

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help us to trust the future which rests in your care. Guide us as we hold cherished memories but now move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

**Amen.**

**President:** Go now, Pastor Peterman, surrounded by our love and led by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation: Amen.**



## **Litany of Farewell for Interim Pastor Janet Peterman**

**President:** A church family is constantly changing. Loved ones come to the end of their lives. Individuals come and go in our church life. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Because this interim time has been stretched longer than we could have imagined by the pandemic, we are all weary of being in transition! Yet our bonds of connection and love are deep. With both joy for what is coming and sorrow at the parting, today we share a time of farewell with Pastor Janet Peterman, whose time as our Interim Pastor ends today.

**Pastor:** God has blessed us in our work together: I thank you for your partnership in the gospel. It has been a joy to work together and to see the fruits of our common work. I thank you for accepting my leadership. I am grateful for the many things we were able to accomplish together, and for the future that has opened up in new ways for Grace.

On a personal level, I want to thank you, Grace, and each and all of you, members and friends, for the love, kindness and support you have shown me during my tenure. When I should have been nearly done, then Kent had his accident, and you were gracious beyond measure. I will never forget your kindness.

Interim work is often uncomfortable. We have to try things we have not done before, confront things that are not working well, talk about things where we are not all of the same mind. Because I come with a background in redeveloping congregations, I know that at least half of the new things we try will not work – but if I told you that in advance, you would never have consented to have me come among you!

From the perspective of where we stand now, with new growth really begun, new staff in place, I ask your understanding of that, as we look back over this time of transition.

Yes, I've made mistakes, probably some you haven't told me about. I have not reached some of the goals I set for myself. I ask your forgiveness, if I have hurt you. I'm sad about these shortcomings as I leave, and I hope you will free me from carrying them with me.

**Congregation: Pastor, we receive your thankfulness.  
We are grateful to have had your leadership for these 2 years,  
4 months and 19 days...  
...even when we wanted the transition to be over.**

**President:** but who's counting?!?

**Congregation:**  
**We are grateful for all that we were able to accomplish  
together and are so excited about our future.  
We thank you for all you have offered to Grace,  
for the sharing of your many gifts.  
We forgive you, as we are able, and thank you  
with all our hearts.  
We don't want you to carry any burdens with you  
from your time at Grace.  
We accept that you leave us now to rest.  
We look forward to hearing if you will be in ministry again.**

**We want to express our gratitude to you for all you have  
done for Grace, and for us. If we have disappointed you,  
or if in any way, we have hurt you, we ask your forgiveness.  
We want you to know that your influence on our lives  
will not leave us, even though you depart from us.**

**Pastor:** Nothing stands between us. I accept your gratitude. I forgive you. Together, we stand in the presence of the Living God, who makes us both whole. We can trust that both our time together and our parting are pleasing to God and to Jesus whom we are called to serve.

**President:** *walking the pastor around to each station, that the symbols of the pastoral office might be returned to the congregation for the next pastor's use*

**At the font:** We have rejoiced to return to baptizing this year! And thrilled to see the joy building in this community for a baptismal ministry with families. Thank you for showing us the way.

**Pastor:** Bless your work with families and children!

**At the pulpit:** Thank you for bringing the Word to us, week in and week out.

**Pastor:** May you ever long for food that satisfies!

**At the altar:** Thank you for presiding at the table, and in the parking lot, and online! For carrying us through worship in such a difficult year, with your gracious presence.

**Pastor:** May the presence of the living Christ ever sustain you!

**President:** Do you the members and friends of Grace release Pastor Janet Peterman from her duties as pastor of Grace, from her continuing ministry in this place?

**Congregation: We do, with the help of God.**

**President:** Do you offer your encouragement to her as she goes?

**Congregation: We do, with the help of God.**

**President:** Will you, Pastor Peterman, release Grace and its members from turning to you or depending upon you?

**Pastor:** I will, with the help of God.

**President:** Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here at Grace, without you?

**Pastor:** I will, with the help of God.

**President:** Let us pray.