

Go From Here and Be a Blessing, by Daniel H. Kuhn, Jr. 02050605
Genesis 12:1-9 and Matthew 9:9-13
Elon Community Church, United Church of Christ, 5 June, 2005

It will not be long before some of our youth leave their parents' houses and go off to college or to a career. On this Sunday when we honor our confirmands and graduates, I have a few brief remarks I would like to make to you and your families.

Life is always a process of welcoming and saying goodbye. The better we can learn to say "hello" and "goodbye," the more pleasant we can make the life in between. I remember the day our daughter first stepped up onto that big yellow school bus that took her to kindergarten. That was a first goodbye, preparing Sue and me for the day she went off to college. We watched her grow and mature through the years. We did our best to teach her, and then we all had to live with the consequences.

You heard the Old Testament reading this morning about Abraham who left his father and mother's house in Haran. The Bible says it was because God told him to leave. That may be. He also may have left because he had had it with his father and mother. Maybe they had a disagreement about how to run the family business.

Abraham went towards a new land: one he had not seen before. Imagine his parents' feelings of loss. Imagine his own feelings of fear and excitement. Abraham had faith in God, and took his God with him. Take God with you wherever you go.

There will be times when you doubt God, or when God won't seem real, or do what you think God ought to do. Take God with you anyway, because God is with you anyways. Take God's teachings with you.

God told Abraham to be a blessing to the world. I ask you to be a blessing to the world. You are God's gift to the world: you were ours only for a short time. Your parents held you in trust for God. How will you use your leadership skills? I pray you will use them to make this a better world: a kinder gentler more loving and caring world.

What does it mean to be a blessing in the world? I hope you will be a peacemaker. I hope you will stand for justice. I hope you will always show care and concern for your friends and for the ones you see as loners.

You have grown. Continue to grow. We and your parents will always be close by: Search your heart and your memories, and you will find us there. You will know what we would say in each situation you face. You know what Jesus would say in each situation in life.

Go from here and be a blessing to the world. Your parents and we love you.