

SERVICE OF TIMES OF PASSAGE: FAREWELL
Based on a service from *Book of Worship, United Church of Christ*

Leader: Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with your (interim, installed) pastor who is leaving.

On _____, the session of this church called the Reverend _____, to serve as (interim or installed) pastor. At the same time, the Pulpit Nomination Committee sought for a candidate who would be called to serve this church in the capacity of an installed pastor. Now the time has come to say good-bye to _____.

Minister: I thank the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____, Iowa, its members and friends, for the love, kindness and support shown me these last two years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

People: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Minister: I accept your gratitude and forgive your mistakes, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Leader: Do you, the members and friends of the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____, Iowa, release the Reverend _____ from the duties of (Interim, installed) pastor?

People: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for her/his ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

People: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you, Reverend _____, release this local church from turning to you and depending upon you?

Minister: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here under the leadership of the _____ and all others called to serve?

Minister: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: On behalf of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of East Iowa, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness and release. Our presbytery continues to hold your church in prayer and we pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service. Let us pray.

All: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The times we have had together in y our name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments, our hurts and our healing. Guide us now as we hold these cherished memories and still 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 we pray. Amen.

Leader: Let us join together in extending our blessings to _____ and to one another.

People: Go in peach and let us remember as we go that we are the church in the world. May we embrace the will of God, may we obey the call of God, may we accept the power of God and may we reflect the love of God and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever more. Amen.

{People will stay in place for a musical benediction}