

Graduation Date and Schedules

a. Graduation Rehearsal

Date: Friday, May 15, 2026

Where: The Chattanooga Convention Center

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

What happens: We will run through the entire ceremony, provide overall details, etc. Graduates will pick up caps and gowns. Display boards can be set up after rehearsal.

b. Graduation Details

Date: Saturday May 16, 2026

Where: The Chattanooga Convention Center

Time:

- 11:00 AM- Graduates can arrive for individual or family pictures.
- 12:00 PM- All graduates to be onsite.
- 12:15 PM - Cap and gown inspection.
- 12:20 PM - Group photo outside with the graduating class (optional).
- 12:40 PM - Line up in the church foyer.
- 1:00 PM - Processional starts.
- 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Ceremony.
- 3:00 PM - Group cap toss (optional).
- 3:00 PM- Reception

- c. You must monitor the CSTHEA Facebook group, your email, and the CSTHEA website (csthea.org) for any emergency announcements of a change in location, decorating times, or any other changes or updates.

d. **Fees**

- i. \$200 for CSTHEA members. Must be a CSTHEA member by December 31 of the current school year.
 1. To inquire about CSTHEA membership status, email membership@csthea.org
- ii. \$250 for Non-CSTHEA members. (Non-CSTHEA Members may join by December 31, 2025 to receive the Member Discount)
- iii. The fee you pay contributes towards the expenses incurred by CSTHEA.
- iv. Expenses frequently EXCEED graduation fees received. CSTHEA covers any deficit.

- v. Expenses include: diploma, cap, gown, tassel, decorations, reception refreshments, facility fees, speaker's honorarium, graduation programs, roses, etc.
- vi. If you have two or more students in your family graduating at the same time, send an email to graduation@csthea.org to discuss the fee.
- vii. No refunds will be made except at our sole discretion. We will take into consideration the circumstances surrounding any request for a refund.
- viii. CSTHEA does not provide invitations, each graduate family is responsible for their own.

2. General Graduation Information

- a. We believe & expect that each participant will honor & follow the rules & guidelines for the graduation.
- b. CSTHEA is a Christian organization. The graduation will include prayers and hymns in praise of & honoring Jesus Christ.
- c. Everyone must behave in a respectful manner. We would like to be able to use the facilities again. We don't want anyone to do anything that might offend the church staff or its members.
- d. Please make sure family and/or friends with young children are aware that they are responsible for removing them from the auditorium should they start crying or become disruptive.
- e. Do not throw your cap inside the church as it may hit expensive & dangerous lights overhead or people sitting nearby. We will attempt to have a "cap toss" outside (weather permitting).
- f. Mr. Steve Duggins will be in charge of & direct the "cap toss". He will provide instructions at the rehearsal.
- g. Only the name of the graduate and his/her parents or guardian(s) will be read from the podium.
- h. The graduate typically walks the aisle with parent(s) or guardian(s) from the foyer to the front.
- i. **Volunteers**

- i. We need volunteers to make the graduation a success!
- ii. This is a cooperative effort between you the parents & unpaid volunteers who can't & don't promise perfection.
- iii. Each graduate must provide at least one volunteer. Indicate on your registration where you prefer to volunteer, e.g, the homeschool banquet, graduation reception, graduation planning/preparation, etc.

j. Diplomas

- i. The Diploma is a memento of the event and not an actual or official Diploma.
- ii. CSTHEA makes no assertions, representations, or claims about the education, knowledge, or ability of the "graduate".
- iii. On the diploma line under the words "has completed the Course of Study prescribed for Graduation by", do not enter the name of any city, county, state, or any government entity or agency, including your umbrella school.
- iv. You may put the name you gave to your family's homeschool.
- v. You must fill out the Sample diploma exactly as you want the information to appear in the diploma & the program.

k. Graduate Profiles

- i. We do not want to have to edit the profiles, so please review the samples posted to the CSTHEA.org website.
- ii. Biographical sketch not to exceed 200 Words in Length.
- iii. Your profiles are due by April 15. Enter the profile using the google form found [here](#). Profile arriving late will incur a \$25 Late fee.

l. Graduate Performers

- i. Those who want to sing, speak, or play an instrument during the graduation ceremony must fill out the form on the graduation page of the website by March 1.
- ii. The email should be sent to graduation@csthea.org, and should contain the subject line "Graduation Performance".

- iii. The email should contain:
 - 1. Type of Performance – Instrumental (piano, violin, etc) or vocal (singing).
 - 2. Number of individuals & name of each Individual performing.
 - 3. Name of musical piece, name of composer, name & instrument of accompanist, if applicable.
 - 4. We may request references who have observed you perform, with their phone numbers & email addresses.

m. Graduate Speakers

- i. For those wanting to speak, send an email with the subject line: “Graduation Speech”.
- ii. The email should be sent to graduation@csthea.org, and contain the following details:
 - 1. List your extracurricular activities for your high school years.
 - 2. List your awards & honors for your high school years.
 - 3. List your most notable public speaking experiences for your high school years.
 - 4. Include an outline of your speech.
 - 5. Those chosen to speak or perform are limited to 5 minutes.
 - 6. Deadline for receipt of the proposed graduation speech is March 1.

3. Homeschool Banquet

Due to a lack of interest in the banquet, there will not be one this year. Please take this time to celebrate with your families.

4. General Graduation Rules

- a. Everyone must behave in a respectful manner. Anyone who becomes disruptive is subject to being removed from the premises.
- b. The graduate and a parent or legal guardian must attend the rehearsal on Thursday.
- c. Graduates must pick up their cap, gown & tassel at the rehearsal on Thursday.
- d. We are not responsible for any items not picked up at the rehearsal or left at the church after the rehearsal.

e. Attire and Appearance

- i. Semi-formal dress attire and modest overall appearance is required for the graduates.
- ii. **BOYS**
 - 1. Dress shirt with collar – solid white or blue, long or short-sleeved.
 - 2. Dress pants – solid khaki, navy, black, or gray
 - 3. Dress shoes – solid dark color (closed-toe only with matching dark laces, dress boots are also okay).
 - 4. Dress socks – black, navy, gray, or dark brown.
 - 5. Dress tie optional – conservative ties only.
 - 6. No Sandals.
- iii. **GIRLS**
 - 1. Dress – No longer than gown and of modest length.
 - 2. No low-cut front, no bare or exposed midriffs, no backless or strapless dresses
 - 3. Dress slacks – dark colored (blue, black, gray, or brown)
 - 4. No sports sandals
- iv. **GENERAL**
 - 1. No shorts.
 - 2. No work boots, hiking boots, tennis shoes, sneakers, sport sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet.
 - 3. No wild hair colors or comical or ostentatious hair styles (mohawks, etc.)
 - 4. No visible body piercings (nose or eyebrow rings, etc; except pierced earrings for girls only).
 - 5. No visible tattoos.
 - 6. No sunglasses.
 - 7. No comical or ostentatious attire of any sort.

8. Graduates are not permitted to change, modify, or add to their cap, gown, or tassel in any way. Those who do so may not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony.
9. Anyone whose appearance is deemed inappropriate will not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony, will forfeit all their fees, and may be escorted from the premises if necessary.