

SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY FOR PARISH MINISTERS AND EDUCATORS IN _____ PRESBYTERY

Policy Statement

The Presbytery of _____ recommends to the sessions of its churches that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Church Educators be granted a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months after six (6) years of service to an individual church.

Rationale

A sabbatical will enable the minister/educator to be renewed through the vital pursuit of continuing education, extended time spent in spiritual formation, and fresh mentoring by respected teachers. A sabbatical enables a minister/educator to return to the responsibilities of the parish with new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness.

Committee on Ministry Responsibilities

1. Review the sabbatical timetable and usage plan as submitted by the minister.
2. Serve as mediator in any concerns of session, educator or minister relative to the sabbatical.
3. Determine who will moderate the session in the minister's absence.

Minister or Educator Responsibilities

1. Bring the sabbatical proposal before the session – at least in outline form - a minimum of six months before the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
2. Secure the approval of the session for the sabbatical proposal and work out the necessary coverage of pastoral and pulpit responsibilities.
3. Assure the session of continued service to the church for at least one full year from the conclusion of the sabbatical.
4. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the session before departing on a sabbatical.
5. Submit to Committee on Ministry in writing the sabbatical timetable and outline of plans.
6. Upon return, present an overview of the sabbatical experience to the session and the Committee on Ministry.

Session Responsibilities

1. Receive "for approval" the minister's proposal for a sabbatical, at least six (6) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
 2. Continue terms of call commitments to the minister during sabbatical leave.
 3. Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
 4. Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the minister upon return.
- Additional Responsibilities/Information, If agreed upon by session and the minister, the sabbatical might be combined with study leave for extended graduate study.

A SABBATH LEAVE POLICY FOR THE EXEMPT STAFF OF _____ PRESBYTERY

Policy: The Presbytery may grant Sabbatical Leave to the General Presbyter and Full-time Associate Presbyters. Sabbaticals shall be for no more than three months with pay, but vacation time may be added if necessary for the Sabbath leave designed. The leave will be for professional development and related to the life of the Presbytery. Only one presbytery program staff person may be on sabbatical leave at any given time.

Eligibility: The General Presbyter and full-time Associate Presbyters must have been employed with the Presbytery for a minimum of six (6) consecutive years and not interrupted by prolonged personal paid leave or leave of absence. A report on learning in relation to agreed goals must be reviewed with the personal Function Group and General Presbyter (when applicable, as with the Associate Presbyters) within one month after the completion of the leave,

Study Plan: A detailed written plan of study with clearly identified goals and expected end-products must be approved by the committee on Ministry and the Personnel Function Group long enough in advance so that budget and staffing needs may be met during the time the Exempt Staff is on Sabbatical Leave.

Sample Recommendations to Presbytery:

1. That _____ Presbytery approve the Sabbatical Policy outline for Ministers and Educators serving churches in _____ Presbytery and strongly encourage member churches to adopt it for their ministers and educators.
2. That the Sabbatical Leave Policy be presented to all Pastor Nominating Committees and commended to them for inclusion in the Terms of Call.
3. That _____ Presbyter approve the Sabbatical Leave Policy outlined for Exempt Staff of _____ Presbytery.