

Recognition and Blessing of the Interim Pastor

Council President _____:

Pastor _____ has been nominated by Bishop _____, of the _____ Synod of the ELCA to serve as our Interim Pastor. On (date), _____ the Congregation Council of _____ Lutheran Church approved Pastor _____ to serve as Interim Pastor. I present him for reception into this ministry among us. We celebrate this time of new beginnings for our church family, and we look to the time ahead that we will share with Pastor _____ as our Interim Pastor. We anticipate that what we build together with one another will be good and pleasing to God.

Congregation: We trust God to lead us toward greater goodness, faithfulness, hope and joy.

Council President _____:

The transition time between installed pastors is an exciting and meaningful time in the life of our congregation. This is not a time for just maintaining the status quo, but it is a time for preparation, a time when we can come to understand more clearly who we are, who we want to become and what God intends our ministry and life together to be.

Congregation:

At this time of transition we pledge that what is past is past, to cherish what has been good, and to let go of what we no longer need. We pledge to reach for the future that is coming, for we believe that God is leading us toward it.

Council President _____:

This is a time for discovering the qualities, gifts, and abilities, which you will want and need in our next installed pastor. For this in-between time, God has sent Pastor _____ to us to be our temporary pastor, to aid us in continuing our work and witness in this community and in the _____ Synod of the ELCA, and to help us see the possibilities for the new vision.

Interim Pastor _____:

As we begin this interim time together, we begin new relationships. With God's help, I promise to be a partner in ministry as God's servant among you. I promise to participate in the life of this congregation assisting you in this time of transition. I pledge to be a pastor for you, standing with you in times of joy or trouble. I promise to serve and lead you with faithfulness and integrity during my time here. I will pray for you, listen to you, assist you in the tasks of this transition period, encouraging and challenging you as we move through this time together. I will give you the best of my gifts, my talents, my time and my energy.

Congregation:

With God's help, we promise to accept and support you as our interim pastor. We will encourage you and pray for you, as well as share together during this transition period the life and service of our congregation.

Congregation and Interim Pastor _____:

As we seek to respond to God's leading, we promise to deal with one another in love, respect, honesty, humor, and creativity.

Council President _____:

Upon these mutual commitments – from you, Pastor _____, and us, _____ Lutheran Church – it is my great pleasure to welcome you as our Interim Pastor. May God bless this beginning, and bring us joyfully through this time of transition, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, the head of the Church. Let us pray:

Eternal God, we thank you for your faithful leading of _____ Lutheran Church throughout the years. We thank you for the ways in which you continue to bless us, challenge us, forgive us, and continue to invite us into being your faithful people. We offer our gratitude for having Pastor _____ partner with us in ministry during this in-between time. We thank you for his gifts, and faith, and vision, and for all the ways you have made him ready for this task. Bless him and our church family as they seek to live out the promises we have made this day. Empower us by your Holy Spirit and lead us all in the steps of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.