

Superintendent Dow's 75th Anniversary Address to the Rosslyn Community at the PTF International Day (February 25, 2022)

Today is the official kick-off of Rosslyn Academy's 75th-year anniversary. You will have likely seen the banners in the school parking area commemorating this year, with a logo designed by one of our Seniors, Ha Eun Yoon. That beautiful logo highlights our theme for this year-long celebration - Faithful Foundation Forever.

As we kick off this year of reflection, I would like to make a few remarks about that theme and the 75 years we are celebrating.

I want to start with the word Foundation. The image of a firm foundation is used throughout Scripture. In the book of Matthew, Jesus famously said, *"everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."*

The imagery of a foundation implies a deeply-rooted and solid basis upon which something good, significant and lasting can be built. A trustworthy foundation allows the inhabitants of the house to flourish regardless of external circumstances.

The foundation of Rosslyn is its Christian beliefs and values. That foundation was carefully established when the school began in 1947 and has been central to Rosslyn's remarkable development over the last 75 years.

I have often wondered how the school's founders would react if they could be transported forward in time to the Rosslyn of 2022.

- I think they would reflect on our current mission statement and statement of faith with a deep sense of satisfaction. They would see that the foundation that they established remains firmly in place but has been built upon in ways that extend far beyond what they could have imagined.
- I think they would look at the international diversity of our student body with tremendous joy.
- I think that they would walk through this beautiful campus amazed at what the humble work of their hands has ultimately produced.
- And I think they would be absolutely stunned by the global impact that our alumni are having.

But I think that the main reason for their joy would be the consistency that they would find between the school's original aims and its current reality. That consistency is highlighted in the first word of our 75-year theme - Faithful. The word faithful was chosen carefully. It implies integrity of purpose and mission, consistency between what is said and what is done, and an ongoing commitment to the beliefs and values of our founders. No human organization can fully live up to its ideals but the fact that our mission, beliefs, and values remain essentially unchanged after 75 years speaks to the integrity of those who have come before us.

The third word that makes up our theme is "Forever". Faithful Foundation Forever. In a recent talk to our staff, I put a question mark after the word Forever. I did this for a couple of reasons. First, we can do our part, but the reality is that none of us are able to control the future. Second, and this was the point I was really trying to make, an organization's mission is only as solid as the current generation's commitment to that mission.

We often say that there are no 2nd generation Christians. Faith is a personal decision. It is not a commitment that can be made by our parents or grandparents. And it is not a commitment we can make on behalf of our children. It must be chosen and renewed by each generation.

In Joshua 24, the nation of Israel is at a crossroads in its history, and Joshua puts a challenge to the next generation. He famously said, "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

In the same way, Rosslyn's faithful foundation, which was so carefully built, and that has produced such incredible fruit over the last 75 years, needs to be reaffirmed and recommitted to in each generation. This year-long celebration is both a chance to reflect on God's goodness over our first 75 years and an opportunity for us as a community to reaffirm the school's educational mission.

And as we recommit ourselves to that mission, I believe that the next 75 years will be even better than the first. In truth, I believe we are only starting to see the long-term impact that Rosslyn Academy is going to have on our world.

This year is about looking back with gratitude, but it is also an opportunity for us to look forward to what God has in store for Rosslyn's future. As we look ahead it is my

great pleasure to introduce to you (via video) our next Superintendent, Dr. Jon Hill, who will be joining us in July from the International School of Beijing.