

Healthy Ministry

Sabbatical leave guidelines for parish ministers, educators, & Commissioned pastors

Statement

The Presbytery of the Pines recommends to the sessions of its churches that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Certified Church Educators, and Commissioned Pastors 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 / CP to return to the responsibilities of the parish with new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness.

Committee on Ministry Responsibilities

- Review the sabbatical timetable and usage plan as submitted by the minister/educator/CP.
- Serve as mediator in any concerns of session, educator, minister, CP relative to the sabbatical.
- Determine who will moderate the session in the minister/CP absence.

Minister or Educator Responsibilities

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

Session Responsibilities

- Receive “for approval” the minister’s / educator’s / CP’s proposal for a sabbatical, at least six (6) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
- Continue terms of call commitments to the minister / employment commitments to the educator / CP during sabbatical leave.
- Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
- Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the minister / educator / CP upon return.

Additional Responsibilities / Information

If agreed upon by the session and the minister / educator/ CP, the sabbatical might be combined with study leave for extended graduate study.

-- approved by Presbytery, 2/17/08