

PRESBYTERY OF GENESEE VALLEY

**Suggested Litany for Dissolution of a Pastoral Call
from *Book of Occasional Services***

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This liturgy may be included in the Service for the Lord's Day, most appropriately on the final Sunday of a *pastor's* service in a congregation.

Following the concluding hymn, psalm, or canticle, the *pastor*, an elder representing the session, and other appropriate people may gather at the front of the place of worship.

The elder representing the session may say these or similar words:

The church of Jesus Christ is constantly changing. Our church is changing as well. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends die. Newcomers join our community and our church. Others leave, moving on to new places and new opportunities. It is important that we recognize these times of change. Today we say farewell to one who is leaving our fellowship. On date of call, this congregation called N. to serve with us as pastor. Today that call comes to an end.

The *pastor* may respond with these or similar words:

I thank all of you, members and friends of N. Church. Your kindness and support, your caring and love, have sustained me, and I shall remember you with gratitude to God.

PRAYER

A representative of presbytery or session leads all present:

Let us pray for the saving presence of our living Lord:

In your world,

be present, Lord.

In this congregation,

be present, Lord.

In this community,

be present, Lord.

In this presbytery and the whole church,

be present, Lord.

In the homes and hearts of all your people,

be present, Lord.

The *pastor* may lead this portion of the litany:

Let us pray for the mercy of the Lord:

For work begun but not completed,

Lord, have mercy.

For expectations not met,

Lord, have mercy.

For wounds not healed,

Lord, have mercy.
For gifts not shared,
Lord, have mercy.
For promises not kept,
Lord, have mercy.

A session representative continues:

Let us give thanks for our journey together in this place:

For friendships made,
for joys celebrated
and for times of nurture and growth,

thanks be to God.

For wounds healed,
expectations met,
gifts given and promises kept.

thanks be to God.

For our fellowship in Jesus Christ,
and for the love of God which has sustained us,

thanks be to God.

THE DISSOLUTION

The presbytery representative addresses the congregation:

Do you, the members and friends of N. Church, release N. from service as your *pastor*?

We do with thanks to God.

The presbytery representative addresses the *pastor*:

Do you, N., recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with this congregation?

I do with thanks to God.

The presbytery representative addresses all present:

Let us pray:

Loving God, Alpha and Omega,
you are both beginning and end.

Our endings and our beginnings
are rooted in your love.

Whether near or far,
we are held close by your love,
and kept safe from any lasting loss.

Let our time together end with your blessing.

Touch all memories with your grace and peace.

Help us to live with courage and gladness
in the future you present us.

In every time and place,
may we offer you our highest and our best.
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Alleluia! Amen.

The presbytery representative continues:

Representing the Presbytery of N.,

I witness these words

of thanksgiving, forgiveness, and release.
The presbytery rejoices with you
in the ministry you have shared,
and we pledge to you
continued support and prayer.
With thanks to God
for the ministry of this congregation
and the ministry of God's servant N.,
and with hope for God's abiding grace
in the years to come,
this pastoral relationship is now dissolved.

CHARGE

The representative of the presbytery continues with these
or similar words:

With God's help and love
may your lives be blessed
and your labors fruitful
as you offer yourselves gladly
in the service of our common Lord.

BLESSING

The *pastor* gives God's blessing to the congregation:

The Lord bless you and keep you. [*See Num. 6:24–26.*]
The Lord be kind and gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and give you peace.
Alleluia! Amen.

Go in peace.

The congregation responds:

Go in peace.

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