



***A Prayer of Thanksgiving***  
**Delivered by Dr. Susan Garrett**  
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**160<sup>th</sup> Commencement Exercises**  
**Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary**  
**May 18, 2014**



God we give you thanks for this day and for all that it represents:

We thank you for your providential leading of the men and women who are graduating from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary today. Long before they ever thought to go to Seminary, you were working in each of their lives: loving them, leading them, shaping and forming them through their varied experiences and through the people who nurtured and cared for them. You taught them to love you and love your way, and you inspired them to make the sacrifices that are necessary in order to dare something great. We thank you for your providential leading.

We thank you, God, for your grace, which has sustained these men and women throughout their Seminary study. God, you know that it has not been easy! There were times when they wondered why they had come, wondered whether their calling was real or imagined, wondered whether any service they might one day offer could possibly be worth the struggle and burden of the work required. Yet you also nurtured them in countless ways and strengthened them to continue on the path. The joy they experienced as they delved into their studies and recognized their own growing competence fostered their desire to learn even more, and to share the joy with others throughout their lives. Their bonds to one another; their bonds to faculty members, administrators, and other employees who cared about their thriving; their bonds to supportive people in their field placements and counseling settings; their bonds to family and loved ones who were looking on and cheering for them all helped them to keep the faith and carry on. Their experiences of your presence in worship and in moments of interpersonal grace were like sun and rain falling on dry ground. We thank you for your sustaining grace.

Finally, God, we thank you for the futures that lie ahead for each of these men and women whom you have claimed as your own. We thank you for the countless ways that they will serve as your hands and feet in the world. We thank you for the discerning judgment they will use as they lead congregations, non-profit agencies, and individuals facing trials of every kind. We thank you for the courage they will display as they persevere when they hit roadblocks or face criticism, and as they confront their own inner obstacles to growth and change. We thank you for the amazing ways they will work for justice, preach the word, and embody your healing love in a hurting world. We thank you, God, for their futures.

You are the God of yesterday, today, and forever and we are infinitely grateful to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.