

The background of the entire page is a dark blue color. A large, faint watermark of the Baker University seal is visible, centered behind the text. The seal features a central figure holding a book, surrounded by the text 'BAKER UNIVERSITY' and '1863'.

BAKER UNIVERSITY

# Spring Commencement

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UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

SUNDAY, THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF MAY  
THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-SIX  
ONE O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON  
THE GEORGE F. COLLINS, JR.  
SPORTS AND CONVENTION CENTER  
BALDWIN CITY, KANSAS

# Today's Commencement

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## THE ADDRESS



The Rev. Warren Thomas Swenson is an Episcopal priest of the Diocese of West Missouri and a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Chester. Earlier this year, he was appointed to a tenure-track position on the faculty of the School of Theology of the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, where he will begin teaching homiletics in the fall. A scholar of contextual theology and preaching, his work will appear in the forthcoming edition of *The Oxford Handbook of Christian Homiletics*.

No stranger to Sewanee, Warren is currently Associate Director of the School of Theology's SUMMA Theological Debate Program. He previously served as Visiting Instructor of Rhetoric in the College of Arts and Sciences as well as Principal Lecturer for the Catechumenate, the university chaplaincy's primary faith formation offering. Warren's ministry experience has been shaped primarily by small church and rural contexts, most notably through nearly six years of service with Southeast Tennessee Episcopal Ministry, a network of yoked congregations on and around the Cumberland Plateau.

Originally from Overland Park, Kansas, Warren holds Master of Divinity (2018) and Master of Sacred Theology (2020) degrees from the University of the South, as well as a Bachelor of Arts with majors in Communication Studies and Spanish from Baker University (2013). While at Baker, Warren served as President of the Student Senate, was active in the Speech Choir, and studied for a semester at the University of Seville. He is a proud member of Zeta Chi fraternity. After graduation, he worked for two years as a project coordinator and special assistant in the President's Office.

Most recently, Warren worked as a consultant on the Netflix original series *Big Mistakes*, created by Dan Levy and Rachel Sennott. He and his husband Walker live in Sewanee, in a 116-year-old farm cottage, which they recently restored.

# THE UNIVERSITY

In the mid-1850s, a group of Methodist ministers sought refuge from the brutality of a territory torn by economic and social disagreement. It was decided that such a retreat could only be found in the presence of education. A sanctuary of culture and civility was planned, but it was not until the Palmyra Association made a considerable donation of land that Baldwin City was selected as the location for Kansas' first university. Named for Osmon C. Baker, the first American bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Baker University was granted a charter by the territorial legislature on February 12, 1858.

Throughout its history, the university has produced educated contributors to all fields. Baker boasts four Rhodes Scholars, a Pulitzer Prize winner, and countless others who have made a lasting impact as explorers, clergymen, politicians, writers, and academics.

In the 168 years since its inception, Baker has evolved from a small university and preparatory school to a comprehensive university with four schools and degrees ranging from associate to doctorate. From the first graduating class of three in 1866, Baker now serves students across campuses in Kansas and online around the world. The College of Arts and Sciences offers undergraduate degrees in more than 40 areas of study on the Baldwin City campus. The School of Professional and Graduate Studies serves working adults with numerous online programs. At the School of Nursing, Baker partners with Stormont Vail Health in Topeka to offer bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing. The School of Education offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in Baldwin City and online.

## CLASS ORGANIZATIONS

Baker University's Class of 1891 began the tradition of naming itself and bequeathing its title to the incoming freshman class. Thus, each organization's name and traditions are passed on through generations. During any given year, four organizations are represented among the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes: Columbian Commonwealth, Senatus Romanus, King Arthur's Court, and House of Hanover. The Class of 2026 is part of King Arthur's Court. When the Class of 2030 enters Baker in the fall, it will assume the traditions of King Arthur's Court.

## DESIGNATION OF SCHOLASTIC HONORS

These designations are applicable to baccalaureate degrees:

Summa Cum Laude – With Highest Honors

Magna Cum Laude – With High Honors

Cum Laude – With Honors



# THE ACADEMIC REGALIA

The pageantry and dress of the academic procession have been inherited from the medieval universities of the eleventh and twelfth centuries where academic life began, first in the Church, then in the guilds. Principal features of academic dress are the gown, the cap, and the hood.

The bachelor's gown has pointed sleeves. Sleeves of the master's degree gown are long and closed with a slit at the wrist. Doctoral gowns have full bell sleeves with three velvet chevrons across them and are faced with velvet. University presidents usually wear academic regalia that represents the school.

The colors of the hood generally represent the school and discipline. Traditional colors associated with disciplines are Maize, Agriculture; White, Arts, Letters, and Humanities; Drab, Accounting and Business; Copper, Economics; Light Blue, Education; Orange, Engineering; Brown, Fine Arts; Russet, Forestry; Crimson, Journalism; Purple, Law; Lemon, Library Science; Green, Medicine; Pink, Music; Apricot, Nursing; Silver Gray, Speech; Dark Blue, Philosophy; Sage Green, Physical Education; Golden Yellow, Science; Citron, Social Work; Scarlet, Theology.

