



## Liturgy for Departure of a Pastor from a Congregation

(Insert before the Benediction)

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

L: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) we called you to be our pastor: to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside 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 (and your family) 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 for \_\_\_\_\_ years. You are now leaving our midst (to become pastor of \_\_\_\_\_ *OR* to retire). As your fellow members of this congregation we wish to honor your ministry among us and bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavor, bringing closure to your ministry at \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church.

P: *I thank the members of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me (and my family) during my active ministry among you. I ask forgiveness for the ways I have sinned against you. 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. We offer you our forgiveness and accept that you now leave (to resume your ministry in another congregation *OR* to retire). We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask forgiveness for the ways we have sinned against you. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

P: *I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.*

L: Do you, members of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church, release Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ from the duties as your pastor?

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

L: Do you offer encouragement for (his/her) ministry as it unfolds in (his/her) (new congregation *OR* retirement)?

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



L: Do you, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, release \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church from turning to you and depending on you?

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

L: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here?

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

L: We will hold you in our prayers as you (begin your ministry at \_\_\_\_\_  
*OR* retire). We pledge our support and love to you and wish you God's blessing.

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

C: **Amen.**

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L: The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: **Amen.**