

## **SNE Ministry Network - Ministerial Sabbatical Program**

**(This is a working document we are developing for a Sabbatical Manual, we will continue to develop it and hope to have it finalized by Fall 2022.)**

We desire to support every leader's overall wellbeing and health in ministry by advocating for periodic ministerial sabbaticals. For those serving in bi-vocational or full-time ministry, whether in a support or lead role, every minister should consider planning intentional times of extended rest – whether in crisis or not. In fact, taking these extended times of rest can drastically reduce the possibility of crisis in a minister's life. The timing, expression, and format of the sabbatical can vary, yet the primary intent of a sabbatical is to take an extended time of rest from active ministry and leadership. This differs from vacation in that it contains an intentional structure and format to promote increased health, inner transformation, and spiritual growth. Sabbaticals also provide the opportunity to find greater clarity in vision and purpose in serving God in vocation ministry.

### **Purpose and Objectives of Ministerial Sabbatical**

- Extended and Intentional Rest for minister (and family where applicable)
- Vision Planning (i.e. personal or family vision development rather than ministry oriented)
- Healing/Restoration
- Necessary Solitude for Leadership Transformation and Development
- Honoring longevity in ministry
- If a pastor, challenges the church to grow in responsibility and servitude
- Strengthens overall physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental wellbeing of minister
- To discern God's leading in this season of your life and ministry
- To strengthen and enjoy marriage and family (when applicable)

### **When should a minister consider taking a Ministerial Sabbatical?**

- Every minister that serves consistently in ministry even if they make ministry transitions
- When in ministry transition, before next ministry assignment
- Evidence of burnout, chronic stress, or mental health problems
- Established routine and employment structure for the minister (i.e. every 7 years of employment as full time minister)

### **The Network and the Minister works together to establish the general structure of the Ministerial Sabbatical. It will address the following:**

- Timeline (How long from start to finish)
  - The length of the sabbatical varies depending on need of minister and church.
- Communication to the board (when applicable)
  - The network can assist in communicating the vision and purpose of the ministerial sabbatical
  - This communication would address (in general):

- Why a sabbatical
  - How does it work
  - Who helps support the church
  - What will the church need
- Sabbatical Plan
  - Format
  - Timeline
  - Goals
  - Location
- Financial Costs (Network vs Church responsibility)

**Example of Network's Role of Support (depending on need, may include any of the following):**

- Help form the framework/plan for sabbatical
- Counseling/coaching/spiritual direction (when applicable)
- Marital support (when applicable)
- Accountability
- Communication to board
- Supporting Sunday preaching ministry and any other needs of church
- Resource recommendations
- Financial (when applicable)
- Sabbatical Team – Network Superintendent, Director of Minister Care, Director of Minister Development, any other necessary designee.
  - Spiritual director, Sabbatical Coach, counselor, etc (when applicable)