



CROSSPOINT

RECOMMENDED SABBATICAL POLICY

for churches and christian organizations

CrossPoint has worked with many churches and Christian organizations in the care of their leadership.

The following recommendations should be seriously considered and hopefully adopted by those who desire to strengthen the souls of their leaders.

Overview

- Sabbaticals should be at least 3 month-long times away from ministry. The time is dedicated to rest and recalibration and preparing for re-entry.
- They are usually granted by the Executive Team or Elder Board after six years of ministry service in the church (Note: There may be valid reasons for offering a sabbatical before six years of service [e.g. church planting]. Any usual situation will be at the discretion of the Executive Team/Elder Board in conjunction with a recommendation from CrossPoint).
- The one on sabbatical is accountable to a spiritual coach from CrossPoint who will supervise the experience. Supervision will include input and care of the mate as well. Both the one on sabbatical and his/her mate must take the WEPSS profile in order to facilitate the oversight CrossPoint will provide.
- The church or ministry organization will provide financial resources during the sabbatical to facilitate time away. We recommend a stipend of at least \$1500 per month be given to make it possible to get time away. We also recommend the church pay the \$1500 fee that CrossPoint charges for sabbatical guidance.
- In preparation for (as well as during) the sabbatical of a Senior Pastor it is advisable for the Executive Team (or Elder Board) to have at least 4 consultations with CrossPoint. This facilitates clear expectations around the sabbatical, reporting on progress of the sabbatical, and re-entry from the sabbatical.

- A written summary of the sabbatical experience will be submitted within two weeks to the Executive Team by the one returning from sabbatical experience.
- The spiritual coach will also submit a report to the Executive Team within two weeks of the end of the sabbatical experience.
- The Executive Team will use the summaries to explore the implications for ministry of the lessons learned during the sabbatical and the staff member.

Specifics

- A sabbatical has three goals. The first is REST. Rest is needed because the demands of doing ministry well are exhausting. Even when ministry leaders take a day a week away from work and a day a month in retreat, an extended sabbatical time is needed.
- To facilitate rest the sabbatical time will include extra sleep, reading novels, watching movies, walking, and hiking. Physical activities such as swimming, biking, golfing, skiing, and swimming will also be encouraged. The time and activities will be schedule both alone as well as with one's mate and children. The sabbatical should be a special time of enjoyment with family so that it creates good memories for all involved. Any meeting with ministry colleagues will NOT turn to matters of ministry.
- The second goal of sabbatical is RECALIBRATION. Sabbatical rest is not an end in itself. The leader must be recalibrated so as to return to ministry with a different mind-set. One must experience the presence of Christ in a way that fosters a greater trust and discernment of His will for life and ministry.
- To facilitate recalibration the spiritual coach will guide the sabbatical experience (via phone, Zoom, FaceTime, or in person). The coach will offer Scripture passages for meditation, ways to engage in contemplative prayer, and suggestions for journaling. The coach will be a spiritual mentor helping the one on sabbatical hear Christ's invitation as to how the soul needs to be recalibrated for future ministry. Contact with the coach is at least every two weeks.

- The third goal is a healthy RE-ENTRY. Often pastors are dangerously tired when they go on sabbatical. Our goal is to help them not to get in a similar situation in the future. And so we work hard to develop a “way of being” for the pastor re-entering his responsibilities so that he does not wind up in the same place. This includes an evaluation of issues like control, delegation, trust, self-worth, and service. We work with the elder board as well to develop realistic expectations of what the pastor can and should do in the future.