

Pastor Garrett Sabbatical FAQ's

What is Sabbath rest, as described in Scripture?

The Biblical concept of Sabbath means “to rest” or “to cease.” It first appears when God rests on the seventh day of Creation. Throughout Scripture, Sabbath keeping is setting aside time that God consecrates and makes holy. Old Testament law instituted a weekly Sabbath, an expanded period of rest every seven years, and, every 50 years, a year of Jubilee. The New Testament frees us from legalism, but also reminds us we should make every effort to enter into God’s rest. The underlying principle of Sabbath rest throughout Scripture is trust in God’s provision rather than our own labor, trust that He provides for us and restores us as we rest in him.

What is a pastoral sabbatical?

A pastoral sabbatical includes elements of rest, disengagement, study, exploration, reflection and prayer. It is a time for the pastor to step away from the routines of regular ministry and experience a change in perspective, receive spiritual nourishment, and focus on a deepening relationship with God. It is an opportunity for a congregation to grow in its participation in ministry. It lays the foundation for envisioning and planning future ministry.

Is a sabbatical a vacation from the church?

Although some components of a sabbatical may sound a bit like vacation, it is not a vacation from the church. It is an opportunity for pastors to reconnect with parts of their life that are important but difficult to prioritize in the middle of routine ministry. These include their sense of calling and the roots of their spiritual journey. Times of sabbatical give pastors the opportunity to shape themselves as better shepherds and leaders for the church and give rise to a deeper reliance on the Holy Spirit in their life. The intent of the sabbatical is for the pastor to return to the congregation refreshed and renewed, ready to move forward into the next phase of our life together.

Why is Pastor Garrett taking a sabbatical now?

Pastor Garrett’s desire, and the desire of our entire staff and CEC Leadership, is to practice sustainable, biblical ministry. Church leadership--the pastor/parish committee and council at CEC, and our regional Conference superintendent--feel that June 12 to September 18 of 2022 is the right time for Garrett to take his sabbatical.

Are sabbaticals normal for pastors?

Sabbatical leaves are most common in ministry or academic institutions. They are less common in the business sector, but some companies now offer this option because they see value for both employers and employees.

Our goal at CEC is sustainable ministry based on biblical principles, and we believe this includes planned seasons of pastoral rest and renewal. Many denominations, including our own, have established policies of sabbatical leave. These leaves are most often granted after seven years of ministry. Advocates for pastoral sabbaticals recognize that the pastoral role as shepherd and leader of God’s people requires them to seek God’s voice. A sabbatical allows time for pastors to

explore areas of ministry outside their usual responsibilities, and pursue spiritual disciplines that will allow them to grow in their ability to lead and serve faithfully.

On a human level, these sabbatical leaves also allow pastors to rest, recharge and reconnect with family members in ways that can be difficult when they are also serving their congregations.

Pastors who have taken sabbaticals say that they provided an invaluable foundation for fruitful ministry in the future.

This seems very sudden. Is everything okay?

Though this plan may be news, Pastor Garrett and the CEC Leadership have been discussing and planning this for several years. Pastor Garrett has served in pastoral ministry for over a decade and for almost 8 years at CEC. We join with our denomination in affirming that pastoral sabbaticals are part of healthy, vibrant and sustainable pastoral ministry, and that this timing is optimal.

Are there health problems? Is there a problem with the pastor's leadership? Was he forced to do this?

There are no negative circumstances or issues prompting the timing of this sabbatical. CEC leadership and Pastor Garrett see this time away as contributing to a healthy, good rhythm for Pastor Garrett and his family, and for the congregation as a whole. We anticipate that this sabbatical will strengthen and deepen Pastor Garrett's ministry effectiveness here at CEC in years to come.

What are the benefits to the congregation of a pastoral sabbatical?

A sabbatical is an investment in the future of the congregation. As pastors cultivate a deeper relationship with God, self and family, they return reporting renewed energy and enthusiasm for ministry. Healthy pastors, in turn, provide healthy leadership for God's people and enhance the life and ministry of the congregations they serve.

Congregations often experience growth during the pastor's sabbatical as well. People gain confidence in their leadership abilities. Lay leadership may develop in creative ways. New people may try new things or experiment with different ways of approaching traditional ministries. The congregation hears from a range of voices in preaching and teaching. The pastor's absence is an invitation to the entire congregation to see ministry from a wider perspective.

How will expenses of the sabbatical be covered?

Consistent with our denomination's policy, full compensation and benefits for Pastor Garrett will continue through the sabbatical. His pastoral responsibilities, including worship leadership and pastoral care, will be covered by existing staff and the congregation.

Grant money provided by our denomination will partially supplement additional expenses incurred by Pastor Garrett during his sabbatical, and also provide honorariums to those who are invited to preach at CEC.

What are the dates of Pastor Garrett's sabbatical?

