

SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY
**FOR PARISH MINISTERS AND EDUCATORS
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSIDERATION**

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. Additional information is available at the Presbytery office.

Recommendation

The Presbytery of the Pacific recommends to each of the Sessions of its Churches that it consider implementing a policy that would grant to Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Church Educators a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months after six (6) years of service to an individual church. The Committee on Ministry will assist the Sessions and the ministers/educators in both (i) designing a specific sabbatical leave policy for the individual church, and (ii) meeting the responsibilities of the COM as set forth below.

The recommended sabbatical leave policy follows.

Policy Statement

The Session believes that the Church should provide each Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and each Church Educator serving in its church on a full-time basis be provided a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months, to be made available after six (6) years of service to the Church. The specifics of each sabbatical will be different, but in outline, the sabbatical program should include each of the following.

Committee on Ministry Responsibilities

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

Minister/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, pulpit and other 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/educator’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/educator upon return. If agreed upon by Session and the minister, the sabbatical might be combined with study leave for extended graduate study.