

Service of Farewell to a Home

GATHERING

Officiant: We gather here today to give thanks to God for *(name of property)*, to remember what it has meant to us, and to pray for the *(household or family name)* who are leaving it.

Optional: We also pray the *(household or family name)* for whom this place will become their home.

Officiant: We ask God's blessing upon you as we lift our hearts in prayer.

PRAAYER OF PRAISE

*All: Almighty God, you are a God of creation, and of love,
Your everlasting rainbow, set high in the clouds,
and your crucified Son, who gave his life for the world,
reminds us of this re-creation and love.*

*Grant us eyes to see your majesty in creation,
even as we walk away from the familiar into the unknown,
Grant us ears to hear your words of eternal comfort,
even in the painful exits.*

*Grant us the gift of your grace to travel the rough road
of the uncertain tomorrow.*

*For all days - even the tomorrows have been formed by your hand
and we praise your name. For we too want to say of all your works
"It is very good". Amen*

Officiant: The Scriptures are filled with stories of people who have been called to move to new places: Abraham and Sarah, Mary and Joseph, Paul and Barnabas, Priscilla and Aquilla. Filled with uncertainty about what lay ahead, these people of God could not have found their moves easy. Yet they were also filled with excitement, trusting that God was calling them and guiding them to a new place. And now you, our beloved friend/s, are preparing to leave us and go to a new place, a new home, and a new church. As a part of this body of Christ over the past years, you have given *yourselves/yourself* in ways that we have appreciated and will miss.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

One or more readings to be offered. They may be read by the officiant or member(s) of the household.

Genesis 1: 28-31 Creation and stewardship

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 Everything has its time

Psalms 63: 1-5 Our thirst for God

Psalms 107: 33-38 God's blessing upon the land

Ezekiel 34: 7-16 Shepherd and sheep images

Matthew 6:25-34 Do not worry

Romans 8:31-39 God's love in Christ

REFLECTION

Guidelines for the individual or family reflection of the time spent in the home:

The person(s) leaving the home will offers a reflection which may include reflections sharing

- how this house was selected to be the new home
- about moving in day
- the milestones that may have taken place - births, first steps, graduations, weddings, and deaths
- thoughts about the difficult times
- thoughts about the good times and the blessings embraced
- projects, such as renovations, if applicable
- remembrances of the neighbors and the neighborhood
- feelings about leaving
- anticipations for the next part of the journey

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SHARED MEAL

A meal shared with family and friends may be appropriately offered here.

After the meal the following prayer is said

Officiant: Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God,

for you have created the wide and wonderful world in which we live.

We praise you for your constant care for those who have trusted you in ages past, who journeyed in faith to new lands of promise.

We trust that now you will hold *N* securely in your hands as *they*, too, follow your call to a new place.

May *they* take with *them* hearts filled with your love and grace, that those with whom *they* live and work may see in *them* the face of Jesus Christ.

Bless them that *they* may be a blessing.

Guide *them* to a new church home, where *they* may continue to grow in grace, in Spirit, and in truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Lord send us anywhere, only go there with us.

Lay any burden on us, only share it with us.

Sever any tie, save the tie that binds us to you,

Lord, we consecrate our lives to you.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Parts of this service are adapted from:

<https://jewishsacredaging.com/a-ritual-for-leaving-the-family-home>

The RCA Reformed Church in America

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