

SERVICE OF RECOGNITION FOR "PASTOR EMERITUS/A"

Resource 9

READING OF THE RESOLUTION

President of Church Council

Rev. _____, _____ Church, United Church of Christ, would like to honor you today for the many years of service here. You have been a distinguished leader and a faithful shepherd; our congregation has grown in our faith in Jesus Christ and has dramatically increased our mission and outreach because of your challenging ministry. The life of our Church is richer and fuller because we have had you living and working among us.

On _____, the Church Council voted unanimously, and the congregation subsequently agreed, to honor you with the title of "Pastor Emeritus" ("Pastor Emerita").
(Motion/resolution is read.)

PRESENTATION OF THE PASTOR and THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE HONOR

Would you please come forward?

Rev. _____, do you now accept this recognition to which you have been elected by the Church Council and the congregation of _____ Church, United Church of Christ and will you now receive the honorary title of "Pastor Emeritus/a"?

THE RESPONSE BY THE PASTOR

THE RESPONSE OF THE CONGREGATION (standing) led by President.

We, the members and friends of _____ Church, rejoice in your acceptance of the title, "Pastor Emeritus/a". We hold in high regard this special honor you have received. We pledge to you our continuing love, our constant care and our sustaining prayers through all of the days before us. (congregation be seated)

THE STATEMENT OF THE MEANING OF THIS RECOGNITION (a church officer)

The conferring of this honor on you is a way of recognizing your distinguished service and also saying, "We love you"! You are indeed our beloved former pastor. The recognition carries with it no professional responsibilities, and nothing is to be required of you or expected of you by virtue of this honor. Rather, it is a visible and symbolic way of declaring to you, to the community, and the denomination this church's esteem and honor.

THE PRAYER OF RECOGNITION Current Pastor

Almighty God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth by your wisdom, and has brought us to this high and holy moment of commitment and praise, we give you heartfelt thanks for the long and fruitful ministry of your servant, Rev. _____. For the

lessons we have learned from her/his faithful obedience to your will and way, for the caring and sharing, the living and loving by which she/he has enriched so many lives over the years, we are most grateful. Continue to bless, we pray, both her/him and _____ as they continue in their retirement. Amen

**THE DECLARATION AND PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE OF STANDING AS
“PASTOR EMERITUS” (“PASTOR EMERITA”.)**

(By Association or Conference Representative)

(Read the Certificate and/or Plaque)

Rev. _____, by acclamation of this congregation accompanied by heartfelt applause of this Association and Conference, I hereby declare you “Pastor Emeritus/a” of _____ Church, United Church of Christ and present you with this Certificate/Plaque.

(Other gifts of the congregation may be given at this time.)

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

(While it is strongly recommended that this honor be conferred after the new pastor has been called, there may continue to be situations where a church wishes to confer the honor as part of the retiring pastor’s final Sunday service. If so, the preceding may be incorporated into the *Book of Worship* service for the “Ending of an Authorized Ministry.”)

(Adapted, Fox Valley Association, Illinois Conference)