



Liturgy for Departure of an Interim Pastor from a Congregation

(Insert before the Benediction)

*Pastor [P] and Representative of the Congregation [L] come
forward*

L: Dear Christian Friends: A church family is constantly changing. It is right and important that we recognize these times of passage – of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with Pastor _____, whose term as our interim pastor is coming to an end.

Pastor _____, during this time of transition, you have proclaimed God's Word, baptized new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, announced God's forgiveness to us, and presided at our celebration of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community.

You have served our congregation faithfully and now you are leaving our midst. As members of this congregation, we wish to honor your ministry among us and bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavors, bringing closure to your ministry here.

P: *I thank the members and friends of _____ Lutheran Church for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me (and my family) during my ministry among you. I ask for your understanding and forgiveness for mistakes I have made and for expectations I have not met. I am grateful for the ways my ministry has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.*

C: **We receive your thankfulness, and we offer you our forgiveness. We express our gratitude for all accomplishments and for your time among us. Forgive us for our shortcomings – for ways we have sinned against you. Your influence in our lives will not leave us, even though you depart from us as our interim pastor.**

P: *I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to our forgiving God and to the Christ we are called to serve.*

L: Do you, members and friends of _____ Lutheran Church, now release Pastor _____ from the duties as interim minister? Do you offer encouragement and support for their ministry as it unfolds in a new place?

C: **We do, with God's help.**

L: Do you, Pastor _____, release _____ Lutheran Church from turning to you and depending on you? Do you offer your encouragement and support for the continued ministry here?

P: *I do, with God's help.*

L: We will hold you in our prayers as you continue your ministry in another place, and we wish you God's blessing. Let us pray.

All: **God, whose everlasting love for us all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together here in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold close these cherished memories, but now move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

L: Go now, Pastor _____, surrounded by our love and led by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

And now, may the Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: **Amen.**