1. **Students graduating from high school move on to many different opportunities in this next phase of their life.** Many, but not all, students graduating high school go on to college or university. Don't overlook your high school graduates going on to military service, vocational or technical colleges, or those entering directly into the workforce. It's not just college students who will face questions and doubts about their Christian faith as they continue to mature. Consider ways that your congregation can help and support all graduates to grow spiritually as they begin the next chapter of their lives.
2. **Help graduating students enrolling in colleges, universities, or vocational schools connect to their campus ministry or a local LCMS congregation.** As much as you are able, share a student's contact information with the local campus ministry or the local LCMS pastor.
A list of LCMS campus ministries can be found on the Synod's website: https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/national/campus-ministry. Locate a local LCMS congregation and notify the pastor that you have a member of your congregation attending school in the area. The sooner you are able to do this, the better. It is hard for local LCMS pastors, and even campus ministries, to connect with new students during those first few weeks on campus because they are busy with orientation, campus events, and the rush of starting college life.
3. **Encourage graduating students that it's okay to get a taste of home once in a while.** Because of the COVID-19 pandemic most congregations have found ways to either livestream their worship services or put them online for later viewing. Remind your graduates that they can view your worship services online. While ideally the graduate will connect with a local LCMS congregation or campus ministry, participating in their home congregation's worship services may be a way for a graduate to alleviate feelings of homesickness.
4. **Develop and share a list of podcasts for graduates to listen to.** In addition to worship services, a great way for young people to continue to learn and grow in their Christian faith is by listening to instruction and conversations from faithful Christian teachers. Put together a list of podcasts for young people to listen to at their convenience.
If your congregation has a unique way of supporting your high school graduates after graduation, share it with us and we'll include it in an upcoming District E-Newsletter.