# THE UNIVERSITY SYMBOLS

In 168 years, Baker has developed many rich traditions. Along with these traditions came a series of symbols holding special meaning to the university and its rituals.

The Presidential Medallion was first worn on April 22, 1967, by Baker President James E. Doty for his inauguration. A gift from Doty's alma mater, Mount Union College in Ohio, the sterling silver and gold medallion is worn by university presidents during ceremonial events, such as commencement and convocation, to signify the official authority and responsibility of the president.

The Baker University mace symbolizes the power and authority of learning. Commissioned for the 1974 inauguration of Baker's 24th president, Jerald C. Walker, Walt Bailey, emeritus faculty member whose career at Baker spanned 42 years as a professor of art, created the mace from remnants of Baker's Centenary Hall and historic Parmenter Hall. Bearing the name of Baker's 31 presidents, the mace is carried in the procession of official university ceremonies by the Grand Marshal. The traditional symbol was derived from a battle instrument of the knights in the Middle Ages.

# FLAGS

The flags represent the countries of origin of our graduating students and faculty. This year we have flags representing Antigua and Barbuda, Cameroon, Colombia, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, South Korea, and the United Kingdom.



# KOPKE AWARD

The Jennie Howell Kopke and Verda R. Kopke Award for Distinguished Teaching recognizes annually a Baker faculty member who has a record of excellence in teaching and in transforming students into scholars, who brings honor to the university, and who exhibits good moral character.

# JABARA LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Jabara Leadership Award recognizes one graduating male and one graduating female student who demonstrate leadership, academic excellence, departmental involvement, and career potential while completing their degree at Baker.

# THE ALMA MATER

TO THE ORANGE

by Warren Shepard

arr. by Roger Kugler

**Andante**

To dear old Ba-ker un - to thee our grate - ful song we sing. In  
6 tri - umph sound through out the land loud let thy prais - es ring. Our Al - ma Ma - ter  
11 will \_\_\_\_\_ reign a - cross the vast fair Kan - sas plain. Hearts  
14 to the Orange for e - ver true. We're child - ren of old Ba - ker U

# THE PROGRAM

This program lists degree recipients together with candidates who plan to complete requirements in the near future. It is not an official list of graduates.

*Exit procedure: In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and move to the exits in an orderly fashion. There are three exits from the building, including the main entrance on the west side of the gymnasium, the exit behind the stage, and the exit in the hallway on the south side of the gymnasium. Please move quietly and quickly to the nearest exit.*

*Thank you.*

# Order of the Ceremonies

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*Processional .....	Kansas City St. Andrew Pipes and Drums <i>Color Guard provided by the Baldwin City Boy Scouts, Troop #65</i>
*National Anthem .....	Ms. Ramie Nation University Registrar and Advisor to the President for Accreditation
*Invocation .....	The Reverend Blake Stanwood, University Minister Class of 2012
Welcome and Introductions .....	Jody S. Fournier, PhD 31st President of Baker University
Senior Class President Address .....	Julie Coffey Class of 2026
Commencement Address .....	The Reverend Warren Thomas Swenson, Class of 2013
Authorization to Confer Degrees and Bestow University Honors and Recognition .....	Mr. John Thomson Chairman of the Board of Trustees Class of 1995
Presentation of University Recognition  Jennie Howell Kopke and Verda R. Kopke Award for Distinguished Teaching .....	Dr. Tina R. Hartley Executive Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and School of Education
2026 Outstanding Senior Awards .....	Dr. Robyn Long Professor of Psychology
Professor Fran Jabara Leadership Awards .....	Dr. Judy Smrha Professor and Chair of Business and Economics
Presentation of Candidates .....	Dr. Hartley
Conferral of Degrees .....	President Fournier

Presentation of Diplomas . . . . . Dr. Hartley  
Assisted by . . . . . Ms. Nation  
Readers . . . . . Dr. Joe Watson, Professor of Mass Media  
Dr. Christian Gomez, Assistant Professor of Biology  
President’s Charge . . . . . President Fournier  
\*The Alma Mater . . . . . Led by Baker Concert Choir Singers  
\*Benediction . . . . . The Reverend Stanwood  
\*\*Recessional . . . . . Kansas City St. Andrew Pipes and Drums

**The University Marshals**

Head Marshal: Dr. Sara Crump  
Assistant Marshals: Dr. Robyn Long,  
Professor John Richards, Dr. Charlise Prosser

**\*All who are able will stand.**  
**\*\*Please remain standing until  
the recessional is completed.**

*College of Arts and Sciences*  
*and*  
*School of Education*

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CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

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SUMMA CUM LAUDE

ELEANOR BARNARD  
MAGNA CUM LAUDE

MAJAYLA SIMONE BOYD

KAMERON JUNE BURNAM  
MAGNA CUM LAUDE

DARCY OLIVIA CATO  
MAGNA CUM LAUDE

BEAUX COLEMAN  
CUM LAUDE

LUKE MONTGOMERY COOPER

COLIN J. CRISSLER

TARYN DIAL  
SUMMA CUM LAUDE

ELIJAH ESLINGER  
CUM LAUDE

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KAMERON GLASPER

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CUM LAUDE

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SIDNEY C. CLAEYS  
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ZANE MICHAEL CLARK

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1858

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