



PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Internship

Manual for
Lay Committees

California Lutheran

UNIVERSITY

THANK YOU!

Dear Members of the Internship Lay Committee:

Thank you! We appreciate your service to the church and value the important work you do in an intern's pastoral or diaconal formation. The beginning of the year is a crucial time for getting the experience off to a good start. The Intern's year of hands-on, day-to-day life in a full-time ministry setting is a major change from previous years of academic work at the seminary. It is both thrilling and daunting to shift to this new style of learning. And, this is where the Lay Committee can uniquely be a help and support to the Intern.

Welcome the Intern, and the Intern's family, if applicable. It is the Lay Committee's specific task to find a variety of ways to help the Intern begin to integrate into your congregation as well as into the new role of Intern Deacon or Pastor. Our hope is that you will show them the ropes of your community and the congregation: introduce them to key people or places they should know; invite them to lunch, dinner, or coffee. Relationships are key to successful ministry practices. As a committee member, you are in a perfect setting to build a trustworthy relationship with the Intern.

Much of your role is to provide support and encouragement to the Intern. A goal of this time is for the Intern to experience as many new and different aspects of ministry as possible. The Lay Committee is the support base for the Intern to debrief how these experiences are going and to talk openly about the highs and lows of this new opportunity. The Lay Committee can also offer encouragement and feedback so the Intern continues to learn about their gifts and passion for serving God and God's people and world.

This manual has been created for you as a reference for the ministry you have so graciously agreed to be a part of. We suggest looking over the entire manual in order to get a more detailed overview of our expectations and the various areas in which the Lay Committee supports and advises the Intern. There is also a manual for Supervisors and Interns that you may want to have available. The Appendix of that manual contains samples of many of the forms that are used during the internship year.

The internship year is a significant part of a student's seminary experience – it is a fundamental and foundational year of their preparation for ministry. You are not in this venture alone – you are partners with the seminary and indeed, the whole church, in the preparation of leaders for ministry. We are ready to assist you, the Intern, and the Supervisor in any way we can. Please contact us if you need clarification or suggestions.

Thank you for accompanying your Intern on this significant journey.

Sincerely,



Rev. Katy Grindberg
Director of Contextual Education & Lecturer

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Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS), a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is a faith and learning community dedicated to excellence in theological education for developing leaders for the church in the world.

Our location, dynamic faculty, cutting-edge curriculum, closely-knit community, and membership in the Graduate Theological Union provide a unique setting for engaging issues of Christian faith, discipleship, and the communication of the gospel to a world in need of truly good news.

PLTS is an inclusive community and offers hospitality to all who participate in our programs of study. As disciples of Christ committed to public leadership among God's people in diverse and challenging cultural contexts, we eagerly learn from and welcome one another's diversity, including, but not limited to, theological perspective, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, relationship status, age, physical ability, social and economic status, and sexual orientation.

PLTS Orientating Perspectives

- **Nurturing a life-giving relationship with God** includes embracing and sharing the life-changing power of God's love through Jesus and cultivating spiritual practices and skills for building community that strengthens people spiritually.
- **Intellectual engagement with Scripture, faith traditions, and the world** involves hearing and interacting with theological voices from the margins of power and privilege and putting Christian beliefs and practices into collaborative engagement with other religious traditions and secular disciplines.
- **Faithful social transformation** grounded in the good news of Jesus Christ endeavors to build communities of resistance and hope by integrating the spiritual and political dimensions of life through theological reflection, social analysis, and implementing strategies to work for justice and ecological healing.
- **Learning through a socio-ecological lens** that looks at race, class, gender, and earth in order to develop competencies for effective community engagement in diverse cultural and political contexts.

INTRODUCTION

What is internship in the ELCA?

Candidates for ELCA ordination into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament are required to complete 2000 hours of internship in a congregation or an agency/congregation combination under the supervision of an experienced pastor. At PLTS, students typically meet this requirement through a full-time, 12-month immersive experience.

Candidates for ELCA ordination into the Ministry of Word and Service are required to complete 1000 hours of full-time internship in a congregation or an agency/congregation combination, under the supervision of an experienced deacon, pastor, and/or nonprofit leader. At PLTS, this requirement is met through full-time or part-time experience, the details of which will be agreed upon in conversation with the Director of Contextual Education and the Intern's Candidacy Committee.

