

## **Sabbatical Policy**

**PURPOSE:** To provide 6 weeks of focused sabbatical for rest and renewal. This will not be in lieu of paid ETO.

**ELIGIBLE:** Full-time Pastoral Staff who have served full-time for 6 years at New Life Church. Sabbatical must be taken before the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of ministry with the church.

**PROCEDURE:** Staff must submit a written proposal, minimum of 3 to 6 months in advance, to the Management Team for their approval, and then to Policy and Personnel for their notice of approval by the Management Team. This proposal will include dates of sabbatical and any budget proposal needed. It must also include a personnel and interim plan to cover the ministry areas involved while they are gone.

**OVERVIEW:** The concept of a Sabbath rest is a biblical one. Rest on the seventh day is first seen in the second chapter of Genesis, where we are told that God “rested” from His creative work. Not to say He was tired, but He also commanded us to rest on our Sabbath.

This local church, along with the General Church of the Nazarene (2017-2021) Manual 129.10, recognizes the special need for its pastors to seek and obtain renewal. Ministry is often associated with spiritual challenges that are not often encountered in the secular work place. Beyond this, pastors are in danger of regarding their ministry as work and a job rather than a divine calling. God’s Sabbath principle applied to their ministries provides an opportunity to rededicate (Sanctify) one’s life and work to the Lord, require God’s perspective, and a freshening of one’s spiritual health. In this way, the entire Body of Christ benefits and is blessed by the pastoral Sabbath.

**PURPOSE:** To help ensure long pastorates by providing for weekly rest, also for providing sabbaticals. The sole purpose for a sabbatical shall be **REST**. It is not for furthering pastoral education, degrees, doing ministry elsewhere, etc. Study for personal spiritual renewal is encouraged. However, this shall not be for the purpose of “ministry planning” or preparing for future preaching/teaching. Ongoing salary and benefits will be provided during the sabbatical leave. The sabbatical leave may not be taken as terminal leave (leave at the end of employment). Sabbatical leave cannot be combined with ETO. Cash, or other compensation, may not be offered or accepted in lieu of a sabbatical leave. Sabbaticals may not be accrued and must be taken roughly in the year in which they are due (in the year following their 6<sup>th</sup> year of full-time ministry).

**SUBSEQUENT SABBATICALS:** Pastoral Staff who have served six full years since his/her last sabbatical will be eligible for sabbatical again. Length shall be six weeks. The Management Team will work with the Ministry Team for scheduling this to optimize the time window for staff pastors who are taking sabbatical.

**APPROVAL OF SABBATICALS:** The Management Team will approve all sabbatical requests. Pastoral staff may receive up to one year of “credit” toward the sabbatical years for contiguous ministry in the Church of the Nazarene, immediately preceding their joining the staff at their current church assignment.

**SUMMARY:** It is church policy to see that sabbaticals are for REST alone. Pastoral Staff taking a sabbatical will have a limited budget of \$500 to \$1000 to help with any funds needed to cover interim or personnel in your place while on sabbatical. In addition the church will provide \$1000 to you to cover a portion of your sabbatical expenses.