God's path.

All: God guides us on the journey of life.

INVOCATION Anna Butler
Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township

REFLECTIONS ON THE CLASS OF 2021 Cate Gallagher
Class Vice President

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES —
ISAIAH 43:1-2 Kate Ziegler
Chatham United Methodist Church

CHORAL RESPONSE *You'll Never Walk Alone* Rogers and Hammerstein
Select Voices, pianist Evelyn Tomaro arr. Johnny Mann

READINGS FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES —
Matthew 14:22-31 Ava Voight
Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Kate Ziegler
Chatham United Methodist Church

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY Rev. Mary Davis
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Kaitlin Osucha,
Zachary Osucha
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

One: We pray for the Class of 2021. We pray that we will continue to find guidance, purpose, strength, and the ability to express our individuality in a unified world. May we have the wisdom and love to accept, understand, and sympathize with others. May we celebrate each other's differences as we go further into life. May we be open, kind, and loving to one another and stand together when we face obstacles in life. May we help others we see and lift them up when challenged. Lord in your goodness,

All: Hear our prayer.

One: We pray for Chatham. For the people in this community, for the opportunities this town has given us, and for the many places of worship that have guided us. May you give love and compassion to the people and families who have helped us through this high school and the COVID-19 pandemic. May you bless them as we graduate and move on from Chatham. May we pray for the lives lost during this pandemic as well as their families and friends. May the people of this town be inspired to come back to normalcy stronger than before, with new feelings of strength and connectedness. Lord in your goodness,

All: Hear our prayer.

One: We pray for the nations of the world and for those who lead them. We pray for the parts of the world still dealing with the current pandemic, as well as those facing conflict and danger. We pray that you can give them the power to continue on and become stronger and united. We pray for the leaders of the world, that they may govern fairly and consider all the people in their decisions. Lord in your goodness,

All: Hear our prayer.

One: We pray for all graduates; for everyone going on their own journeys. To have strength, love, and support to continue on in life. We pray that everyone has peace and joy moving forward on to their next adventures. Lord in your goodness,

**All: Hear our prayer.
Amen.**

READING

This Year is Yours
by Alfred Lord Tennyson

Bridget Eveleth
Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church

CHORAL BENEDICTION

The Lord Bless You and Keep You
Select Voices

Peter Lutkin

WE BELIEVE

CLOSING REMARKS

Ryan Gibbons
St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church

RECESSIONAL

*Unwritten
I'm a Believer*

Natasha Bedingfield
Smash Mouth

BACCALAUREATE COMMITTEE 2021

Kate Ziegler Chatham United Methodist Church
Ava Voight Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church
Bridget Eveleth.....Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church
Anna Butler Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Lucas Reasons..... Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Lauren Clark St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church
Ryan Gibbons St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church
Kaitlin Osucha St. Paul’s Episcopal Church
Zachary Osucha St. Paul’s Episcopal Church

YOUTH INTERFAITH COUNCIL (Advisors to Baccalaureate Team)

Karen Berry.....Chatham United Methodist Church
Haley HeibergerCorpus Christi Roman Catholic Church
Rev. Tom Brown Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Maggie GradySt. Patrick Roman Catholic Church

CLERGY & REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR FAITH COMMUNITIES

Rev. Jeff Markay Chatham United Methodist Church
Rev. Sharon Yarger.....Chatham United Methodist Church
Rev. T. Kevin CorcoranCorpus Christi Roman Catholic Church
Sr. Margaret Dincher S.C.C.....Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church
Rev. Dr. Christa Compton Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Rev. Tom Brown..... Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Rev. Dr. Ellen Clémot Presbyterian Church of Chatham Township
Fr. Bob MitchellSt. Patrick Roman Catholic Church
Mark Nixon, DeaconSt. Patrick Roman Catholic Church
Rev. Mary DavisSt. Paul’s Episcopal Church



Special thanks to ...

- Kenneth Bryson and the various Chatham High School Choirs
- Cate Gallagher for representing our class
- Rob Radler for his sound engineering skills
- All who helped guide traffic this evening
- The Chatham High School Administration and Board of Education for making possible the various celebrations of the class of 2021
- Our parents, families, teachers, friends, and mentors, and those who have believed in our journeys

with love,
The Class of 2021

*I am unwritten
Can't read my mind
I'm undefined
I'm just beginning
The pen's in my hand
Ending unplanned*

*Staring at the blank page before you
Open up the dirty window
Let the sun illuminate the words that you could not find*

*Reaching for something in the distance
So close you can almost taste it
Release your inhibitions
Feel the rain on your skin
No one else can feel it for you
Only you can let it in
No one else, no one else
Can speak the words on your lips
Drench yourself in words unspoken
Live your life with arms wide open
Today is where your book begins
The rest is still unwritten*

From the song by Natasha Bedingfield,