The purpose of internship is to facilitate vocational skill development and assist in the diaconal and pastoral formation of the Intern. Supervisors work with Interns in the various areas of ministry and reflect with them about their learning and growth in regular supervisory sessions. The internship Lay Committee also meets regularly with the Intern and is involved in the preparation of the Intern for ordained ministry. Periodic evaluation reports are submitted to the Office of Contextual Education and the Intern's Candidacy Committee by the Supervisor, Intern, and Lay Committee.

What is the purpose of the Lay Committee?

The Lay Committee is charged with accompaniment of the Intern on behalf of the whole congregation and/or agency. The Lay Committee members specifically are set aside to walk with the Intern during this time of formation and learning. Committee members develop a special relationship with the Intern as they learn, grow, and struggle to help each other develop a unique ministry. The Lay Committee also participates in the evaluation process with the Intern and the Supervisor several times during the year.

Action-Reflection Model of Learning

At the heart of internship, and all field education, is the **action-reflection** model of learning. In this learning model, students plan, prepare, practice, and perform some action or activity. Once the activity has been completed, there is dedicated time for self-reflection and reflective conversations about the activity and the preparation process. The conversation may include questions such as:

- What went well?
- Where were the challenges or difficulties?
- What needed more attention in the preparation?
- What additional resources were needed?
- What feelings did the Intern have during the activity and after?
- What theological principles did the activity intersect with; and what theological questions did the activity raise?
- How did this experience impact the Intern's growing diaconal, pastoral, or leadership identity?
- What was surprising? What was fun? What was uncomfortable?
- What would the Intern do differently next time?

The Lay Committee members are important partners in the reflective conversations with the Intern. Understanding how different people receive, perceive, and hear them is important to the Intern's learning and development. The reflection sessions are also times for the Intern to continue to discern their sense of call and to integrate their academic and field learning.

LAY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

Selecting a Lay Committee

The Lay Committee is typically appointed by the Supervisor, perhaps in consultation with the congregational council. The committee is normally made up of about 5 people who are able to meet monthly with the Intern to give fair and open-minded consideration to the Intern's experiences. It should be composed of a broad cross-section of the congregation and/or agency. Some Supervisors allow the Intern to choose one or two members of the committee after they have arrived.

Gifts and Skills of Lay Committee Members

Ideally, the lay committee members would be:

- faithful in worship attendance
- willing to pray for the student regularly and to show their care and support
- capable of giving articulate, honest, constructive feedback regarding the student's ministry skills
- eager to share experiences and insights about their own ministry in daily life
- willing to set aside the necessary time for the monthly committee meetings
- involved and knowledgeable of ministries with which the congregation is involved or can develop

Choosing a Chair

The Lay Committee chairperson is responsible for:

1. Convening all committee meetings.
2. Notifying everyone as to the time and place of meetings, and leading them.
3. Planning the agenda with the Intern.
4. Keeping the Supervisor informed about any difficulties with convening regular Lay Committee meetings or any dysfunction of the committee.
5. Participating in the evaluation process, including filling out forms.

Committee Member Term Limits

If your congregation regularly has an Intern, we suggest committee members serve three-year terms, with one-third of the committee in rotation each year. If not, members may remain on the committee for multiple Interns with an eye toward offering the Lay Committee both stability as well as fresh energy and ideas.

Expectations of the Committee

Before the Intern Arrives

- Meet with the Supervisor to organize, study Lay Committee materials, and select the person who will serve as Chair. Exchange telephone numbers and addresses with the Intern to establish contact before the Intern arrives.
- Check on the physical arrangements for the Intern. Is the housing adequate, clean, and ready? Does the intern need help unloading? Are there family members that need to be included in these arrangements?
- Send information to the Intern about the housing, community, and congregation.
- Inform the congregation of the Intern's pending arrival.
- With the Supervisor and staff plan a *Service of Beginning* (see appendix for examples).
- Ensure a good start for the Intern and their family by planning a Welcome Celebration.

During the Internship Year

In regular monthly meetings, the Lay Committee and the Intern become mentors and teachers to each other. Give your monthly meetings high priority. The Intern and the Lay Committee should function as a team. When a team member is not available or fails to participate, the whole effort suffers.

