

SOP: Pastor Sabbaticals

Introduced: 9/9/20

Adopted: 9/9/20

Introduction and Background

The current contract with Pastor Kevin Clark grants him a sabbatical every seventh year of his career with FCC Mukwonago. Pastor Kevin began his service in June 2014. The first sabbatical was originally planned for January-June 2021, which would have corresponded to the last six months of his seventh year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, travel plans for the sabbatical were cancelled, and the Council agreed to postpone the sabbatical to 2022. The initial sabbatical should be taken by the end of the third quarter of 2022.

Timing

In order to 1) adhere to the contract terms allowing a sabbatical every seventh year, 2) minimize the impact of delays, and 3) allow for unforeseen circumstances, the following guidelines are adopted:

- Pastor Kevin is eligible for subsequent sabbaticals beginning June 30 of the years 2027, 2034, and so on.
- Pastor is expected to complete the sabbaticals within 15 months after being eligible. This corresponds to September 30 of the years 2028, 2035 and so on.
- Exceptions to the above are expected to be rare, and due to unforeseen circumstances beyond either party's control. Either the Pastor or the council can request exceptions. Council must approve all exceptions.
- If Pastor Kevin leaves FCC service between sabbaticals, the contract does not offer a partial sabbatical.

Funding

The contract provides Pastor Kevin with his full salary during the sabbatical, as well as sabbatical-related travel, living, and study expenses in an amount to be negotiated. FCC is also responsible for obtaining substitute pastoral services during the sabbatical.

In anticipation of the sabbaticals, Council should establish a sabbatical fund and set aside one-seventh of the expected sabbatical cost each year. For planning purposes, an estimate of the expected sabbatical cost is 60% of the pastor's annual compensation, broken down as follows:

- Substitute pastoral services: 40% of pastor's annual compensation, excluding medical expense and education/books. A housing allowance may or may not be necessary.
- Pastor's sabbatical-related expenses: perhaps 20% of the pastor's annual compensation. This recommendation is not intended to be a guarantee or a limit on the negotiated expenses.

Planning

The council should appoint two teams to plan for the sabbatical.

Sabbatical Planning Team

This team will act as a liaison between the Pastor and Council. Planning should begin in year five of the cycle. The committee should include a Council member, a member of the Long-Range Planning Committee and a member of the Congregation. For an effective sabbatical, planning should include:

- Theme or purpose of the sabbatical. Rest is an important part of a sabbatical, but a renewal theme that will benefit both the pastor and congregation should also be considered.
- Specific activities and schedule, including rest, travel, study, etc.
- Congregation involvement, including pre- and post-sabbatical communication and congregation activities to aid in achieving the sabbatical purpose.

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- Guidance regarding involving the pastor in church matters during the sabbatical. Such involvement is strongly discouraged.

Pastoral Coverage Team

This team will be responsible for covering all pastoral functions during the sabbatical, including securing an acting minister for the duration of the sabbatical. Their work should begin one year prior to the scheduled sabbatical. Membership, duties, and procedures are described in the SOP, "Calling an Acting Minister."