

COVENANT OF CLOSURE
Of
Heartland Presbytery

The Rev. _____; the _____
Church of _____, Missouri/Kansas, and the Committee on Ministry of
the Presbytery of Heartland having discussed the intent and requirements of the Presbytery's
"Ministerial Practice in Relationship to a Former Parish" policy enter into the following covenant:

1. The Rev. _____ agrees
 - a. not to involve him/herself in any leadership or advisory role (public or private) in the
_____ Church of _____,
Missouri/Kansas
 - b. not to intervene, support or give advice to anyone involved in a congregational
disagreement or dispute;
 - c. not to officiate in any special events in the lives of former parishioners or of the
congregation, including weddings, funerals, baptisms, worship leadership, church
anniversary activities, etc. unless expressly invited by the Moderator of the Session;
 - d. to refuse requests for pastoral services made by members of the _____
congregation;
 - e. to recognize that some conflicts make it unwise for a prior pastor to return to visit a
previous congregation, and as a matter of professional courtesy, to establish an
understanding with the new Moderator of Session regarding subsequent visits to the
church, attending worship or attending a special event;
 - f. to refrain from giving opinions or direction regarding church business that could
undermine the transition necessary for the church and the development of the
relationship between the congregation and a new pastor;
 - g. in the event that the departing pastor continues to live in the area and does not begin
service to another church, he/she will not normally attend congregational events for at
least one year, or at least one year after a new pastor is installed. After this period, in
consultation with and invitation by the session and the current pastoral leadership, the
departing pastor may resume worshiping and fellowship within the congregation,
provided that the requirements above continue to be observed; however
 - h. if the departing pastor has family, (spouse, children, grandchildren) who remain active in
the former congregation, in consultation and with the approval of the current pastoral
leadership, he/she may be attend isolated "special events" in the life of the relative, e.g.,
baptism, ordination, marriage, Christmas programs, always being careful to observe the
criteria contained in this agreement.

It is understood that this policy does not affect or require the termination of friendships with individuals in the former congregation.

2. The Session and members of the _____ congregation agree
 - a. not to initiate pastoral or professional contact with previous pastors;
 - b. to respect the terms of the Covenant of Closure agreed upon by The Rev. _____ outlined above;
 - c. to interpret the terms of the Covenant of Closure to the congregation; and
 - d. to incorporate this agreement in the Session minutes.

3. The Presbytery of Heartland's Committee on Ministry shall
 - a. interpret this Covenant of Closure to the Session of _____ Church;
 - b. be the Presbytery's agent in reminding the parties to this Covenant of Closure of the principles of the Covenant in the event any transgressions are reported to it;
 - c. note this agreement in the minutes of the Committee on Ministry; and
 - d. Consider setting aside portions of this policy if requested by a departing pastor and the session of the former congregation.

I have read the Presbytery's policy, "Ministerial Practices in Relationship to a Former Parish." I understand these policies and agree to abide by them.

Pastor

Date

Clerk of Session

Date

Name of church

City

Committee on Ministry representative

Date