

A LITURGY OF FAREWELL Sample

(With thanks to Philip Swan and the Diocese of Lichfield)

(Adapted from the Interim Ministry Network. <https://imnedu.org/a-liturgy-of-farewell/>)

Churchwarden

O God, you have bound us together for a time as Interim Minister and people to work for the advancement of your kingdom in this place: We give you humble and heartfelt thanks for the ministry which we have shared in this time now past.

Silence

We thank you for your patience with us. We thank you for offering us your forgiveness and mercy.

Silence

Especially we thank you for your presence with us through this time, and for the deeper knowledge of you and of each other which we have gained.

Silence

We thank you for opening our hearts and minds again and again to your Word, and for feeding us abundantly with the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of your Son.

Silence

Now, we pray, be with those who leave and with us who stay; and grant that all of us, by drawing ever nearer to you, may always be close to each other in the communion of your saints. All this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Representative of the Congregation:

Our worshipping family is constantly changing. Loved ones come and go in our community's life. We embark on a new era. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage... of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with XXX, whose term as our Interim Minister is ending.

Interim Minister: Today I thank the people of XX its Wardens and Standing Committee and PCC, its parishioners and its friends for the welcome and support I have received during this past XX period. I thank too (any colleagues). I ask for your understanding and forgiveness for mistakes I may have made and for expectations which have been unmet. I am grateful to God that so many here have graciously accepted my leadership. With sadness I remember those things not accomplished. With deep joy I recall the many things we have been able to accomplish together in this short time. As I leave, I carry with me many good memories of you all and of this season of blessing, healing, restoration and re-unification we have shared together.

People: We receive your thankfulness, and we offer our genuine forgiveness for any things left undone, and our heartfelt thanks for all accomplishments in our mission and ministry. We now acknowledge your departure from this ministry and we accept that you now leave us as our Interim Minister. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We will remember you and the influence you had in our lives even though you are leaving us as our Interim Minister.

Interim Minister: Thank you! May our time together, and our parting, be pleasing to our loving God and to the Risen Christ we are called to serve.

Representative of the Congregation: Do you, the members and friends of XX, now release the XX as your Interim Minister? Do you offer your encouragement and support to him in the next step in his journey as a starts his next Interim ministry in XX?

People: We do, with God's help.

Standing Committee Representative: Do you, XX, release the people of XX from their pastoral relationship with you and offer your prayerful support for them as they take the next step in their journey as the people of God in this place?

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

Leader: Let us pray.

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 joys and our sorrows, our hopes and our disappointments. Guide us as we hold close these cherished memories, but help us now also to move in new directions, until that time comes when we are completely one with you, and with each other. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Leader: XX, we wish you joy on your journey, surrounded by our love and by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in communion with XX and all the saints, and with the world-wide church. Amen.

All: We send you into the world in peace to love and serve the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God! Alleluia. Alleluia.