Northwestern Ohio Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Office of the Bishop
1701 Tiffin Avenue
Findlay, Ohio 45840
Phone: 419.423.3664
www.nwos-elca.org

COVENANT OF SEPARATION – (Pastor _____)

Pastor _____:
On behalf of Bishop Daniel G. Beaudoin, the _____ Conference and this Synod, I extend to you our thoughts and prayers upon your leave-taking from (church, city).

The following is a ***Covenant of Separation*** designed to help guide changes in the relationship between you and the people of (church, city) after you have departed from this ministry. It is intended to strengthen accountability for you and the parish through establishing safe and healthy relationships and ministerial boundaries moving forward.

Healthy boundaries and limited communication with the (church, city) worshipping community includes the following activities at any time after your official resignation date: not participating in any conversations related to (church, city)'s ministry with members, staff or anyone associated with the congregation; not participating in any ministerial functions or responding to requests for engagement in preaching, staff relations, hospital or ministerial visitation, funerals, youth events or education-related activities at (church, city). In essence, upon your last day with the people of (church, city) and the congregation's ministry, you are no longer able to serve as Pastor for this parish and do not have the authority to make such commitments, perform duties or offer professional recommendations to/for the congregation.

It is important for all members of the parish to understand the importance of this agreement. While it is hard to minimize some relationships, it is absolutely essential that any future contacts be on a friendly basis and we suggest that for an extended period of time, at least 12 months, these contacts be limited as well. These Covenant boundaries certainly affirm your past service but are important so that the parish can bond with and build a trusting relationship with new pastoral leader(s) who will provide the necessary ministry functions.

Again, if invited to participate in a ministerial role by a member of the parish, you are not at liberty to accept the invitation. The Synod will be working with (church)'s leaders to ensure that appropriate care is received throughout the transition process. We also encourage that you, as the Pastor leaving this ministry, not receive or entertain negative comments or participate in conversations or activities which might undermine the parish's ministry, programs or people.

This Covenant is offered to you and the people of (church, city) for the sole purpose of strengthening mission and ministry in the future. It acknowledges deep gratitude for the past years of your significant ministry together and is built on Christ's hope for you and this parish as you both move ahead, but separately, in mission and ministry.

We ask for the designated signatures below as a promise that both parties agree to uphold this Covenant of Separation for the health and welfare of both (church, city) and you, Pastor _____.

Blessings and Peace,
Sherry L. Krieger – Assistant to the Bishop for Strengthening Parishes & Synod Development, NWOS-ELCA

_____, Date _____ _____, Date _____

Church Council President Pastor

"For I know the plans I have you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11