Meetings should include discussion helpful to the Intern's development and learning. The members are expected to be available to give constructive feedback to the Intern regarding the many different areas of ministry. At these meetings, members can tell the Intern about congregational life and how well the Intern is equipping the members for ministry. With loving concern, tell the Intern about their growing edges or weaknesses. We do not always perceive ourselves as others do and someone who honestly reflects our behavior can be invaluable. Share your story of faith and your style of ministry. Take time to ask the Intern what they need from the members of the committee. Similarly, the Lay Committee can help the Intern learn what the expectations of the congregation are and bring experiences of other congregation members into the meetings. The Lay Committee members should avoid unhealthy triangulation, and if someone has a complaint or takes issue with the Intern, and brings that to a Lay Committee member, the member should encourage that person to discuss their concern directly with the Intern.

The Lay Committee should participate in developing and regularly reviewing the Learning Service Agreement and filling out evaluation forms.

Please see the Appendix for a calendar of suggested discussion topics for each month's meeting.

Roles as a Committee

As a member of the Lay Committee, you will be playing several roles to support the Intern in their work. Some of these roles are:

1. **Supporter**
You provide counsel and encouragement for the Intern and their family. You also provide support and honest feedback - something that everyone needs.
2. **Sponsor**
You acquaint the Intern with the members of the congregation and the issues and concerns of the people and community.
3. **Consultant**
You provide information about the congregation - teach, guide, and introduce the Intern to your community. You help to make sure that the Intern knows the 'audience' for worship and something of the history of your congregation and community.

4. **Christian Witness**

You share your own faith background, experiences, and beliefs. Tell stories of how God has called you and what that has meant.

5. **Partner in Ministry**

You assist the Intern in developing a style of ministry that is collegial. Ordained deacons and pastors need to work in partnership with others. The Intern must learn how the roles of deacon or pastor and layperson complement each other and how they can effectively function in partnership with others.

6. **Evaluator**

You are a mirror, reflecting your perception of the Intern's ministry. You will offer your impressions of sermons, personal presence, teaching skills, etc. Be honest as you speak the truth in gentleness and love. The *entire* committee is expected to participate in the evaluation process by giving their opinions on the evaluation questions. The Lay Committee Chair is responsible for *compiling* these opinions for the evaluation forms and providing the final drafts of the forms to the other members. The evaluations are required three times during the year – at the 6, 9 and 12 month intervals, in addition to the Summary Paragraph form that is an offshoot of the final evaluation form. *See pages 7-8 for more information.*

Serving Effectively: Observations from Experience

Our experience with Lay Committees has given us the opportunity to make some observations about how an effective committee functions. Here are some key points to remember:

1. The purpose of an internship is to enable students to learn from supervised experience and reflection. The needs of the congregation must be recognized, but Interns are placed with the objective of learning. The Committee should always ask first, "What will the Intern learn in this situation?"
2. Confidentiality is vital. No one will be frank if the Lay Committee members or the Intern share outside the meeting anything that happens at the committee meeting. However, Lay Committee members/Intern may at any time consult with the Supervisor as needed.
3. Be concerned about the whole life of the Intern. Is the housing adequate? Does the Intern have time for personal needs? Who will introduce the Intern to congregation members? What feelings are coming to the surface in the Intern? How is their family doing? How are they tending to their day off and their support networks?
4. Be honest. It does not help to compliment a poor sermon or presentation. Interns want the Lay Committee to give them honest feedback. Speak the truth in gentleness and love. Holding back vital information to spare the Intern's feelings is not helpful. At times, uncomfortable subjects may need to be discussed. If guidance is needed, the Supervisor and the Director of Contextual Education are both resources.
5. Respect differences. Your Intern will be unique, not at all like the last intern or the present ministers, deacons, or pastors.
6. Affirm your own ministry. Your views are important. The Intern can use your impressions to learn about effective ministry from you.
7. Be concerned about an ongoing internship program. Ensure the future health of the program with some good long-range plans. Be an advocate for the internship program in your congregation and your synod.
8. The Lay Committee Chair needs to work closely with the Intern to set meeting times and agendas, and to communicate this information to the rest of the committee.
9. Remember that the Intern is a *student*, not an experienced deacon or pastor.

