

# Sabbatical Leave Policies & Procedures

Sabbaticals are a wise and healthful investment for all involved. Those taking sabbatical leave benefit, as do those left behind. If they are open to it, all involved in and affected by a sabbatical leave have an opportunity to grow and explore new opportunities and, in some cases, responsibilities. In turn, this growth, renewal, and experience for opportunity produce significant results, including lower staff turnover and fewer high level conflicts leading to terminations.”

The cost of conflict in congregations is high. Generally one to three years of conflict and then termination are followed by one to three years of an interim period, and three to five years for new clergy leadership and a new strategic direction to emerge. Consequently, five to eleven years may be lost in the congregation’s mission development. (from *Clergy Renewal: The Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning*.)

The Committee on Ordained Ministry (COM) and our bishop strongly support the use of sabbatical renewal leave. No two sabbaticals are the same. Each one is unique to the individual and to the congregation. Below is a proposed outline for the preparation of the sabbatical leave, including expectations, funding, and resources for planning.

We pray that the use of sabbatical renewal leave will serve to promote and support healthy congregations and ministries.

## Outline of Process for Sabbatical Leave Planning

<b>Two Years Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Review Letter of Agreement and sabbatical leave handbook with Vestry
<b>18 Months Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Contact sabbatical leave mentor Meet with the Bishop to begin plan Read <i>Clergy Renewal from the Alban Institute</i>
<b>12 Months Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Consult with Senior Warden regarding sabbatical leave Establish a Sabbatical Leave Committee and budget Invite COM representative or Diocesan designee to introduce sabbatical leave information to Vestry
<b>Nine Months Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Create a Sabbatical Leave Plan for approval by Bishop and Vestry

<b>Six Months Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Prepare for continued congregational ministry during the sabbatical leave
<b>Three Months Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Plan for interim ministry welcome and sendoff for clergy taking sabbatical leave Prepare for communication to parish regarding the sabbatical leave
<b>One Month Before Sabbatical Leave</b>	Complete plans for transition Use last Sunday before beginning sabbatical leave to say good-bye Celebrate with a sendoff
<b>Sabbatical Leave</b>	

## Financial Planning for Sabbatical Leave

- This diocese shall support and make available information from other sources for financial resources for sabbatical leave.
- Sabbatical leave funding shall be used for the following to the extent they are necessary within the sabbatical leave plan:
  - Continuing education opportunities fees
  - Books
  - Education-related travel
  - Housing
  - Food
  - Child care
  - Supplies necessary to accomplish sabbatical leave plan. Other appropriate expenses approved by the bishop.
- A budget for anticipated expenses shall be presented in consultation with the bishop and vestry.
- Clergy supply for the duration of the sabbatical leave shall be the primary responsibility of the congregational budget.
- The cost of sabbatical leave shall be shared between the congregation, diocese, and individual. The diocese will fund the sabbatical leave in the

amount of up to \$400 per year of accumulated service and up to a maximum of \$2,400 for six years of accumulated service. Additional diocesan funding *may* be available in consultation with the bishop.

- Sabbatical leave funding which has not been used within seven years shall not be increased beyond a maximum of six years of accumulation.

## Accountability Following the Sabbatical Leave

The clergyperson who has completed a sabbatical leave shall:

- report the results and significant learnings from the sabbatical leave to the bishop and congregation
- be available to mentor others in planning for sabbatical leave over time
- be available to other congregations and diocesan organizations to share their sabbatical leave learning.

The congregation who has experienced a sabbatical leave shall be available to share that experience with other congregations.