**Sample Letter from a Departing Pastor to the Congregation…**

(in this example the pastor is retiring but it can be adapted for any situation)

Dear Friends,

Occasionally we need to adjust to role changes. Our “little children” become adults and we begin to relate to them as fellow adults and peers. A fellow worker becomes our supervisor and there is a different relationship.

My role will change in a few weeks. Will no longer be in the role of a parish pastor. Instead I will be living nearby you as your former pastor.

I will be your neighbor, a fellow citizen of the community, an acquaintance, a friend. While I will still be an ordained minister and a pastor I will not be serving as your pastor. I (and you) will need to adjust to a role change.

My traveling out of town much of the time will lessen the challenge of the adjustment. However, there may still be awkward moments. I will try to do y part to not add to the struggle of the adjustment. While I will initially still be a member of the Presbytery, I will not interfere in this church’s organization or administration. The decisions you will face in transition will be in my prayers, but they will not be my decisions. I will support the decisions and actions of the present and future pastors and congregational leaders.

The present and future staff of Knox Church will provide all pastoral care. I feel it is in the best interest f the whole congregation and its future ministry that I do not conduct funerals, weddings, etc. They are best done by those whom the Lord now calls to serve you. I’m sure they, too, will love and care for you in the name of Jesus.

While I certainly will meet you in the community and genuinely ask “How are you (not the church) doing?” I will not provide the congregational pastoral counseling which is best left to your present and future pastors and the agencies they would recommend.

I count it as a great blessing to have served in the rle as your Pastor. I and my family consider it a blessing to continue to reside in this community with you May God continue to bless our witness together.

In the name of our Risen Lord,

Pastor Susan

(adapted from a letter by a Lutheran Church pastor)