10. Your relationship with the Supervisor should be marked by cooperation and shared concerns, and the Lay Committee should complement the Supervisor's work. The committee should be supportive of the Supervisor and the Intern.
11. Try to avoid:
 - a) one person dominating the discussion
 - b) talking about someone not present
 - c) criticizing the pastor, staff or congregation members
 - d) bemoaning a situation in the congregation
 - e) complaining about things the Intern or Lay Committee cannot change
 - f) sidetracking the agenda and discussing unrelated concerns
 - g) relating only on a superficial level

Sermon Response Forms

During the internship, the Lay Committee is asked to comment on the Intern's preaching ability, style, and delivery – for the benefit of the Intern. The Lay Committee may want to give input to the Intern after each sermon and discuss them individually or as a whole committee. The Lay Committee may also want to include congregation members who do not serve on the committee to be involved in this process. Some Interns have had many opportunities to preach in a public setting while others have very little.

Sample Sermon Response Forms are provided in the Appendix. They are recommended instruments to provide feedback to the Intern on their preaching, and are not required to be used. The intent of these Sermon Response Forms, over the course of the year, is to note improvement and greater confidence in the Intern's ability in the area of preaching. These forms are NOT to be sent to the seminary, or shared with anyone other than the Intern.

Interns generally hope to improve their preaching, and they look forward to suggestions from the members of their congregation. You can help by listening carefully to their sermons, and consider the following questions:

1. What insights did I gain from the biblical text?
2. How did the message from the Bible relate to the world, the community, my family, my life?
3. Are there ways the Intern could improve their speaking style or delivery?

Thank you for your commitment to help the Intern become a better preacher!

Intern Evaluations

Lay Committees are required to submit two evaluations and an update to the final evaluation to the seminary over the course of the year. The evaluation includes an assessment of skills and personal characteristics for ministry. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to collate the group's responses and share the final draft with the committee members and the Intern. The Intern is responsible to send a signed copy to the seminary.

The Final Evaluation form includes Summary Recommendations, where the committee indicates the Intern's readiness for ordained ministry. Due to the fact that PLTS students complete their internship in their final year, PLTS asks for a separate form for the summary recommendations and paragraphs to be submitted to the seminary before the end of the academic year, in order for the faculty to consider the student's readiness for ordained ministry. The Summary Recommendation Form can be found on the PLTS website, and a sample form is in the Appendix of the Supervisor/Intern Manual. The Intern will be in communication with their home synod's candidacy committee and the PLTS Associate Dean's Office regarding the due date for this form.

There are three options for recommendations for ordained ministry in the ELCA: unconditional, conditional, and not recommended. The summary recommendation paragraph should support the recommendation. The paragraph for a conditional recommendation should include suggestions for the Intern's development/growth. The summary paragraph will be shared with appropriate synodical/church-wide personnel as part of the approval and first call process.

The summary recommendation paragraph is most helpful when ministerial and theological competence, commitment to gospel justice issues, teaching abilities, and personal characteristics suited for ministry are included as they pertain to the candidate. Try to provide as much substantive detail as possible noting strengths, weaknesses and growth edges. A statement affirming only strengths is not as helpful.

The ELCA requires the summary paragraph be limited to **500 characters including spaces!** This is quite a challenge, so it is important to be clear and concise when drafting the summary paragraph.

Below are examples of summary paragraphs:

- *The intern shows a distinct desire to serve God's people as an ordained pastor in the ELCA as evidenced in preaching, teaching, leading worship, etc. Her ministry is shaped by a clear understanding & application of basic Lutheran theology. Some areas of growth include: challenging people beyond their comfort level, develop a personal conflict management style & increase familiarity with OT. Strengths include a positive & energetic personality & she's very welcoming & inviting of strangers*
- *The intern is a person of deep faith and clear call. She has great skills in listening and being present with people. Her preaching has become more engaging and gospel centered. She has developed confidence in worship leadership. She works well on a team. Growth areas: stewardship and evangelism.*
- *We highly recommend the intern for diaconal ministry. His sermons are excellent; speaking style clear, relates well with congregation members of all ages, he has good listening skills, and has the discipline necessary to multi-task. We found no weaknesses in him and would be happy to have him return.*

The Evaluation forms can be found on the ELCA Website

The Summary Recommendation and the Final Evaluation Update forms can be found on the PLTS Website

When an Intern receives a conditional or failing evaluation from the Supervisor and/or Lay Committee, the Intern may ask the Director of Contextual Education at PLTS to initiate a process of review that will result in the formation of a panel to address the Intern's evaluation. The Director of Contextual Education may also initiate the formation of a panel to review an internship and/or evaluation.

- i. Suggested Meeting Agendas
 - ii. Sermon Response Forms
 - iii. Service Suggestions for the Starting and Ending Internship
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Suggested Meeting Agendas

The Lay Committee/Intern may choose different topics of discussion that may be more appropriate to the setting.

