

Liturgy for Pastoral Transition– When a Pastor Leaves

Clerk of Session: For everything there is a season. A time for reflection and a time for action; a time for cheers and a time for tears; a time for saying hello and a time for saying goodbye. For over ____ years the _____ Presbyterian Church has grown in wisdom and in strength, guided by the caring and insight of our pastor, _____.

General Presbyter: In _____, when your congregation called Reverend _____ to be your pastor, the Presbytery concurred and a partnership began – a partnership well suited for the particular challenges you faced as a church.

Clerk of Session: With growth comes change. In his/her ____ years with us, _____ has baptized new life among us; joined couples together in the sight of God, family and friends; welcomed new members; presided over the Lord's table time and again; led us in self-examination and decision-making; and helped us bid farewell to those moving on. Now it is time for us to bid adieu to _____ as his/her ministry takes on new shape and new place.

Congregation: **We give thanks for the grace of God that has established the Church and this congregation. We give thanks for _____'s time among us. We give thanks for his/her kind leadership, sage words, caring and compassion. We must now accept the satisfactory conclusion of his/her ministry among us, as we prepare for a new chapter for our church family.**

Clerk of Session: Do you, the members of this congregation release _____ from his/her pastoral duties?

Congregation: **We do, with the help of God.**

General While _____ leaves this congregation, he/she continues to serve the Presbyterian Church USA as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Do you offer your encouragement and support for his/her ministry and life as it unfolds in new ways and new places?

Congregation: **We do, with the help of God.**

Clerk of Session: Let us pray.

Creator God, whose steadfast love for all has been there since the beginning, we give thanks for remembered times when we have shared the life of faith.

Savior God, who sacrificed so much that we might have eternal life, we thank you for the times we have gathered in worship, in learning, in service. Our times together saw laughter and tears, hopes and disappointments, victories and failures.

Comforter God, guide us as we hold these cherished and challenging memories. Inspire us to move in new directions until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other. Until that moment, help each of us to look to the future with the confidence, trusting in your abiding care and grace.

In the name of Jesus who is the Christ.

Congregation: **Amen**