

# COVENANT FOR DEPARTING PASTORS

## Northeastern Ohio Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

It has been my privilege to serve the mission and ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ Church as Pastor during these past \_\_\_\_\_ months/years. As God called me for a time to serve among you, God now calls me forth to serve in a new way, in a new place among a new people though still one in the body of Christ.

In prayerful conversation with the Congregation Council of \_\_\_\_\_, I have discussed the policies and expectations of the Northeastern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and I enter into the following covenant.

I agree:

- to pray for the ongoing mission of the congregation and for their new pastor;
- to communicate to the congregation, in writing and in conversation, the terms of the covenant, which terminates this pastoral relationship;
- to not be involved in any leadership or advisory role (public or private) in this congregation and to refrain from behaviors that seek in any way to control the transition process, including any attempt to influence the choice of a successor;
- to refrain from language or behavior that could undermine the development of the relationship between the congregation and a new pastor (interim or successor), including social media;
- to refuse to offer support or advice to anyone involved in a congregational disagreement;
- to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the congregation, including baptisms, weddings, funerals, anniversaries, visiting the sick and homebound;
- to consult with the current pastor regarding my attendance at worship and special events;
- to encourage my family members to support me in maintaining this covenant and to support the ministry of the congregation's new pastor.

*(Other items may be added that are consistent with the particular relationship and mission of this congregation).*

It is understood that this covenant does not affect or require termination of friendships with individuals who are members of this congregation.

Signature of Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed by President (Vice-President): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*After sharing this covenant with the congregation, please mail a photocopy of the completed and signed document to the office of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, where it will be kept in the departing pastor's file.*