

RITUAL FOR THE CLOSURE OF A MINISTRY
Presbytery of Newark
(Proposed draft. 09/06. Modify as required.)

Congregational Representative: PASTOR'S NAME, on DATE, we called you to be our pastor: to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebrations of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel we have been challenged to live lives of service. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and our sorrows, you have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community.

Congregation: We release you from NAME OF CHURCH to share God's gifts as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in NAME OF NEXT CHURCH/MINISTRY AND LOCATION or as HONARABLY RETIRED.

Pastor: I give thanks for the life we shared in Christ. I have found our time together rewarding and memories of what we have shared will always remain precious and meaningful. I return to you symbols representing my role and responsibilities as an ordained minister in your midst. I have tried to proclaim the Word of God faithfully among you. Here is the Bible which expresses this.

(The bible is presented to a lay leader at the pulpit).

I have baptized people in the name of the Triune God, using water as a symbol of cleansing and rebirth. Here is water that symbolizes God's gift of belonging in Christ

(A vessel of water is given to a lay leader at the font).

I have celebrated Holy Communion with you. Here is bread and wine, the means by which we are strengthened in our faith and transformed into the Body of Christ.

(Bread and wine are given to a lay leader at the table).

Here are the keys to my office, the place where I have challenged, counseled, and comforted people.



COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

(The keys are given to a lay leader).

Congregational Leader: Prayer, both individual and corporate, is the means by which our relationship with God and with one another grows, deepens and strengthens. We will continue to pray for you.

Congregation: Eternal God, we thank you for PASTOR'S NAME and for our life together in this congregation and community. As he/she has been a blessing to us, so now send him/her forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregational Leader: We send you forth with a going away blessing.

Congregation:

(Arms raised upward toward pastor)

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace, now and forever.

Amen.