



Sabbatical and Study Leave

The Diocesan scheme for Sabbatical and Study Leave recognizes that for those who have been in ministry for some time, an extended period spent away from their post with its many demands and expectations can be a source of enrichment, providing renewed energy, and fresh perspective and vision.

A well planned sabbatical or study leave will be of enormous benefit to ministers, their families, those they serve, and to the wider church. It should include time for renewal, refreshment, retreat, rest, and re-fueling, along with opportunities to reflect on a theme or topic of your choice, in a setting or settings appropriate to your needs. Normally sabbatical or study leave is granted after no less than ten years in ministry, nor less than ten years since any previous study leave. It is a three month period which is best taken as a whole, but which in some circumstances might be split into two six week blocks.

Permission for sabbatical or study leave is granted by the Diocesan Bishop after the submission of a Sabbatical or Study Leave Application which is discussed with the Ministry Development Adviser. The proposal is formally signed off by the relevant Area Dean and Archdeacon.

What qualifies as Sabbatical or Study Leave?

The possibilities within sabbatical or study leave are endless, but this time away from the usual routine of ministry should include an appropriate element of 'sabbatical living' for the purposes of renewal. Taking time away from work is a principal set out in Genesis 2 v.3. It is a positive gift, blessed by God and made holy. In Leviticus 25 we read of 'Sabbath years' and the idea that the ground should be left untilled so that it can replenish itself, and we recognize this to be true for us too. This time should allow for a stepping back to realign with God, self, family, friends, and more.

There should be some focus or the three months can pass by and be lost, but what counts as appropriate during sabbatical or study leave is much broader than applying oneself to scholarly learning. Some church leaders are excited and energized by study, and it is possible to use this time to start or complete a major academic piece of work. But just as appropriate as formal study is a re-engagement with some passion, or reflection on a subject you just can't undertake during the normal round of ministry tasks.

Where do I begin?

In order to get the best from a period of sabbatical or study leave you need to formulate a clear idea of how you intend to use the time. The rest, relaxation, and refreshment aspects may well come to mind easily. The other emphasis is likely to be an idea you've had which you've never had time to develop, or an area of interest that you've not had space to work on, a passion for something that you've not been able to focus on. Think about what this might be for you, and why it's important to you. Ask what you might learn as a result of spending time with these ideas or themes, and how you might be different at the end of it. The process exists to enable learning which leads to change and growth – personal and vocational. When you have ideas that stimulate and excite you, you might just have the start of a sabbatical or study leave proposal.

The next step would be to contact the Department of Discipleship and Ministry and speak to Ministry Development Adviser, Jackie Johnson who will support you through the process of planning your Sabbatical or Study Leave. There are some Guidelines and an Application Form which can be accessed below, to provide further guidance.

[2018 Sabbatical Study Leave Guidelines & Application](#)