



Sample of a Sabbatical Request Document

It is a temptation for me to lean hard into my own resources and energy in an effort to press on. Human strength, human wisdom and human perspective have their limits. They reach their end. God has a Sabbath principle that we rehearse together every Sunday. It is one where we sanctify our lives, again, to His good purposes. We are strengthened by it. We are trading our strength, wisdom and perspective for God's. We leave our Sabbath worship with joy, refreshed and energized. The Church of the Nazarene carries this Sabbath principle further, into Sabbatical leave for clergy:

"129.10. In order to encourage a healthy pastoral ministry and strong spiritual life of the pastor, the church board, in consultation with the district superintendent, should provide a sabbatical leave for the pastor during each seventh consecutive year of service in one congregation. The timing and duration of the sabbatical shall be determined in consultation with the pastor, church board and district superintendent. It is strongly urged that the pastor's salary continue in full and the church board provide for pulpit supply during the sabbatical period."¹

As indicated in the above recommendation by our denomination, having completed my ninth year of consecutive service with Woodstock Church of the Nazarene, I humbly request a sabbatical leave. The goals of this sabbatical would be one of rest (physical, mental and spiritual). It would also include Sabbath worship in different contexts and reflection.

If it is the pleasure of the board to grant this sabbatical, it will center around:

- 1. Silence, Prayer and Bible Reading.** While this is part of my weekly devotion, much of it currently is focused on the purposes of ministry. Time with the Lord with no agenda other than my own edification is coveted.
- 2. Reflection\Development.** Worshiping in a variety of churches to listen and experience God in different contexts.
- 3. Family Connection.** Spending time with our three children who continue to make incremental steps to adulthood outside the orbit of our nuclear family is desired. We also would look forward to visiting extended family across the country, some of whom we have not seen in years.
- 4. Marital Refreshment.** Allison will be off for the summer. Covid-19 has created an incredible amount of added stress to the routines of public education and in turn, her workload. We will be spending most of our time together without work responsibilities for either of us.
- 5. Physical Health\Vitality.** Sabbatical time would allow Allison and me to refocus on our physical health. Working out, training and hiking would provide time for us to refocus on our physical well-being.
- 6. Time Spent Resting.** No agenda here—just physical, mental and spiritual rest.
- 7. Travel.** National Parks. Both Coasts. Multiple states. Many rejuvenating miles.

¹ Manual of the Church of the Nazarene, 2017–2021.



If a sabbatical rest is approved, I will look to mentors and other resources in planning and objectively evaluating this sabbatical time. We need to step away from normal routines for an extended period. While some clergy use this time for academic or writing purposes, this sabbatical will focus on spiritual rest and rejuvenation.

Duration:

The proposed sabbatical would begin on Sunday, June 6 with a return of Sunday, August 8. I would be working the first week of June, but not preaching on June 6. The length of the proposed sabbatical is nine weeks, one week for each year of ministry here.

Budget Implications:

The Church of the Nazarene recommends the continuation of the pastor's salary and benefits during the pastor's time away. It also makes provision for the church to assist, as it is able, with the incursion of sabbatical expenses that would be separate from routine pastoral expenses. I foresee much of the incurred cost to be associated with travel. How to provide for sabbatical expenses would need to be discussed with the finance committee before our 2021-2022 budget is formalized.

I am so grateful for the church board's consideration of my sabbatical. If granted, I request the continuance of regular salary and benefits, as well as the ability to access the regular pastoral travel and expense budget. If it is the pleasure of the board and deemed prudent based on the church's annual budget to provide additional funding for sabbatical travel it would be greatly appreciated.

Outcomes:

I hope with great anticipation that the Holy Spirit will move in profound ways upon my spirit, my body and my mind. I desire to be filled 'full' with renewed energy, passion, joy and enthusiasm as needed to inspire and reinvigorate the Call to which I am deeply and profoundly committed.