Month One

- Welcome the Intern, help them get settled and acquainted. Perhaps arrange for a guided tour of the congregation's campus and community – remember to include the Intern's family.
- Schedule the first committee meeting at which you begin introducing the committee members, asking each to share their story of faith; discuss learning experiences available and the needs of the congregation and the Intern.
- Review and formalize with the Supervisor and Intern the Learning Service Agreement. The internship project can also be discussed at this time.
- A time for sharing joys and concerns. This should become a monthly routine.

Month Two

- Check on housing and personal needs, including family's concerns.
- Discuss the transition from seminary to congregation.
- Talk about the agenda for the rest of the year.

Month Three

- Develop a process for providing feedback on the Intern's preaching and public scripture reading. Agree on when to use it and how.
- Allow time for committee members to discuss what they gain from sermons and what is helpful to them.
- If the Intern is married/partnered, discuss how congregational members relate to the Intern's spouse/partner.
- Begin looking at each of the areas of the midterm evaluation, and discuss what/how the Intern is doing and feeling with regard to each of them.

Month Four

- Discuss the Intern's sermon and worship leadership.
- Discuss ways of providing feedback on the Intern's teaching. Will you talk to students or participate in a class? The group should discuss the teaching role and the importance of the teaching ministry. Plan a feedback session for the next meeting.
- You may be in the holiday season now. Will the Intern be alone for Thanksgiving and Christmas? How can you be mindful of them as they spend the holidays away from family and friends?
- Discuss progress with Internship Project Plan.
- Continue looking at the areas of the midterm evaluation.

Month Five

- Discuss and provide feedback on the teaching ministry.
- Review the final Project Plan.
- Finish reviewing the midterm evaluation form and offer explanations in preparation for completing the forms.

Month Six

- Complete the Midterm Evaluation forms.
- Discuss the Midterm Evaluations with the Intern and the Supervisor, sign the forms and submit to PLTS and the Intern's candidacy committee.
- Check the Learning Service Agreement. Does it need to be updated?
- Discuss, reflect and evaluate your relationship to the other congregations in your area and your response to social concerns of the community, the synod, the country, and the world.
- Plan a process of feedback on of the pastoral visitation activity of the Intern. Why is it important? How can both lay and clergy minister to the shut-in, the sick, and the troubled? Plan to discuss this aspect of ministry at your next meeting.

Month Seven

- Discuss the feedback from the Midterm evaluation forms.
- Discuss pastoral visitation, ministry to the elderly, the sick, etc.
- Plan ways to explore the role of office manager. Become acquainted with day-to-day office administration.
- Make any necessary adjustments to the Learning Service Agreement.

Month Eight

- Discuss the role of the clergy in the broader Christian community. What is your congregation's relationship to the other churches in the community? How does your congregation relate to the Synod and Region? Examine social ministry opportunities in your community. What is the congregation doing in terms of justice, advocacy, community involvement, etc.?
- Review the Final Evaluation forms in preparation for completing them and the Summary Recommendations.

Month Nine

- Fill out the Final Evaluation forms and the Summary Recommendation Form.
- Discuss the Final Evaluations and Summary Recommendations with the Intern and the Supervisor, sign the forms and submit to PLTS (both) and the Intern's candidacy committee (evaluation form only).
- Discuss, reflect, and evaluate your relationship to the other congregations in your area and your response to social concerns.
- Review the past months. Summer plans are likely being made and the pastor may schedule vacation. Will the Intern have additional responsibilities when the pastor is on vacation? Will there be retreats? Will you cover the full range of ministry areas by the end of the year?
- By now, the Intern will be fairly free to organize work and to operate independently. Discuss how one plans work, sets priorities, and operates under great freedom.
- Review a sermon or discuss the ministry of lay people as it relates to the ordained minister.

Month Ten

- Discuss how the presence of the Intern has impacted the congregation.
- Make plans for next month.

Month Eleven

- Plan a "Service of Ending" for the Intern. Talk about "going away" issues.

Month Twelve

- Discuss the Final Evaluation Update form and draft a committee "consensus report".
- Evaluate the committee. How did the committee respond to the presence of the Intern? What could be improved? Were any issues not addressed? Do you have advice for the next internship committee or advice for the contextual education staff of the seminary? Overall, how well did the committee function?
- Say goodbye in a personal way and participate in the "Service of Ending".
- You may want to suggest/coordinate a farewell event for the Intern (and family).

