

Responsive Reading upon a Pastor's Farewell

Leader: We have heard testimonies of _____'s ministry among us. We are grateful to God for providing the gifts that we have needed. Let us voice our gratitude in prayer. Let us pray.

People: **Thank you God for the gift of _____. We recognize in her/his ministry many aspects of your love, your truth, your grace. You have become more real to us because of _____'s example and gentle nudging. We recognize your presence in _____'s encouraging words, sensitive listening, thoughtful counsel, warm and comforting presence when he/she touched our lives.**

We acknowledge that we may not have always supported and encouraged _____ as we ought to have done. If we have not declared our gratitude to him/her or to you as we should have done, we pray your forgiveness.

We pray that _____ will continue to experience your blessing as he/she leaves this assignment and serves in other ways. We pray that we will experience your blessings as we follow you in new directions, led by others whom you and we have called. We seek your Spirit's guidance and power. Amen.

Leader: Because _____'s leadership and ministry have been so significant to her/him and to us, the end of this assignment requires us to make important adjustments in our relationships. _____ will be giving up the privileges and the responsibilities that go with lay ministry. He/she will no longer feel both relief and loss. It may take time for _____ and for us to get used to our new relationship. We want to commit ourselves to making this necessary transition comfortable and complete.

People: _____, **we release you from the responsibilities that we asked you to carry when you were called to this ministry. We pledge our continuing support and friendship. We commit ourselves to change our expectations of your availability to us. We invite you to help us relate to you in new ways.**

Pastor: As I welcomed the call to serve you _____ years ago, so now I welcome your release from that call. Though I am no longer one of your ministries, I intend to serve the church in other ways. I pledge my support to those who continue or

who will begin to lead this congregation. I invite you to help me relate to you in new ways.

Leader: We have asked and allowed _____ to be our servant for the past ___ years. Now, others will take his/her place. In the church, we take turns serving and being served. Let us join in expressing our commitment to serve and to be served by singing together Hymn #307, "Will you let me be your servant."

Anon. (Canada), Waterloo North Mennonite Church

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People: _____, *we release you from the responsibilities that we asked you to carry when you were called to this ministry. We pledge our continuing support and friendship. We commit ourselves to change our expectations of your availability to us. We invite you to help us relate to you in new ways.*

Pastor: As I welcomed the call to serve you _____ years ago, so now I welcome your release from that call. Though I am no longer one of your ministries, I intend to serve the church in other ways. I pledge my support to those who continue or who will begin to lead this congregation. I invite you to help me relate to you in new ways.

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