

**Thanksgiving at the Conclusion of a Call
for Pastor _____**

Pastor, in (date) the people of () Lutheran Church called you to be pastor in this place: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table. With the gospel you have comforted them in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of loved ones. Sharing joys and sorrows, you and your family have been important to the life of this community within the church of Jesus Christ, in their service to this community, and as they participate in God's mission to the whole world.

On (date) the congregation's call to you comes to an end. As you leave this community of faith and say farewell to one another, we give thanks for your ministry and pray for God's blessing.

PULPIT: You were invited into this pulpit. From this place you have proclaimed the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ countless times throughout these past years. This preaching ministry has not belonged to you; the saving message of Christ is not something one can possess, but only bear witness to. You have been a faithful occupant of this church's pulpit and messenger of the good news of God's love in Christ. As you leave this pulpit we thank God for your preaching ministry.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

FONT: At this font you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Through the cleansing waters of baptism we welcome new members into the family of Christ. The gift of new life in Christ belongs to God. The church is the custodian of this rite of welcome, and you have introduced this congregation to many new brothers and sisters in the faith. You have presided as confirmands affirmed their baptismal promises. As you leave this font, we thank you for your ministry surrounding baptismal promises.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

ALTAR: At this altar you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Communion. You have reminded the members here of how Jesus began this meal with his disciples. You have provided instruction to those who would receive it for the first time. The meal is the Lord's, and this congregation has been provider of this meal to all who seek to be fed with the living presence of Christ. You have

presided over this meal so that it could be served in a faithful and orderly fashion. As you leave this table, we thank you for presiding at the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL STEP: Standing in front of this congregation you have led services of thankfulness to God for people who had died. You led this community in the midst of grief while expressing gratitude for God's gift of life. You proclaimed the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and encouraged the community with the comfort of the gospel. As you leave this sanctuary, we thank you for your presence in times of loss.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL: It is here that you presided at services where couples were married. You were present to rejoice with those who rejoice. Thank you for sharing those and other great times of joy.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

People of God, as representatives of the members of () Lutheran, and with thanks to God for the ministry of Pastor () among you, do you now release him from service as your pastor?

We do, and we give thanks to God.

Pastor, with thanks to God for the members of this community and for their ministry with you, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with () Lutheran Church?

I do, and I give thanks to God.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. We give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor () among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love. You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial: prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us. Help Pastor () and (his/her spouse/family) as well as the people of this congregation to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

As they have been a blessing to this congregation, so now send them forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Your sisters and brothers in the () Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the ministry you have shared. We promise you our continued support and prayer.

Rejoicing in the blessings of God in this congregation and in the ministry of Pastor (), with hope in God's abundant grace in years to come, I announce that this pastoral relationship is ended effective (date).

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sharing of the Peace