

**Sabbatical Guidelines for Stipendiary Clergy – Reviewed September 2024**

**The purpose of a sabbatical**

A sabbatical is an expression of Shabbat. It is an extended period of time which is neither work nor holiday, but an opportunity to be refreshed as a minister, to live differently to study and explore, to look again at ministry, work and lifestyle, to let God speak to us afresh.

People who have taken a sabbatical usually return considerably re-energised and re-envisioned for their work.

**Eligibility**

Stipendiary clergy are eligible to apply for a sabbatical of up to three months if:

* they have been ordained for at least ten years;
* it is at least seven years since any previous sabbatical;
* they have been in their current post for at least three years;
* they are at least one year from retirement.

Annual leave may be taken to augment the sabbatical time (up to two weeks depending on local contexts).

**The shape of a sabbatical**

A sabbatical plan should include significant elements of three transforming aspects:

* **Personal and Vocational Renewal** – time and space to reconnect deeply with God, to refresh spiritually, to renew our calling in ministry, to consider the future. One or more retreats are likely to be built into the sabbatical; a retreat at the beginning to mark the transition into the sabbatical is particularly recommended, and if possible, a similar time as sabbatical ends.
* **Ministry-related Study and Experience** – development of ministry skills and experience, making the most of opportunities that you may not find in ordinary work time. It could relate to your present role, to a parallel interest, or something you’d like to explore with future ministry in mind. For example: a research project, a study course, improving knowledge of biblical languages, or a ministry placement in an unfamiliar environment.
* **Recreation and Refreshment** – time and space simply to do what brings you well-being, joy, fulfilment. Especially something you wouldn’t be able to consider in the normal pattern of work and life. For example: cycling from Land’s End to John O’Groats, learning (or improving skill) on a musical instrument, taking up a new language.

**Sabbatical elements –** a sabbatical plan may be made of several different elements, here are some examples of the types of elements you may want to consider:

* Visiting and/or working alongside mission partners or projects (Namibia, India etc.)
* Led retreats at a recognised retreat centre (e.g. Ignatian retreats, Scargill House, Northumbria Community)
* Self-guided retreats of a format agreed with the HCD
* Researching missional projects across inner cities in the UK
* Focusing on an area of theological or linguistic study (e.g. Biblical languages)
* Developing mentoring skills
* A significant walk of pilgrimage (e.g. Comino de Santiago, North Wales Pilgrims Way)
* Researching worship/liturgy
* Improving proficiency on a musical instrument for usage in ministry

In the best sabbaticals these are likely to overlap and reinforce each other: for example, a cycling challenge could link key sites of Celtic Christianity as part of a study project, and include a retreat at one of them; the work on a musical instrument could lead to a greater understanding of musical worship in your current context.

**Process**

There is a process of exploration/application and approval for sabbaticals. Please ensure that you follow these 3 simple steps before making your sabbatical plans public.

1. Permission to explore sabbatical is given in the first instance by your Suffragan Bishop, this can be done via email or conversationally.
2. Following on from initial permission, please contact the Head of Clergy Development (Revd Jonathan Bramwell) who will work with you in shaping a sabbatical plan. The form below is to be used to facilitate this. The Bishops’ Leadership Team will be informed of your request and will be updated throughout the process.
3. Once the HCD has approved your plan, please submit this to your Suffragan Bishop for final approval. Once this is granted you are free to; publicly share your plans, apply for a sabbatical grant and other sources of funding (please contact the HCD who oversees sabbatical grants) and to begin practical planning.

**Funding**

Your full stipend will continue to be paid to you throughout your time of sabbatical.

A sabbatical grant of £500 is available for ten stipendiary clergy each year. In addition, any unused CMD allocation can be used for specific retreats, courses etc. Currently the annual CMD allowance is £240 pa.

The HCD has a list of possible additional sources of funds.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group awards a small number of bursaries each year for clergy sabbaticals, usually for more ambitious projects with a well-presented rationale. You must apply by 30th September in the year before the sabbatical is due.

There are very few other sources of possible grant-funding. In practice, most clergy draw on their own funds for an opportunity which may arise only once in the course of their ministry.

For further information or an informal discussion please contact the Head of Clergy Development: **Revd Jonathan Bramwell**

Email: jonathanbramwell@manchesteranglican.org

**Appendix 1**

**Sabbatical – Initial Planning Form**

This is an initial planning form to help you plan the outline of your sabbatical and to prepare with your meeting with me after receiving permission from your Suffragan Bishop.

When we meet, I’m not expecting you to have a fully formed plan, but rather some general ideas. As we work towards approval it is expected that your plans will become more detailed.

It is usual for the process to involve at least one in person meeting, and a second meeting can be arranged if needed.

**Training Incumbents**

If you are a training incumbent responsible for a curate in IME 2 please discuss arrangements for the ongoing supervision of the curate during your sabbatical with me at an early stage. Whilst the experience of helping to lead a parish during their incumbent’s sabbatical can be a valuable part of a curate’s formation towards the end of their second or in their third year, their needs take priority and in some case a sabbatical may need to be delayed to accommodate the curate’s training. Training incumbents will not normally be allowed to take a sabbatical until the curate has been ordained priest for at least 6 months.

I am always glad to continue to work with you as your plans take shape.

**Revd Jonathan Bramwell**

Email: jonathanbramwell@manchesteranglican.org

**Office use only**

Date of meeting:

Next steps:

Final agreement given bythe Bishop of Bolton / the Bishop of Middleton

Further meeting/s:

Report back to the Bishop:

**Initial Planning Form**

**Name:**

**Parish:**

**Date of proposed sabbatical:**

**Brief description of sabbatical project / plan:**

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**What value / benefit do you think the sabbatical would bring to you and to your ministry?**

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**What opportunities would this give for:**

Ministry-related study and experience

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Recreation and play

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**Estimate of Cost:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you discussed the possibility of a sabbatical yet with the following**

* Suffragan Bishop YES / NO
* Area Dean YES / NO
* Churchwardens YES / NO
* Local Ministry Colleagues YES / NO