



## Sabbatical Leave Policy

**Purpose of Sabbatical Leave:** The Sabbatical Leave is a period of time away from the pastor's regular duties, offered to its pastors by Salford Mennonite Church, for the mutual benefit of Salford and the pastor. Its purpose is to provide the pastor opportunities for exposure to and study of new ideas, improvement of professional skills relevant to the ministry, development of the pastor's spiritual resources, and spiritual and physical renewal and refreshment.

**Intended Use of the Leave Time:** Since the primary purpose of the Sabbatical Leave is the professional development of the pastor while being relieved of their regular duties associated with their ministry at Salford, the majority of the time spent on the Sabbatical Leave shall reflect that purpose.

**Eligibility:** A pastor serving fifty-percent time or more may apply for a three-month Sabbatical Leave after having completed five or more years of continuous service at Salford Mennonite Church. Subsequent Sabbatical Leaves may be considered after four years has elapsed since the end of the previous Sabbatical Leave.

Since a Sabbatical Leave is for the benefit of Salford as well as the pastor, a pastor may apply for a Sabbatical Leave only if there is clear intent to return to ministry at Salford for at least one year after the end of the Sabbatical Leave period, with the understanding that repayment of sabbatical salary and benefits will be made for failure to do so.

**Application Procedure:** Application for a Sabbatical Leave is to be prepared by the pastor in consultation with a Church Board Subcommittee, and submitted to the Church Board for its approval. It is then brought to the Congregation.

It is expected that the nature, duration, schedule, and financial and logistical arrangements for the leave will be worked out in consultation with the Church Board Subcommittee as part of the application to the Church Board. The application shall contain the following:

1. a clear statement of the rationale for and goals of the leave;
2. an outline of the intended use and schedule of the leave time;
3. the envisioned benefit to the pastor's personal and professional development;
4. the benefit to Salford and the church's ministry; and
5. any other criteria the Church Board deems important.

In preparing an application, the pastor shall allow sufficient time (six months or more) before the start of the leave for the necessary Church Board approval and Congregational preparation,

and for Salford to make suitable arrangements for covering the necessary pastoral duties and responsibilities.

Financial Arrangements: Salford will continue to pay full salary and benefits (base salary, housing allowance, pension, insurance coverage & continuing education). Salford is not responsible to fund the sabbatical in any other way but may choose to provide additional financial assistance.

A Sabbatical Leave may not be used to accept paid employment. Opportunities to preach or speak should only be accepted as part of the Sabbatical Leave proposal, but such opportunities shall be minimized so that the full benefit of the time away may be achieved.

To assist in covering the costs to Salford while the pastor is on Sabbatical Leave, the Church Board Subcommittee and the pastor are encouraged to apply for financial assistance (e.g. fellowships, grants and scholarships).

Returning from the Sabbatical Leave: Upon returning from the Sabbatical Leave, the pastor shall meet with the Church Board Subcommittee and the acting lead pastor before reentering his/her duties of ministry. The purpose of this meeting shall be so that the Church Board Subcommittee and the acting lead pastor can inform the pastor of all issues that have arisen during his/her absence.

Upon returning from the Sabbatical Leave the pastor shall submit, to the Church Board, a written reflection on the Sabbatical Leave experiences and the implications for the pastor, Salford and the ministries of the congregation.

Within two weeks a congregational meeting will be held so the pastor can share the reflections, experiences and implications for the pastor, Salford and the ministries of the congregation as well as a time for celebration of renewal for the pastor and congregation.

#### Stipulations

1. The Sabbatical Leave policy shall be reviewed periodically.
2. The purpose of this policy is for direction and is not intended to be all inclusive. Proposed changes or additions in this policy may be submitted to the Church Board Subcommittee and presented to the Church Board for approval.
3. No more than one member of the pastoral staff may be on sabbatical leave at any one time.
4. No personnel shall be hired or terminated while the lead pastor is on sabbatical leave, unless approval is given by the lead pastor.
5. The pastor's immediate family members may, but are not expected to, attend regularly scheduled services and/or activities. The pastor and family members shall be free to communicate with the church community as they desire.