

A Litany of Farewell Concluding an Interim Ministry

Congregational Representative: A church family is constantly changing. Loved ones come to the end of their lives. Individuals come and go in our church life. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage...of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with Pastor Brown whose term as our Interim Pastor is ending.

Interim Pastor: Today I thank the United Church, its members and friends for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me these past 5 months. I ask for your understanding and forgiveness for mistakes I may have made and for expectations unmet. I am grateful to God that so many here have graciously accepted my leadership. With deep joy I recall the many things that we have been able to accomplish together in this short time, and with sadness I also remember those things not accomplished. As I leave, I carry with me many good memories of experiences we have shared together.

The People: We receive your thankfulness, and we offer our genuine forgiveness for any failures and our heartfelt thanks for all accomplishments in our mission and ministry. We now acknowledge your departure from this congregational ministry and we accept that you now leave us as our interim pastor. We express our gratitude for your time among us and ask for your forgiveness for our shortcomings and sometimes our flagging faith. Your influence in our lives will not leave us, even though you depart from us as our interim pastor.

Interim Pastor: I forgive you for your failures and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together, and our parting, is pleasing to our forgiving God, and to the Christ we are called to serve.

Congregational Leader: Do you, the members and friends of United Church of Northfield, now release Pastor Brown as interim minister? Do you offer your encouragement and support to Pastor Brown in the next step in his journey?

The People: We do, with God's help.

Congregational Leader: Do you, Pastor Brown, release the United Church from turning to you and depending on you for future pastoral needs?

Interim Pastor: I do, with God's help.

Congregational Leader: Let us pray.

All: O God, whose everlasting love for us all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time when we were together here in your name saw our laughter, our 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 the Christ, we pray. Amen.

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