

What is a sabbatical?

The word *sabbatical* comes from the Hebrew word *Sabbat*, or as we know it, Sabbath. A sabbatical is based on God's design for a Sabbath: it is a time to rest and reflect; to be renewed and refilled.

Why do we promote sabbaticals?

Research indicates both ministry staff and the churches they serve benefit from designed, prayerful, God-directed time spent apart. It is one of the most effective ways for a minister and a congregation to maintain a long-term relationship. Therefore, many churches — large and small — have created sabbatical policies for their ministers. A minister who takes a sabbatical is committed to continued ministry at Discover, returning to serve with renewed passion, spiritual focus, energy, and vision.

Who qualifies for a sabbatical?

Ministers are eligible for a sabbatical after seven years of full-time service at Discover. The maximum sabbatical duration is ten weeks.

Who will cover the minister's responsibilities during a sabbatical?

For each sabbatical, the Discover ministry staff and elders will develop a plan to cover the minister's responsibilities. For some responsibilities, people from outside Discover may be enlisted, so that the overall ministry remains strong, and the current leadership is not overburdened. People who meet regularly with the minister (mentoring, discipleship, counseling, etc.) will be able to connect with other qualified leaders during the sabbatical.

What does a minister do during a sabbatical?

A sabbatical is designed so ministers can have the time and space necessary for spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational renewal. It provides an intermission within the unending demands of daily ministry life. It is *not* additional vacation, an academic leave, nor an escape. Ministers are to have clear (but not complicated) renewal strategies in place before the sabbatical begins, covering the 4 areas listed above.

How can the church family help make a sabbatical beneficial?

By following these 3 directives, the church family greatly enhances a sabbatical's benefits:

1. Pray consistently for the minister, his (her) family, and the congregation throughout the sabbatical.
2. Support the idea that the minister will not be attending Discover worship services, events, etc., and instead will worship with other congregations of his (her) choosing.
3. Please do not contact the minister about church matters. If a situation arises that needs to be addressed, please contact one of the elders or ministry staff.

If you have additional questions, please see one of the Discover elders.