

## LITURGY FOR THE DEPARTURE OF A PASTOR

(The congregation sitting, the departing pastor stands.)

Pastor Doug Rights, on Sunday, August 27, 2017, you were installed as our pastor to proclaim God's Word, to baptize and welcome new members into the church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to officiate at our celebrations of Holy Communion. 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 sorrow, you have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community. You have served our congregation faithfully these past seven years. You are now leaving our midst to retire. As your fellow members of this congregation, we wish to honor your ministry among us and bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavor, bringing closure to your ministry at King Moravian Church.

(The departing pastor addresses the congregation:)

**I thank you, the members of King Moravian, for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to my family and me during my active ministry among you. I am grateful for the ministry we have shared together. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned and experienced from here.**

(The congregation responds:)

**We receive your thankfulness. We accept that you now leave us to enter into your retirement. We express our gratitude for your time among us. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness for many in our church family will not leave us at your departure.**

(The pastor responds:)

**Thank you, King Moravian, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.**

(The congregation stands.)

Do you, members of King Moravian Church, release Pastor Doug Rights from his duties as your pastor, and recognize that he will no longer serve among you in pastoral duties and responsibilities?

**We do, with God's help.**

Do you offer encouragement for his ministry as it unfolds in his new situation?

**We do, with God's help.**

(The following questions are addressed to the departing pastor.)

Doug, as you conclude your service as pastor of this congregation, do you release the leaders and members of King Moravian Church from turning to you and depending on you?

**I do, with God's help.**

Do you offer your prayers and encouragement for God's ongoing work here?

**I do, with God's help.**

Though you are no longer our pastor, you remain our brother in Christ. We will uphold you in our prayers as you begin this new chapter in your life of service and ongoing ministry. We pledge our support and love to you and wish you God's blessing.

Let us pray:

God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories, but move us in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

(On behalf of the congregation, the Vice-Chair offers the Right Hand of Fellowship to the departing pastor as the following hymn stanza is sung:)

Covenant (185 A), Hymn 447

With your presence, Lord, our Head and Savior, bless him now, we  
humbly pray;  
Our dear heavenly Father's love and favor be his comfort every day.  
May God's Spirit now in each proceeding favor him with his most  
gracious leading;  
Thus shall he be truly blessed both in labor and in rest.