



PASTORAL LEADER COVENANT OF CLOSURE OF WHITEWATER VALLEY PRESBYTERY

It is understood that the purpose of this *Covenant* is to affirm that _____ and _____
name of pastoral leader
_____ Presbyterian Church in Whitewater Valley Presbytery give thanks to
name of congregation
God for their time in ministry together and commit to supporting the next pastoral leader so they can enjoy the same depth of relationship and faithfulness in ministry.

For this to happen well, it is necessary for the departing pastoral leader to make space for that healthy new relationship to grow. Therefore, the session, the pastoral leader, and the Commission on Ministry enter into the following *Covenant*:

The pastoral leader's departure signifies that their pastoral relationship with _____
name of congregation Presbyterian Church will end on _____
date.

The pastor will establish and maintain personal, professional, and pastoral boundaries as described below.

1. The departing pastoral leader agrees that they will not officiate or assist in any baptism, marriage, memorial service, worship leadership, church anniversary activities, Bible Study, etc. at _____ or elsewhere, for members of _____ after
name of congregation _____
length of time (years) unless specifically invited by the Moderator of Session. This includes any interim period before the new pastoral leader begins their ministry. *After the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, former pastors and associate pastors shall not provide their pastoral services to members of their former congregations without the invitation of the moderator of session. (G-2.0905)*
2. The departing pastoral leader will no longer make hospital visits or offer pastoral care to members. Their role will be within the normal limits of friendship and community activities, while affirming that pastoral care is the responsibility of the church's pastoral staff and ministries. In extraordinary circumstances a moderator of session may invite a former pastor to offer pastoral care to members.
3. The departing pastoral leader and their spouse and minor children (if applicable), will ordinarily not attend worship or social events of the congregation. A conversation with the Session, and Committee on Ministry is advised particularly in cases of the spouse of a retiring pastor seeking to continue congregational involvement.

4. The departing pastoral leader and their spouse (if applicable) are expected to offer support to present and future leadership. They shall not communicate with, provide advice to, nor receive or engage in criticism of the clergy, staff, or church leaders or be involved in any congregational disagreement or dispute.
5. The departing pastoral leader will be independent of the church office and staff, except for routine forwarding of mail or other courtesies provided to the members and correspondents, and others if appropriate.
6. If desired by both parties, the departing pastoral leader and new pastoral leader may meet for the purposes of knowledge transfer or a “pastor to pastor debrief.” The purpose of such a process is to preserve the strengths and assets of the church, but always allowing the new pastoral leader to function without interference.
7. The departing pastoral leader promises to pray for the new pastoral leader, the church leadership, and the congregation.
8. The Session promises to pray for the departing pastoral leader as they follow God’s call and leading in their future ministry. The Session also promises to pray for the congregation, and to put this *Covenant* in the Session minutes and shares this *Covenant* at the congregational meeting when the pastoral relationship is dissolved.
9. If, after a suitable period which has been agreed upon by the new pastoral leader and the Session (at least one year after new leadership is installed), the departing pastoral leader wishes to review any of these items, they may initiate a review with the consent of the Session, and in consultation with the Commission on Ministry, provided that the new pastoral leader is willing to concur.

Signature, Pastor

date

Signature, Clerk of Session

Presbyterian Church

date

Signature, Presbytery Representative

date