

SABBATICALS

I. Policy Statement

The Presbytery of San José recommends to the sessions of its churches that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament be granted a compensated sabbatical of three months after seven years of service to an individual church.

II. Rationale

A sabbatical allows the minister to be renewed through the vital pursuit of continuing education, extended time spent in spiritual formation, and being mentored. A sabbatical enables a pastor to return to the responsibilities of ministry, bringing new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness to the congregation.

III. Responsibilities

A. Committee on Ministry (COM) Responsibilities

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

B. Minister 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 congregation for at least one full year from the conclusion of the sabbatical. A sabbatical is not to be taken at the time of retirement or dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
4. Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the session before departing on a sabbatical.
5. Submit to COM in writing the sabbatical time table and outline of plans.
6. Upon return, present an overview of the sabbatical experience to the session and the COM.

C. Session Responsibilities

1. Receive for approval the minister's proposal for a sabbatical, preferably at least six months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.

2. Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
3. Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the minister upon return.

D. Additional Responsibilities/Information

1. If the session and minister agree, the sabbatical may be combined with study leave.
2. Sabbaticals may not be accumulated, nor taken consecutively.
3. Another cycle of seven years of service begins on completion of the sabbatical.