

# Life's Transitions

## *Celebration of a Retirement*

### Invitation

*Name* has decided to retire from the vocation of (*name of vocation*) into a time of retirement. We invite (*her/him*) to come forward.

*(In a longer time frame the individual may share something about his or her vocation. The retiree may speak of how it was a calling from God and in what ways the work served God and others. Others may wish to express appreciation. The person may wish to share some plans for retirement.)*

**Scripture**      Psalm 90:16–17

### Prayer

God, we offer thanks for the time, energy, and commitment (*Name*) gave (*example: as a teacher*). We celebrate all that (*she/he*) gave in service. We release the frustrations of this work and reclaim its blessings. We name the loneliness and loss of identification that retirement brings in our job-oriented culture, and ask for your tenderness during this time of transition. We pray for your abundant grace in the anticipated and unexpected blessings of the days to come, and for opening horizons of new ways to experience meaning and serve you and others, praying through Jesus Christ, who served others as carpenter, rabbi, healer, and friend. Amen.

### Lighting New Possibilities

*(Three candles are placed on the communion table. One is lit and two others have fresh wicks.)*

Individual:      This candle represents my work as (*name type of work*). I light this candle (*lights one candle with the previously lit one*) to represent my blessing on those who will carry on this work in my place. I light this candle (*indicates third candle*) to represent my excitement about the possibilities of retirement. (*Lights third candle.*)  
*Leave candles burning through the remainder of the service.)*

## *Prayers for Job Loss*

In times of financial hardship in a congregation, with many who are out work, this prayer may serve as prayers of the people. The prayer may be followed with the Prayer of Our Savior/Lord's Prayer and the Passing of the Peace.

### Invitation

The loss of a job is a wound to identity and self-confidence in our culture, which often values a person according to his or her career. The loss of a job is also a source of financial vulnerability, family friction, and danger to health and future through the loss of insurance and pension. Let us speak, aloud or in our hearts, the first names of those who come to mind who in the past have been without work or who have been fired or laid off. Speak and listen.

*(There is a time when person's names may be spoken.)*

Listen; hear the names. We are particularly sensitive to those who may be among us who may be facing this situation now. May they know the cloud of witnesses who, with God's help, survived this difficult time.

### **Prayer**

God, we seek your strength and healing for those who are facing job loss now. Help each person so affected to claim with assurance his or her precious value as God's child. Draw families together and knit around them support and care. Some of us are threatened by homelessness, uninsured medical bills, or inability to provide for children. Confirm in our spirits your promise that for every empty bucket, there is living water, for every empty net, a miraculous catch, for every empty noontime, a lunch of loaves and fish. Amen.