

Study Leave Guidelines

The churches of the Presbytery provide for study leave/continuing education time and expenses in the terms of call of pastors. All calls for ordained pastors shall include a minimum of 1.) 2 weeks annual study leave time and 2.) \$750 (as of 2000) expense allowance for said study leave.

A planned study leave/continuing education program is of great value in helping pastors to maintain and to improve skills required for their ministry. A study leave/continuing education program should benefit each participating congregation, the pastor, and the church at large. The intent is to provide stronger leadership for the local churches through pastors who are kept abreast of new developments and programs in the various areas of ministry, and to provide stimulation for pastors to continue their spiritual and mental growth by contact with scholars, teachers, and other pastors.

The Session has responsibility, as part of their leadership of the church, to encourage and support their pastor in continually updating his/her skills so as best to minister to the congregation.

The following are the guidelines/procedure for study leave/continuing education:

1. Study leave/continuing education time and expenses may be used annually or may be accumulated in accordance with the terms of call. Accumulated study leave/continuing education expenses may be used for a study leave of less duration than the accumulated time; e.g., a pastor with four weeks accumulated time and money might choose to use the entire sum for a two week study leave, provided the expenses are documented.
2. Each year the pastor shall make a request to the Session for:
 - a. Use the study leave/continuing education, proposing a special plan of study to the Session.
 - b. As an alternative, accumulate the study leave for future use. If the pastor chooses this option he/she shall submit a general plan of how he/she intends to use the accumulated leave at a later date.
3. In addition to the study leave expenses, the local church continues the pastor's salary, defrays any cost of pulpit supply (one Sunday for each week of study leave), and meets the expense of other necessary pastoral services during the study leave.
4. Study leave time may not be used for vacation purposes.
5. Travel, food, lodging, registration, and related expense incurred during study leave/continuing education may be chargeable to the study leave expense allowance. Additional expenses shall be negotiated between the pastor and the Session.
6. At the next scheduled Session meeting after each study leave/continuing education, the pastor shall submit a verbal or written evaluation of the study leave/continuing education to the Session. A copy shall be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Committee on Ministry.
7. Additional information on possible study leave/continuing education options is available at the Presbytery Office.
8. Every pastor is expected to use study leave time to attend General Assembly as visitor within the first 5 years of ministry.
9. Unused study leave time and money are cancelled at the termination of the call.

Study Leave Report

See II-A-1 for guidelines.

Name of (Associate) Pastor _____

Church _____ Year of Report _____

Was a request made to session for:

_____ a) Study leave for this reporting year?

_____ b) Plan to accumulate study leave for future use?

If a), please describe the study leave (where, what, how long, etc.).

If b), please describe plans for future use of study leave.

NOTE: This form is generally submitted annually as part of the packet of “annual reports” completed by clerks of session/pastors.