

## Graduate Recognition Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup> Class of 2024

Parents of 2024 Graduates,

The Spring semester is flying by, and Graduate Recognition Sunday will be here before you know it. We can't wait to celebrate this huge milestone in the life of your student as a church family. Please read the entire email so you are aware of some upcoming deadlines. Our purpose for this special day is:

- To pray over our students as a church family and commission them for Jesus' mission.
- To help parents use this "rite of passage" moment to intentionally bless their student by highlighting areas of past spiritual growth and challenging their student towards continued spiritual growth.

Last year we made some changes that are more aligned with our goal for Graduate Recognition, and we are continuing with these for 2024:

- We are asking parents to take time to write an intentional letter that will bless your student (instructions given below).
- Students **will not be** walking across the stage one at a time and wearing their cap & gown. We will show a video in church that honors our 2024 graduates for completing HS, but we want to use our time in a way that is distinctly different than their school graduation ceremony. At the 11:00 Modern Service, graduates will come on stage, and we will have a pastoral charge, and a prayer time commissioning them as a church family! We will reserve certain seats in the front middle section of Worship for students and their families. These changes are fully supported by our Senior and Executive Pastors.
- We want the luncheon to be a more intentional and encouraging time for both graduates and parents!

### Schedule for Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>

9:30 Traditional and Modern Services

11:00 Modern Service

\*The graduate recognition video will be shown in all 3 services, but the time of prayer and commissioning will take place in the 11:00 Modern Service.

12:00 Service Dismisses

\*RH Students Photo Banner in the Atrium for Family Photos

12:30 Group Photo of Graduates on Main Staircase (that leads upstairs)

12:45 Lunch in the Attic (sit together as a family)

2:00 Lunch Ends

## 4 Things to Do Before Graduate Recognition (Check Deadlines Below!!)

### 1) Pictures for Church Graduate Recognition

- Upload **ONE baby picture, and ONE senior picture by May 1<sup>st</sup> (at the latest)** for the Church-Wide Graduate Recognition video. This will be shown in all 3 services on May 19<sup>th</sup>. If we do not receive pictures by May 1<sup>st</sup>, your student will not be in the video.
- Select photos of the Graduate only. Close up pictures with plain backgrounds are best.
- Photos should be high quality (no Facebook photos please).
- Scan photos (JPEG) and upload them in the attached Dropbox folder. Save both photos with your student's name on them (the same name you want displayed on the screen). If you are having any issues with uploading them to Dropbox, then scan and email them to [angela@riverlandhills.org](mailto:angela@riverlandhills.org)
- Use this link to submit pictures - [Dropbox](#)

### 2) RSVP for Graduate Recognition Luncheon (12:45 in Attic)

- We would love for you and your immediate family to join us for our Graduate Recognition Luncheon in the Attic at 12:45 on May 19<sup>th</sup>. This is a time of fellowship and encouragement for students and their families. Space is limited so RSVP to [riverlandhills.org/graduation](http://riverlandhills.org/graduation) in order to participate.

### 3) Hand-Written Letter

- Take time to write a hand-written letter to your graduate that will intentionally bless them during this rite of passage moment.
- Keep this a secret from your student and give it to them at some point on Sunday evening after graduate recognition. This is a meaningful and personal letter from YOU as their parent, not from THE CHURCH.
- Here are some ideas for topics to include in your letter:
  - **Memories:** What are some specific memories you have shared with your graduate that bring you joy as a parent? What are some memories that made you laugh?
  - **Christian Character:** What specific Christ-like character traits you have seen them grow in?
  - **Significance of their Name:** What significance does their name have? Why did you name them \_\_\_\_\_ and how has their life been a reflection of their name?
  - **Accomplishments:** What are some specific accomplishments you can point out and celebrate, beyond celebrating the fact they graduated from HS!
  - **Prayers:** Which of your prayers has God answered in your student's life in the past? What prayers are you asking God to answer in their life for the future!
  - **Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> Year beyond High School:** As a parent, your job isn't "done" when your graduate completes high school. They still need parents who can help them process the challenges and joys of their new-found freedom and

independence. In your letter, write down specific and intentional ways you plan to walk alongside your student. This may be a weekend trip you want to take with them each semester, specific dates you want to visit with them and treat them to a nice dinner, or a weekly time where you can FaceTime them!  
**I'm convinced that students need BOTH routine rhythms of connection with you and special shared experiences to connect with you!**

**4) Gift**

- Give your graduate some sort of meaningful gift and explain why you gave it to them!