

VIEW OF SABBATICAL LEAVE FOR STAFF ELDERS AND DEACONS

Rationale

Exodus 23:10-11

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat.

Reminder to Church that God is the leader of the Church, Dependence on God alone, a time of renewal for the pastor.

A sabbatical is aimed at reinvigorating and renewing the mind and heart of the pastor/minister through rest, fun, research, purposeful travel, reading, writing, etc. A sabbatical is part vacation but it is so much more. The pastor/minister will be encouraged to pursue continuing education, spiritual formation/renewal, and/or mentoring by leaders or teachers in their field. A sabbatical enables a pastor to return to the responsibilities of the church with new energy, spiritual vision and effectiveness.

Policy Statement

The Elders of Summit Community Church may grant full time pastors and ministers a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months after six (6) years of service.

Sabbaticals shall be no more than three months with pay, but vacation time may be added if necessary. The leave will be for rest, working on the soul, time with family, and time away from working on the ministry. Only one pastor may be on sabbatical leave at any given time. A pastor must be in 'good standing' regarding duties, roles and responsibilities and not under church discipline.

Part-time ministers may also be eligible for Sabbatical after six (6) years of service. There time shall be limited to two months with pay, but vacation time may be added if necessary. The leave will be for rest, time with family, and professional development related to the life of the church.

Pastors Responsibilities

A Pastor must request a sabbatical in writing to the Elders and secure their approval before plans are made. The request should be submitted up to six months in advance (exceptions will be made case by case).

Following the request, the pastor/minister needs to turn a sabbatical plan that includes the following:

- 1) a broad or general outline of the time table and travel plans,
- 2) a plan of what will be done to feed and work on their soul,
- 3) a plan of who will cover their current responsibilities and activities (include phone #s),

- 4) bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the elders prior to departing on a sabbatical,
- 5) a determined number of short blogs the pastor/minister will write for the body during their time away (six is a good minimum number).

Upon return, present an overview of the sabbatical experience to the elders and appropriate ministry teams.

Elders Responsibilities

Receive “for approval” the pastor’s/minister’s proposal for a sabbatical, at least six (6) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical. Review the sabbatical timetable and plan as submitted by the pastor. Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical. Communicate the church this pastor’s/minister’s sabbatical. Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the pastor/minister upon return.

Eligibility

The pastor must have been employed by Summit Community Church for a minimum of six (6) consecutive years and not interrupted by prolonged personal paid leave or leave of absence. The pastor/minister must assure the elders they will be employed at the church for one year after their return from sabbatical

Finances

The elders will offer a stipend of no more than \$1,500 to help defray some of the costs of a sabbatical. This will be spent on the church credit card for accountability purposes. The elders will take up a love offering to help toward these costs as well.