

## Graduation May 2018

Takes place May 4-6

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(Photo by Jessica Condon, IMC student photographer)

By: Gillian Sanner, media communications manager, IMC

Andrews University's spring graduation will take place May 4–6, 2018. The weekend's central events begin Friday evening with the Consecration service, continue Saturday morning with Baccalaureate services and conclude Sunday with Commencement services. All services will take place at Pioneer Memorial Church unless otherwise noted. Overflow seating for Baccalaureate services is available in the Pioneer Memorial Church Youth Chapel and the Seminary Chapel; overflow seating for Commencement services is available in the Pioneer Memorial Church Youth Chapel. Please note that in order to provide more seating for families of graduates, Commencement is held in three separate services by school/college and is by reserved seating only.

Additional academic and cultural programs are planned for Friday and Saturday. Consult the online schedule for a complete listing at [andrews.edu/graduation](http://andrews.edu/graduation).

A. Rahel Wells, assistant professor of Hebrew Bible, will present the Consecration address, "The Choice of Joy," on Friday, May 4, at 8 p.m.

Wells is passionate about God's word and God's world. She has completed graduate degrees in religion and biology and earned her PhD at Wheaton College. It is her great honor and joy to inspire her students to discover the beauty and depth of biblical truth for themselves. She is married to the love of her life, Bill Wells, and they enjoy engaging in church ministries together, as well as backpacking and climbing mountains.

On Saturday, May 5, Calvin B. Rock, retired general vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and honorary degree candidate, will offer the Baccalaureate address for both the 9 a.m. (graduate) and 11:45 a.m. (undergraduate) services. His presentation is titled "Eternal Morn."

After receiving his BA in religion from Oakwood College, Rock obtained an MA in sociology from the University of Detroit and a DMin and PhD from Vanderbilt University, both in religious ethics. In his 63 years of active ministry, Rock has pastored; lectured extensively about the topics of diversity, leadership and pastoral ethics; and conducted major evangelistic campaigns internationally. Rock served for 14 years as the president of Oakwood College, now Oakwood University, then was elected to serve at the GC. In 1994, he began chairing the board of Operation ReachBack, Inc: The Association of Black Seventh-day Adventist Professionals. Rock has also written nine books, numerous studies and a variety of magazine articles.

A vespers program will take place in Pioneer Memorial Church at 8:30 p.m. on May 5. Immediately following vespers, there will be a President's Reception for graduating students and their parents in the Great Lakes Room of the Campus Center.

On Sunday, May 6, Dr. Vonda Douglas-Nikitin, member of the Andrews Board of Trustees, will be the speaker for the 8:30 a.m. Commencement service for graduates of the School of Education and the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Her address is titled "The Time Is Now."

Douglas-Nikitin is a pathologist with a specialization in hematology. Currently, she is the medical director of the Flow Cytometry Laboratory for the Beaumont Health System in Royal Oak, Michigan, program director for the Hematopathology Fellowship at Beaumont Hospital and associate professor of pathology at the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, where she has also served as the assistant dean for diversity and inclusion. She is active in research, having a number of presentations and manuscripts, and has an active interest in health and wellness education. Douglas-Nikitin has served as the health and temperance leader at multiple churches and worked with the community. One of her greatest passions is mentoring youth, and she has spoken at various career seminars, workshops and universities.

G. Thor Thordarson, executive vice president and chief operating officer of AMITA Health, will speak for the 11 a.m. Commencement service on Sunday, May 6. His address is titled "Ultima Thule." This service is for students graduating from the College of Arts & Sciences.

Thordarson received a BS in nursing from Andrews University in 1985 and earned an MBA from Kent State University in 1991. In his role at AMITA Health, a joint operating company of Ascension Health and Adventist Health System in the Chicago area with a mission of extending

the healing ministry of Jesus, Thordarson is operationally responsible for 16 acute care hospitals and three specialty hospitals. Thor lives in Wheaton, Illinois, with his wife of 35 years, Lori Ann (Kendall) Thordarson. They have three grown children and two grandchildren with one more on the way. Thordarson's personal interests include barefoot waterskiing, triathlons, mountain and road cycling, obstacle racing, hiking and backpacking. He is an instrument rated private pilot.

Honorary degree candidate Wilce L. Cooke, former mayor of the City of Benton Harbor and 50-year healthcare professional, will be honored at this service. In 1968, when Cooke began working at Mercy Center, which later became Lakeland Health, he was the only male nurse in Southwest Michigan. Since 1977, Cooke has been actively involved in the political, public and civic life of his local community and beyond, including service as mayor of Benton Harbor from 1981 to 1987 and 2004 to 2011. In 2013, he founded the Wilce L. Cooke Foundation as a way to provide healthcare scholarships to Benton Harbor area residents and enhance healthcare education and health and wellness outreach in Benton Harbor and Southwest Michigan.

Lars G. Gustavsson, international development administrator, managing partner and associate of the 4th Sector Futures Group and honorary degree candidate, will present his address, "Equipped," for the May 6 Commencement service at 2 p.m. This service is for students graduating from the School of Architecture & Interior Design, School of Business Administration, School of Distance Education & International Partnerships and School of Health Professions.

Gustavsson has spent most of his professional life working in the arena of overseas development assistance. In 1998, Gustavsson began approximately 18 years of service with World Vision International. His most recent role was chief futurist and partner in the Global Office for Strategy, Collaboration and Innovation based in London, UK. Prior to this role, he held other senior management positions. Gustavsson also served with ADRA for 12 years, helping to develop, design and/or provide management support for community development and emergency relief programs in 15 lesser-developed countries. Gustavsson was the principal architect and fundraiser of the master's degree for international development, a joint effort between ADRA International and Andrews University.

Select graduation services will be livestreamed. For details, visit [andrews.edu/graduation](http://andrews.edu/graduation).