

A LITURGY OF LEAVE-TAKING IN THANKSGIVING FOR OUR MUTUAL MINISTRY

Returning the Gifts for Ministry

After the sermon the exiting priest stands before the congregation and says,

Priest: At the beginning of my ministry, you gave me many things in trust and a charge as to how to use them. Now, I leave these and other things with you, the ministers of St. YYY, its congregation and lay leaders.

To Worship Leaders: Continue to share these worship resources (Book of Common Prayer, Enriching our Worship etc.) and these stoles that belong to this church and ensure that the prayers of God's people and, along with the ministry of clergy, the sacraments of the church continue in this place. **Amen.**

To Lay Preachers: Continue to use these various translations of scripture and ensure that the word of Christ is preached and proclaimed in this place. **Amen.**

To Ministers of Music: Continue to use all these hymnals and ensure that the praise of God continues in this place. **Amen.**

To Healers: Continue to use this oil for anointing and ensure that this remains a place of care, healing and reconciliation. **Amen.**

To Pastoral Caregivers: Continue to use the congregation's Communion kit and ensure that this remains a place of mutual care, healing and reconciliation. **Amen.**

To Christian Formation Leaders: Continue to use this LCD projector for Christian Formation programs and the Family Friendly Service and let it give you vision for programs in the future, so that all may learn of God's love for us in Christ.

To Senior Warden: Receive this key and ensure that the doors of this place remain open to all people. **Amen.**

To Vestry: Receive these Canons and the Diocesan Handbook and ensure that this congregation continues to be governed in accordance with them and in communion with our Bishop. **Amen.**

To Leadership Team: Continue to use this water for the baptismal font and ensure that this remains a place where people are loved and brought into the family of God through baptism. **Amen.**

Let all these be signs of the ministry that is yours and the Bishop's in this place. **Amen.**

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The service continues with the Prayers of the People

Let us pray.

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all, and provider of grace to all who toil together in the hope of meaningful living: continue your saving work through your Spirit in our midst.

People: **Give grace to your servants, O Lord.**

Grant that our lives, and XXX's in *retirement (her/his new call)*, may continue to be instruments for serving the common good, with time for leisure, for new growth and service.

People: **Give grace to your servants, O Lord.**

Grant XXX, as s/he leaves the accomplishments and trials of the *work place (this congregation)*, a sense of gratitude for those who have shared this journey, both at St. YYY's, in this community, the Church, and the world.

People: **Give grace to your servant, O Lord.**

Give him/her thankfulness for all who have supported her/his life's journey, especially NN, as well as for all those who have shared in her/his spiritual journey, that s/he may continually use insights from her/his path to help others know and serve God.

People: **Give grace to your servant, O Lord.**

Grant her/him wisdom and understanding in *the ordering of retirement life (in her/his new ministry)*, that s/he may be blessed with a positive, hopeful perspective, so that future years may be valued and productive, in service to you.

People: **Give grace to your servant, O Lord.**

Give forgiveness to us and to XXX for all things done and left undone in our common life.

People: **Give grace to your people, O Lord.**

Grant to the people of St. YYY Episcopal Church the vision to continue on God's journey, to fulfill the mission of St. YYY, that all people might know God and love each other through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: **Give grace to your people, O Lord.**

Grant to this congregational family the awareness of those who have gone before us, a thankfulness for their abiding faith, and a willingness to ever seek the kingdom of God, both in this place and beyond its walls.

People: **Give grace to your people, O Lord.**

To you, O Lord, be the power and glory, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

After the blessing and before the closing hymn and the dismissal, the priest sits on a chair placed in view of the congregation and says:

On the Xth day of Month Year I started my ministry with St. YYY Episcopal Church as your rector. I have, with God's help and to the best of my abilities, exercised this trust, accepting its privileges and responsibilities.

After prayer and careful consideration, it now seems to me that I should leave this charge, and I publicly state that my tenure as rector of St. YYY ends this day.

On behalf of the Bishop, the Senior Warden says:

Do you, the people of St. YYY Episcopal Church, recognize and accept the conclusion of this pastoral relationship? **We do.**

Closing Hymn and Dismissal

Adapted by the Rev. Thad Bennett from liturgies designed by a number of clergy when they were leaving their congregations.