**Mutual Expectations between Rector and Parish**

**when the Rector is leaving**

Parties to this Agreement:

The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Out- going Rector’s full name*

The Vestry and Parishioners of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  *Name of parish / town*

The Diocese of Massachusetts, represented by The Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates or his

Successors.

This agreement will be shared with the interim priest, and later with the candidate for the new Rector, and shall be part of the agreement in the calling of both. The interim priest and new rector will also be asked to review and adopt this agreement as they begin their work at the parish.

Rationale:

*Letting go, I become free to receive something new;*

*I may not see it now but I have faith it will come*

It is for the health of Christ’s Body, the Church, that all involved are agreeing to these expectations in preparation for the Rector’s leave taking.

We acknowledge that the bonds of love and common purpose that have bound us together as clergy and people are important and meaningful. As we move through this transition the grief we feel in letting go of these bonds in preparation to the next chapter of ministry is a measure of the presence of Christ among us. Despite that grief and the pain of parting, we commit to these expectations trusting that God abides with us and is leading us on to a new chapter. It has been the experience of our Diocesan community that when such expectations are followed and the healthy boundaries that flow from them, all involved are set on a course to pursue our God given work in discrete and healthy ways.

Expectations:

Entering into this agreement in a spirit of Christian love and respect we agree to the following principals and responsibilities:

1. The initial period of absence will begin upon outgoing Rector’s final day, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, include the tenure of the interim Priest, and extend for

*Date of final Sunday*

one year after the new Rector assumes leadership.

1. During the initial period of absence, the former Rector will not lead nor participate in Sunday morning and other regularly scheduled church services, parish gatherings, meetings, and events, including pastoral activities, classes and fellowship activities and other acts that are traditionally attended to by a Rector or assisting clergy of the parish. Members of the parish will be expected to plan baptisms, weddings and funerals with the Interim Priest, and then the new Rector who will lead those services. If the former rector is contacted directly by a member of the parish and asked to officiate at a baptism, wedding, funeral or other pastoral event, it is urged that the former rector **not** say that he/she needs the permission of the interim or new rector to do so, as this sets up an unhelpful triangulation. Rather it is expected that the former rector will respond that he/she is no longer serving in that pastoral role and that the interim priest or new rector is the one who will fulfill those pastoral duties now.
2. During this period of initial absence, the former Rector and her/his family members are welcome to ask the discretion of the Interim Priest, Rector or Vestry if they would like to attend weddings or funerals as well as concerts, exhibits, and other events open to the public, but which are not primarily Parish gatherings. The former Rector and her/his family members agree to abide by the decision of the Interim Priest or new Rector. It is expected that the family of the former Rector seek out spiritual community and pastoral care within another congregation.
3. During this period of initial absence, the former Rector will intentionally step back from pursuing ongoing friendships with individual members of the parish staff and with parishioners. Her/his informal contacts with them - running into them and chatting in the grocery store, or at some social/community event, etc. - are in line with the spirit of these expectations as long as those contacts do not center on talk of parish business. The former Rector commits to take great care in this regard, so that these contacts do not disrupt the new connections growing between staff members, parishioners and the interim priest or new Rector. If either the interim priest or new Rector feels there is a problem in this regard they are strongly encouraged to speak to the former Rector immediately about it. If that conversation does not solve the problem the interim priest of new Rector will contact their Regional Canon for assistance, and if necessary consultation with the Bishop.
4. The interim priest and the new Rector shall initiate contact with the former Rector as soon as possible to discuss this agreement and ways that they can support each other in accomplishing its goals, and will make every effort to develop a collegial relationship. As part of this agreement it is understood that the departing priest and the new priest will affirm one another’s ministries and not undermine those ministries in any way.
5. After the initial period of absence has passed, the new Rector will have the discretion to invite the former Rector to participate in specific services and activities of the parish, or not to do so as she/he sees fit. The former Rector covenants to honor all such decisions of the new Rector and to continue to honor the spirit of these expectations, understanding that her/his presence may have unintended negative consequences for the new Rector’s developing relationship with the parish.
6. The Vestry will communicate this agreement and purpose to the parish. During the initial period of absence, the Vestry will review this agreement at least semi-annually, with the Interim Priest / new Rector to make sure all is working well with regard to the expectations stated herein.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Departing Rector / Clergy

For the parish by:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sr. Warden

**For The Diocese of Massachusetts:**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates

**This Agreement is received by:**

Interim Pastor:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

New Rector:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_