Sermon Response Form #3:

Preacher: _____

Date: _____

Responder: _____

Pulpit Presence

- Was the preacher caught up in the message? Speaking from genuine feelings and conviction?

- Was the preacher speaking to you, eye-to-eye, person-to-person?

Delivery

- Rate: (varied, effective use of pause, rushed, monotonous, hesitant?)

- Volume: (strong, well directed, varied, monotonous, too soft, too loud?)

- Inflection: (varied pitch, monotonous pitch, enthusiastic, overly somber?)

- Articulation: (distinct, slurred, mumbled, affected precision, endings dropped?)

- Voice Quality: (clear, muffled, nasal, breathy, not enough breath, stained glass tone?)

- Eye Contact: (direct, sustained, varied, lacking, eyes glued to notes?)

- Posture: (relaxed, tense, swaying, leaning, distracting foot movement?)

- Gestures: (smooth, full, rigid, awkward, distracting, limited, nonexistent?)

Rites of Installation and Sending (for the beginning and ending of Internship)

There is no official order of service for the beginning or ending of an internship. You may adapt these sample services, write your own, or adapt a service from ELW Occasional Services. It is important that some public recognition of the beginning and completion of the internship year be made. It may or may not be appropriate to include the partner and/or family in this service. The arrangements should be made by mutual agreement. It would be appropriate to arrange for an informal reception for the intern in order to encourage congregational members to welcome and then say good-bye in a personal way.

A Service of Beginning

Congregation leader: Let us pray:

O God, through the Holy Spirit you illumine the minds and sanctify the lives of those who are called to be deacons, pastors, and teachers. Look with favor upon the seminaries of the ELCA as they seek to instruct those preparing to serve in the ministry of your Church. Bless your people in this congregation who by word and example aid your servant, *(Name)*, in learning to do the ministry for which *she/he/they is/are* being prepared. As we diligently work together, grant that our lives may be enriched and our ministries fulfilled with joy, to the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

The Apostle Paul writes: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. (I Cor. 12:4-6 NRSV) In the coming year, *(Name)* will work with the Supervisor, Lay Committee, and this congregation to be formed as a *deacon/pastor* and develop skills for ministry.

Congregation leader: I ask you, *(Name)*, are you willing to assume your partnership in ministry here, and will you seek to engage in that ministry to God's glory?

Intern: I am ready, and I ask God to guide and help me.

The congregation stands

Congregation leader: The members of this congregation and the supervisor are asked to accept *(Name)*, Intern *pastor/deacon*, as a partner in ministry: welcoming *her/him/them* into our homes, sharing in *his/her/their* learning and growth and encouraging, supporting and praying for *her/him/them*.

Now I ask you, will you receive *(Name)* as a partner in ministry and uphold and support *her/him/them* in every way?

Congregation: Yes, with God's help.

Congregation leader: Almighty God, by whose call we are at work, bless us in our labors together.

Let us pray.... God, we ask you to bless this congregation and this Intern, make us faithful to your word; empower us to show one another and all creation your justice and love; and bring all at last to your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

If not used elsewhere in the service, the Lord's Prayer may be used here.

Congregation leader:

May God

Go before you to show you the way;

Be behind you to encourage and inspire you;

Be beside you as your Faithful Friend;

Be above you to watch over you;

Be within you to give you peace;

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A Sending Liturgy

Congregation leader:

God's grace and peace be with you. **Amen.**

(Name), When we welcomed you *(and your partner/family)* last year to *Congregation's name*, it was our joy and privilege to welcome you as a partner in ministry. Today, we wish you Godspeed as you leave us for your next adventure to:

(Name), God has blessed you, and God has blessed us through you.

Other personal remarks may be added and gifts may be given.

Congregation leader:

May you be blessed to be a blessing, glorifying God in all things.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, we thank you for your presence in all our days, and we ask you to be with us especially this day as we say good-bye. We thank you for our time together, which is now ending. We thank you for the work of *our pastor (the supervisor)*, for the guidance of our Lay Committee, and for the encouragement and prayers of this congregation for *(Name)*. Bring *(Name)*, *(and family)* safely to their next endeavor: bless *his/her/their* preparations for ministry, and bless those with home they will serve and minister in the future. Keep those of us who remain behind safe in your loving arms and bless our continued ministry. And bring us all at last safely to your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

