



The Diocese of Fond du Lac

The Episcopal Church in northeast Wisconsin

SABBATICAL GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY AND CONGREGATIONS

Adopted by the Executive Council as recommended Guidelines

The purpose of **Sabbatical Leave** is for clergy to return to the congregation refreshed, renewed, and with insights to enhance the ministries of the congregation. A sabbatical is not understood as extra vacation or continuing education for the clergy, but a period of intentional rest, renewal and growth.

Sabbatical leave is to be mutually negotiated between the wardens and vestry and the cleric and should be incorporated into the Covenant. In planning the sabbatical, the cleric develops a program of rest, renewal and growth in relation to personal, spiritual, emotional and intellectual life. Congregations are plan for sabbatical by annually budgeting reserve funds to provide the cleric full pay and benefits during the sabbatical, and cover supply clergy cost during the period.

The recommendation is that a cleric accumulate sabbatical leave time at a rate of two weeks each year of service to the congregation. Such leave time is available after five years. Sabbatical leave is not to accumulate more than seven years. It is expected that all clergy who are active and working full-time shall take sabbatical leave time at least every seven years.

It is expected that any cleric taking a sabbatical will return to serve the congregation for at least one full year following completion of the sabbatical. No cleric expecting to move to another cure within the next year should take a sabbatical leave.

The cleric and vestry should agree upon the dates of a sabbatical leave at least one year in advance. A specific plan for the sabbatical should be presented to the Bishop and vestry at least six months prior to the leave. All parties should agree upon dates and the plan. Expenses incurred during sabbatical leave are to be borne by the cleric, (tuition, books, supplies, travel, living expenses) with congregations endeavoring to reimburse at least half these expenses.

The cleric is expected to submit a written report, identifying benefits and key learning experiences of the sabbatical, to the Bishop and vestry following completion of the sabbatical. It may be beneficial for congregational leadership to write a summary of preparations and experiences in the congregation before, during and after their cleric's sabbatical.

Development of a clergy sabbatical fund to aid clergy in taking sabbaticals and congregations in providing Sunday supply clergy during their cleric's absence is recommended.

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