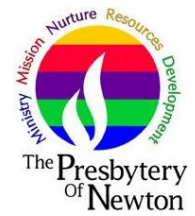


## SEPARATION ETHICS COVENANT



By signing this form the departing/retiring pastor and the congregation, through the Clerk of the Session, indicate that after separation each party will seek to act in ways that promote the good health of the other. When questions arise if certain behavior is appropriate, each party will discuss them with the COM liaison or the Presbytery Leader. Both sides affirm that although the relationships of friendship continue after departure, the pastoral relations do not.

### **Ethics for the Retiring/Departing Pastor**

- It is essential to refrain from all pastoral contact.
- The retired/former pastor should make every effort to be supportive of his/her successor. Contacts from members of the former congregation shall always be referred to the present pastor or the Session of the church.
- It is strongly recommended that the retired/former pastor and his/her family become active in the work and worship of another congregation.
- A retired/former pastor shall refrain from all pastoral functions and not accept any leadership responsibilities in his/her former church including teaching, visitation, pulpit supply, weddings, funerals or baptisms.
- A retired/former pastor shall refrain from formal or informal participation in or comment on the work of a pastor nominating committee.
- Any invitations to participate in weddings or funerals or special services for members of the church should be taken under advisement with the stipulation that the retired/former pastor assists and does not officiate. This invitation shall only come from the new pastor.
- The conducting of funerals of nonmembers defined as persons never connected with the congregation might continue to be done so long as the services do not occur in any place other than the funeral home or cemetery.
- A retired/former pastor should not participate in any live online church activities, including Sunday worship, unless specifically invited to do so by the pastor.
- A retired/former pastor must be cautious in the use of social media: guarded and gracious as to what is posted and sensitive to possible interpretations of responses to the posts of others.

### **Ethics for the Congregation of the Retiring/Departing Pastor**

- Members of the congregation should not request a former pastor to perform pastoral duties nor invite the retired/former pastor to live online church activities.
- While there continues to be bonds of affection between members and the

former pastor, members should not discuss nor should the retired pastor encourage discussion about church business, issues, personalities, or events.

- Congregations should celebrate with the retiring/departing pastor the achievements within his/her time in the church and the parting should be within the bounds of mutual affection, admiration, and respect.

### **The Role of the Committee on Ministry**

- The COM shall enforce the above statement for guidelines for retiring/departing pastors and shall respond immediately to any complaints involving the above statement for guidelines by counseling with the retired pastor and the congregation.

Signed by

Clerk of Session

Pastor

COM liaison