



NORTHFIELD MOUNT HERMON  
*Baccalaureate Service*

— Saturday, May 23, 2026, 5 pm —  
Memorial Chapel

NORTHFIELD MOUNT HERMON  
*Baccalaureate*

*Order of Program*



FANFARE AND PROCESSIONAL	“Pomp and Circumstance,” Op. 39, No. 1 Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934) Arranged by James D. Ployhar (1926–2007)
WORDS OF WELCOME	The Rev. Lee-Ellen Strawn P’21, ’23, ’26, NMH Chaplain
CLASS OF 2026 HYMN	“Let Freedom Span Both East and West”
REFLECTION	Richard P. Messer P’06, ’13, ’16
SPECIAL MUSIC	Allen Chen ’26 performing “This Is What Autumn Feels Like” by JVKE, arranged by Won Da-hee
CLASS OF 2026 VALEDICTORY ADDRESS	Yuhan Emily Sun
SCHOOL SONG	“Jerusalem”
HONORING OF RETIREES	Brian H. Hargrove, Head of School
SEND-OFF BLESSING	The Rev. Lee-Ellen Strawn
SUNG BENEDICTION	“The Northfield Benediction”
RECESSIONAL	Matthew D. McClure, Accompanist

*Please turn off cellphones  
during the ceremony.*

CLASS OF 2026 HYMN  
“Let Freedom Span Both East and West”  
African American Spiritual

Text by Jacob Trapp (1899-1992)  
Matthew D. McClure, Organist

Singing led by Aurora Song '26  
*The audience is invited to stand and sing.*

Let freedom span both east and west,  
and love both south and north,  
in universal fellowship  
throughout the whole wide earth.

In beauty, wonder, everywhere,  
let us communion find;  
compassion be the golden cord  
close-binding humankind.

Beyond all barriers of race,  
of color, caste, or creed,  
let us make friendship, human worth,  
our common faith and deed.

Then east and west will meet and share,  
and south shall build with north,  
one human commonwealth of good  
throughout the whole wide earth.



SCHOOL SONG  
“Jerusalem”

C. Hubert Parry (1848-1918)  
Text by William Blake (1757-1827)

Singing led by Talia Baron '26 and Isabel Hunt '26

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?  
And did the countenance divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!  
I will not cease from mental fight;  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In ev'ry green and pleasant land.



THE NORTHFIELD BENEDICTION

Lucy Rider Meyer (1849-1922)

Singing led by Alexandra A. Ludwig, Director of Choral Programs

The Lord bless thee and keep thee.  
The Lord make his face shine upon thee,  
And be gracious unto thee,  
And be gracious unto thee.

The Lord lift up her countenance,  
Their countenance upon thee,  
And give thee peace,  
And give thee peace.



## RETIREE | ROBERTO IRURUETA

Roberto Irurueta is the heart of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, a colleague whose warmth and profound care for student access and well-being have shaped our community. Roberto first arrived at NMH in 2003 as a supporting spouse to Bea Garcia, along with their three children, ready for a new opportunity and strong beginnings. Before coming to the United States, Roberto led labor revolutions in Uruguay, where he was a powerful presence. This history of activism speaks to his lifelong dedication to equity and his commitment to uplifting his community.

Roberto's journey at NMH transitioned through many faculty roles. He began as a temporary member of the World Languages Department before becoming a full-time Spanish teacher in 2010. Whether coaching girls' thirds soccer, teaching Diversity and Social Justice and Spanish for adults, or leading the study abroad program to Uruguay, Roberto's presence has been felt across campus. Outside of those roles, Roberto has been a mentor to many; in fact, the majority of faculty currently at NMH were interviewed by him. From that first meeting, his dedication to diversity and a true sense of belonging was always clear.

For Roberto, family always comes first, extending far beyond blood to include his chosen family. He is the person who will be there for you no matter what, prioritizing true connection over simple greetings. He is quick to jump on the grill for a visitor or offer a warm hug, always making time to ensure you are OK and getting what you need.

In our residential community, Roberto served as the dorm head of North Farmhouse and is currently the dorm head and an advisor in Oaknoll. In the OMA space, where he is often affectionately referred to as the "Blake dad," he has supported many with his compassionate guidance. Even in his final year, he most notably led the reintroduction of the International Carnival. Roberto cares deeply about bringing back the culture and the intentional gathering of community and ensuring belonging for our international students.

We will miss the man who is famously the most talkative person in the room, the one who finds joy in long walks with his dog, Mambo; sipping maté in his office while talking about life; and Facetiming with his grandson, Matías. Roberto cares so much for people, and his departure is a loss to our office. As he begins his retirement, we are grateful he will remain close by, and we look forward to seeing him around campus. Thank you, Roberto, for the immense heart you have shared with us all.

— Mercedes Garcia, Office of Multicultural Affairs



## RETIREE | KAREN JODOIN

Few people arrive at their life's work already knowing it's theirs. Karen is one of the rare few, and that's part of what makes her story so compelling. While most of her peers were still figuring things out, she already knew in high school that she wanted to teach and coach. She pursued a biology degree with a clear-eyed focus: not depth for its own sake, but the breadth that would make her a better teacher. It was a philosophy she would carry with her for the next four decades.

Her career began in 1986 at Stoneleigh-Burnham School, where she hit the ground running, teaching chemistry and geometry, living in the dorm, and coaching both basketball and softball. She still laughs about the basketball team that would leave the court in their uniforms and head straight to the smoking area. After four years, she pursued a master's degree in biology at the University of New Hampshire, as one of the inaugural students in that program.

After graduate school, Karen headed to Thayer Academy, where she taught biology, honors biology, and anatomy and physiology; the last of which she agreed to teach having never taken a single class in it and learning alongside her students as she went. She later spent a sabbatical year working on developing Thayer's integrated science curriculum. For 20 of those years, Karen was also the head coach of girls' varsity basketball.

After her sons, Matthew and Jack, graduated from Thayer, Karen made the move west to the Connecticut River Valley, where her wife, Betsy, was already teaching in the Amherst public schools. She spent a year doing fill-in work: librarian, long-term sub at Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School. It didn't take long to realize how much she missed real teaching. After searching for jobs at local schools, she found at NMH exactly the teaching and advising role she wanted. She has spent three meaningful years here, and we are glad she found us.

In retirement, Karen and Betsy, who is also retiring, look forward to, above all else, flexibility: mornings without a schedule, days shaped by weather and whim. She'll be exploring the Berkshires with her dog, Maggie, hiking, and hoping to try out a fat-tire bike. She wants to learn to knit, so that she can do that while watching the birds, and plans to read purely for pleasure. A Paris sisters' trip with her three sisters is already in the works for January.

The NMH Science Department will miss Karen's years of expertise, her desire to be the best teacher she can be, and her delicious brownies. We wish you all the best with your newfound freedom!

— Katie Simpson, Science Department