Sunday, June 12 2022, Pastor Garrett and family will be here and worship with us. We will have a sabbatical celebration for our church and his family. He will return to regular ministry responsibilities Monday, September 19th and resume worship leading responsibilities on October 2nd

What are Pastor Garrett's plans for his sabbatical?

Garrett's sabbatical focus is on being present with God, himself and his family. The Beatty family will fly to Nairobi Kenya on June 15th and spend a month in-country visiting friends, serving in a local orphanage, traveling to the coast and visiting the Rift Valley on safari.

After Kenya the Beatty children will travel home with family while Garrett and Cami head to Greece for a second honeymoon. This will be intentional time for Garrett and Cami to rest and reconnect without the pressure of their regular responsibilities

Upon returning from Greece, Garrett will spend time camping with his children, spending solo time on the crooked river, working on a few house projects and visiting a prayer retreat center for reflection and meditation on God's word.

Throughout his sabbatical Garrett will be reading, journaling, praying and seeking God's voice and direction. He intends to rest, be present with his family and explore the healing and rejuvenation God

Who will oversee the ministry during Pastor Garrett's sabbatical absence?

CEC's leadership has continually focused on building teams to lead ministries. This focus is evident when one looks at the ministry areas Garrett oversees. Our worship ministry will be led by our worship intern as well as other congregant leaders. Microshelter ministry will be overseen by Dave Trosen in conjunction with the CEC council. Serve Sunday is being planned and directed by a team of 3 congregants. Let's Eat has a yearly rhythm of pausing to regroup and evaluate over the summer. Our Let's Eat leadership team will be meeting while Garrett is away to plan, prepare and communicate the details of reopening Let's Eat back inside the church building in October.

Who will be leading worship while he's away?

In May of this year CEC welcomed Alex Noble as our summer worship intern. Alex will be integral in leading and planning our worship gatherings through the summer. He will be leading worship twice a month and assisting in the tech room once a month. Even when Alex isn't leading or serving on the worship team he will be present at CEC on Sundays worshipping as a part of our CEC family. Nikki Stauber and Stacey Wutzke will also be a part of the worship leading team and will lead our worship gatherings once a month respectively. Garrett is excited

to empower these leaders to serve our congregation and trusts God has great things in store this summer.

What if I need Pastor Garrett for something?

Pastor Garrett will be unavailable throughout the period of sabbatical and it's requested that you don't try and contact him through email, Facebook, or by phone. If there is a care need, or you need pastoral guidance, you can contact Pastor Karen or Pastor Ryan and they will be able to find the best way to help. We will receive a few updates from Pastor Garrett and his family via video or written correspondence that will give us a window into how his sabbatical is going and what he is experiencing and learning.

In case of emergency, Pastor Karen and Pastor Ryan are the designated contacts to reach out to Pastor Garrett at their discretion. Pastor Karen and Ryan will also be joined by a pastoral support team made up of retired ministers within CEC and other pastoral care members.

What about our other pastors? Will they take sabbaticals too?

While each sabbatical scenario is unique and developed with the pastor, their family and CEC leadership teams, it is the hope that sabbaticals become a regular part of healthy, sustainable pastoral ministry at CEC.

How can I best support our pastor and our church throughout this sabbatical time?

- **First, recognize that the church is not the pastor.** This church does not belong to Pastor Ryan, it belongs to Jesus. In fact, the Bible calls the church His "Bride," which means He loves it more than any pastor ever could. So recognize that what you are a part of in this church goes far deeper than the leadership of a single pastor.
- **Second, lean in, not out.** It's very normal for some of you to think this would be a great time for you to take a break from ministry in either attendance, giving, or volunteering. Our hope is that this won't be the case for you. The church is a body that needs all of its parts doing what they do best. Our church needs you and we hope that you take this opportunity to engage even deeper in our church and find new ways to call this place your home.
- **Finally, pray for your pastor and his family.** Though there are many great things about spending an extended period in this way, it can also be a struggle. Disconnecting from relationships for a period can be painful and changing the day-to-day rhythms can leave one wondering about their purpose.

Pray for Pastor Garrett and his family's journey through sabbatical and for his leadership to be renewed so that the church may benefit from what God is doing in him upon his return.

Will Pastor Garrett be in contact with the congregation when he's on sabbatical?

No. Sabbaticals are meant to be a time away from the congregation and the routines of pastoral ministry. The congregational leadership has made arrangements for pastoral needs to be covered in his absence so he will be able to take full advantage of his time away.

I still have questions and concerns. Who do I contact?

On this webpage there is a place to send questions to our sabbatical steward team. Feel free to share your questions and someone on our team will respond to you soon.

Want some outside resources on the benefit of sabbatical?

Here are some great articles that talk about its benefits

<https://www.christianpost.com/voices/why-sabbaticals-are-critical-to-avoiding-burnout.html>

<https://churchanswers.com/blog/five-reasons-your-pastor-should-take-a-sabbatical/>

<https://www.soulshpherd.org/sabbatical-guide-pastors/>