President Ainlay, Chairman Walsh, Trustees, faculty, staff, students and guests,

I am pleased to welcome you today as we celebrate Union College’s historic charter.

This celebration is an ideal time to reflect on how fortunate we are to work, live and be involved in the vibrant activities on this campus, where the liberal arts thrive. While very few American institutions of higher education can claim this distinction, many of our academic, political and industrial leaders have been educated at a liberal arts college.

For the past 220 years, a Union education has focused on the intellectual growth of our students through a deeply personal, very individualized process.

This process is grounded in developing critical and analytical thinking, effective communication, and ethical engagement among students in all disciplines.

Making all of this happen is a dedicated faculty of scholars who are committed to their students.
At this time in history - as the world faces extraordinary economic, geo-political, and ideological conflicts - the liberally educated men and women of Union College have another opportunity to distinguish themselves as leaders and innovators, as they have so many times over the years.

As a faculty, it is our privilege and our duty to continue to build upon, reshape and redefine the liberal arts experience that is the Union hallmark.

As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (her-uh-klahy-tuhs) of Ephesus stated, “You can’t step into the same river twice.” Let us insist, as he famously did, on ever-present change to confront change in the universe. As we evolve, we must strive to build a future worthy of our past.

Keep moving forward.

Finally, on behalf of the entire faculty, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mark Walsh for his time and service to the College as Chairman of our esteemed Board of Trustees. His leadership has certainly helped us to move forward these past four years.