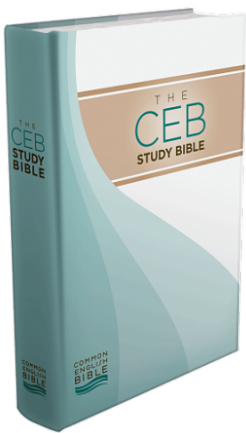


“You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.”
Psalm 139:2-3

Sending Off Seniors

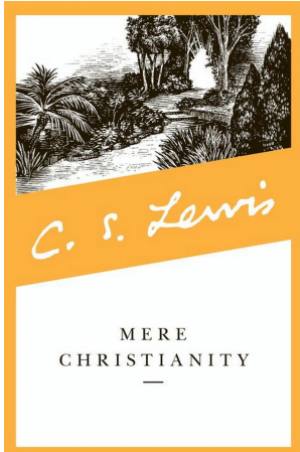
One of the great joys of congregational life is watching children grow up in and through the church. When these young people graduate high school, the church has a special role to play in honoring and sending them off. Whether students are headed to college, the military, service work, or the working world, many churches mark the occasion by giving gifts. Here are some ideas to consider:

Books



[A Study Bible](#)

Hopefully, teens already have a Bible, but it is important to have an updated study Bible with notes and cross references. There are many good options in a variety of translations. Check out [Cokesbury](#) to browse.



[Mere Christianity](#)

A classic since 1952. As a whole, there may be no book that so clearly and winsomely outlines belief in Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. (Recent edition by Harper Collins, 2001)



[Daily Prayer for all Seasons](#)

This book was written for an Episcopal context, but many Christians will find the prayers and liturgies helpful and inspiring. Daily volume offers short daily prayer services that change for each season: Advent, Epiphany, etc. Excellent for individual use, or for small groups and Bible studies. (Church Publishing, 2014)

Non-Book Gift Ideas

Realizing that graduating seniors have plenty of books coming their way, here are some other options.

Gift Card for Faith-based Apps

One of the best ideas is a gift certificate to iTunes or Amazon (for Android users), along with a list of four or five suggested apps. Let the students decide if they want a Bible app, a study app, a spirituality app. [See suggested apps on Building Faith.](#)

“Survival” Kit

A waterbottle filled with “rescue” items: flashlight, thermometer, band-aids, and other minor items newly independent young people might need. Include a prayer book, set of prayers, Scripture verses, or card!

Thinking Outside the Box

In addition one of the above gifts ideas, the following actions can bear much fruit for graduating seniors as their faith lives develop.

Chaplain Intro

Do some searching and make a direct connection with a campus chaplain, military chaplain, or congregation in whatever place the student is going next.

Promised Contact Card

One Christian educator offered the following idea: “I give each graduating a card with my phone number on it and a written promise that they can call me any time for any reason.”

Selected Scripture Passages

In difficult moments, young people can lean on Bible verses or prayers. You can write these on cards. Or, if you gift a bible, use post-its or bookmarks to mark passages that will provide guidance, comfort, and strength.