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Sabbatical

FAQ’s

*What is a Sabbatical?*

It is a time to disengage from normal ministry and leadership involvement to allow a time of rest, spiritual renewal, personal growth, serious evaluation of life and ministry, or professional development and/or research. It is not the same as a leave of absence or vacation.

*How long are Sabbaticals?*

Depending on the purpose and your length of time in ministry, it can be from 1 to 6 months

*When should you take a Sabbatical?*

The NSC suggests their staff take a 2 to 6 month Sabbatical every 7-10 years. Other instances might include a change of ministry location or direction, burnout, family or marital difficulties.

*What do you do during a Sabbatical?*

All Sabbaticals should include a time of physical rest, renewal of family and soul, and re-evaluation of current ministry roles. The specific activities of this rest look differently depending on the individual.

*How do you begin the process?*

The long answer can be found in the [Navigators Sabbatical Guidelines](Sabbatical-Guidelines-PRT.pdf). A summary can be found here www.xxx.impact.yfc.net.

*Where do you take a Sabbatical?*

It is beneficial to spend some of the time away from your normal physical location. This could include, for example, a retreat center (see list at <training.yfc.net/sabbaticals>), visiting distant friends or family, camping – some place that facilitates filling up your soul.

*How would my responsibilities be met while I’m gone?*

It is recommended that planning for a Sabbatical begin 6 months before the projected start date. That allows time to discuss with your supervisor, Board of Directors, or Ministry Director which of your responsibilities will be picked up and by whom. It is also recommended that your Sabbatical be taken during a “slower” time of your ministry calendar.

*What if my chapter doesn’t currently allow for Sabbaticals?*

The concept and value of Sabbaticals is now becoming more recognized as essential soul care. Take time to educate your board on the value of Sabbaticals to staff and the chapter. Examine the resources at [training.yfc.net/sabbaticals](file:///\\10.1.5.250\Shared\Leadership%20Development\Sabbaticals\training.yfc.net\sabbaticals) and speak with others about their Sabbatical experience. You can join the group called “Sabbatical Seekers” hosted within YFC Online Training. Log in through YFC Impact.

*How can I explore further what a Sabbatical might mean to me?*

*The Rest of God* by Mark Buchanan is highly recommended reading. Other books include *Leading on Empty* by Wayne Cordiero and *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton.

*This all sounds good to me, but is it really Biblical?*

While “Sabbatical” is not used in the Scriptures, regular periods of rest from work are part of God’s plan since the beginning of Creation (Genesis 2:1-3). Obviously God didn’t need to rest but was establishing a pattern for all of His creation. He reiterated times of rest in Leviticus. In fact He set up the Sabbath just for us (Mark 2:27) and Jesus called His worn-out disciples to a time of rest with Him (Matthew 11: 28, 29). Isaiah 30:15-17 reminds us, “In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength”, but it was as hard for the Hebrews to accept God’s rest as it is for us, so we will “flee and be pursued” (by our driven-ness and our ‘enemies’), “yet He longs to be gracious to us” (v.18).