

Sabbaticals - Guidelines for Clergy

The Diocese of Derby encourage all licensed clergy to take a three-month sabbatical every 10 years in ministry. This sustained period away from normal duties promotes professional development and personal enrichment. It is recommended that sabbaticals are planned **at least 18 months to two years in advance.**

- The Diocese of Derby funds up to six sabbaticals in each calendar year
- Episcopal permission is needed to be absent from a post, and therefore the process set out below must be followed regardless of whether funding is applied for or not

The purpose of a sabbatical

A sabbatical is an expression of Sabbath. It is an extended period which is neither work nor holiday but an opportunity to live life differently; to study or explore; to look again at ministry, work and lifestyle; to let God speak to you afresh.

The shape of a sabbatical

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

Retreat – The space to reconnect deeply with God, to refresh spiritual roots, to renew your calling in ministry, and to consider markers for the future. For some, this may take the form of a retreat or a pilgrimage or living in a community. A retreat at the beginning is a good way to mark the transition into a Sabbatical, as well as the transition back into full-time ministry at the end.

Renewal – This is the element of personal and/or professional development, which will normally take the greatest part of your three months. This is the time and space to equip you further in ministry, 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. It will involve some element of learning, probably through study and theological reflection. For example: a self-determined research project, a short study course, or a ministry placement in an unfamiliar environment. Whatever is chosen, it should be designed to widen horizons or deepen thinking rather than simply revisiting familiar territory.

Rest and Recreation – A sabbatical is not intended as a holiday, but the biblical pattern of Sabbath includes rest as a vital part of life. Take time and space simply to do what brings you well-being, joy, fulfilment, with no immediate link or outcome in your ministry; especially perhaps something you wouldn't be able to consider in the normal pattern of work and life. For example: taking up

painting, gardening, cookery, sailing, playing a musical instrument or even a challenge such as cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats.

How long can it last?

The normal period for a sabbatical is three months (with a minimum of six weeks and a maximum 12 weeks). These periods should be seen as over and above annual holiday.

Eligibility

Clergy of incumbent status are eligible to apply if:

- They have been in orders for at least 10 years
- It is at least 10 years since any previous Sabbatical or period of Study Leave
- They have been in their current post for at least 3 years
- They are at least 3 years from retirement

Please note:

- A sabbatical is of greatest benefit to those in active and healthy ministry; it is not the right course for those who are recuperating or recovering from any kind of crisis.
- It would also be inadvisable for a minister to plan a sabbatical during a time of parish upheaval or when an important decision is being made or major project being undertaken. In such circumstances, the Diocese will offer alternative support and provision.
- If you are supervising a curate in training, the proposed period of the sabbatical should not fall within the first 2 years of the supervision of the curacy.

Process

It is recommended that sabbaticals are planned **at least 18 months to two years in advance**. This is to secure an allocation in the budget and to enable sufficient time for planning, preparation, and additional fundraising (if required). Proper planning before submission is key.

1. Arrange a meeting with the Ordained Ministries Development Officer by emailing or ringing Marietta Forman at either Marietta.forman@derby.anglican.org or 01332 388673 to discuss ideas and possibilities. *You might also consider talking through ideas about the sabbatical with your Spiritual Director.*
2. Bring a draft of the **Application for a Sabbatical Form** to that meeting. A final version will eventually be submitted to the bishop for authorisation.

Your draft should:

- Include Retreat, Renewal, Rest and Recreation
- Include a plan of the proposed sabbatical with a rough schedule and itinerary
- Confirm support of your Area Dean
- Confirm support from the Churchwarden(s) or any appropriate other(s)
- Show what the arrangements for cover will be in your absence
 - This will involve consultation with the Area Dean and work colleagues. It is very important that throughout the period of the sabbatical you have no significant contact with your church, so we would encourage you to spend a significant amount of the sabbatical period away from the vicarage (particularly in the early part of the time) and to arrange for all work-related phone calls to be redirected elsewhere. It is not appropriate to expect other family members living in the vicarage to deal with all enquiries during your absence.
- Where funding is applied for, a budget indicating the costs of its various elements, including whether you will need to look to other sources of funding (Please use the **Grant Application Form for a Sabbatical** to apply for a sabbatical grant).

3. When your revised final application is completed and cover is sorted for the time you are hoping to be on sabbatical, the Ordained Ministries Development Officer presents the proposal along with their support to the Bishop and the Bishop's Leadership Staff Team for approval.

4. You will be notified by the Ordained Ministries Development Officer whether your application has been successful.

Funding

- A sabbatical grant of up to £900 is available.
- In addition, any unused CMD allocation for the year in which you are taking the sabbatical can be used for specific retreats or courses (but not for travel expenses).
- Please use the **Grant Application Form for a Sabbatical** to apply for your sabbatical grant. Please support your application with receipts and invoices. We are only able to reimburse your expenses and do not pay third parties directly.
- These funds can be applied for before or after your sabbatical, but they must be claimed no later than 30th November of the year in which you take your sabbatical.
- Stipendiary clergy continue to receive their stipend during the sabbatical period.

Supervision

The Ordained Ministries Development Officer is available for consultation or advice at any time. Together with the Ordained Ministries Development Officer you may, should you wish to, appoint or designate a supervisor to help you plan and resource your proposed sabbatical. Please note that any charges a designated supervisor may make will need to be budgeted for within your application and will need to be supported by invoice. Your CMD allowance cannot be used for this purpose.

Please note you **must keep the Ordained Ministries Development Officer informed should there be any change** in your circumstances that would impact on your proposed sabbatical.

Post Sabbatical

After the sabbatical, you will meet again with the Ordained Ministries Development Officer to debrief and evaluate the sabbatical. Within a month of returning to normal duties you will also be expected to submit a short report, no more than a side of A4 so that we might share your experiences more widely within the Diocese, for encouragement and learning.

Personal Details and GDPR?

You can find details as to how we use and retain your details on our Diocesan Website.

Questions?

Please feel free to contact Marietta Forman or the Rev'd Susie Curtis. They will attempt to answer any questions you may have.

Complaints?

If there is a complaint about how the grants were approved and/or distributed, please contact Claire Lees, Director of People and Ministry Development for the Diocese of Derby.