

**SEASON OF RENEWAL**  
**MAY – AUG, 2018**

Kent's Sabbatical Preview

# OVERVIEW OF THIS SESSION

- I. What is a sabbatical and why might a church want their pastor to take one?
- II. Kent's Sabbatical Goals for Renewal
- III. Details of the Plan

# I. WHAT IS A SABBATICAL?

From the Lilly Foundation:

*“[A clergy sabbatical] strengthens Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Renewal periods are not vacations, but times for intentional exploration and reflection, for regaining the enthusiasm and creativity for ministry, for discovering what will make the pastor’s heart sing.*

*Pastors serve a variety of roles in their privileged position at the center of congregational life: preacher, teacher, spiritual guide, pastoral visitor, friend, confidant. The responsibilities are continual, and the pace and demands of parish life can be relentless, often leaving even the most dedicated pastors recognizing the need to replenish their own spiritual reservoirs to regain energy and strength for their ministry.”*

## WHAT IS A SABBATICAL? (CONT.)

- A sabbatical is designed to allow the pastor time to renew, recharge, reflect, pursue areas of reflection and study that the normal demands of parish life do not allow for, time for perspective, and rest.
- The creativity, emotional resequencing, study, professional development, prayer, reflection and perspective needed for pastoral ministry require deep reflection and extended time, which the demands of parish life make impossible on a regular basis.

# WHAT IS A SABBATICAL – WHY GIVE ONE?

From Thom S Rainer, Church Consultants:

1. **A pastor has emotional highs and lows** unlike most other vocations. In the course of a day, a pastor can deal with death, deep spiritual issues, great encouragement, petty criticisms, tragedies, illnesses, and celebrations of birth. The emotional roller coaster is draining. Your pastor needs a break—many times a break with no distractions.
2. **A pastor is on 24-hour call**. Most pastors don't have an "off" switch. They go to sleep with the knowledge they could be awakened by a phone call at anytime of the day. Vacations are rarely uninterrupted. It can be an exhausting vocation, and a sabbatical can be a welcome time to slow down.
3. **Pastors need time of uninterrupted study**. It doesn't usually happen in the study at church or home. There is always the crisis or need of the moment. Church members expect sermons that reflect much prayer and study. The pastor's schedule often works against that ideal. The sabbatical can offer much needed, and uninterrupted, study time.

# WHAT IS A SABBATICAL – WHY GIVE ONE?

Cont. from Thom S. Rainer

4. Pastors who have sabbaticals have longer tenure at churches. Though my information is anecdotal, I do see the trend. And while I cannot prove a cause-and-effect relationship, I feel confident that pastors who have sabbaticals are much more likely to stay at a church because they are less likely to experience burnout.
5. Pastors who have sabbaticals view the time off as an affirmation from their churches. I have heard from many pastors who share with me a sentence similar to this one: “I know my church loves me because they give me a sabbatical.” Pastors need affirmation. Sabbaticals can accomplish that goal.

# AN INVESTMENT

This is an investment by St. Luke's in its leadership – which I firmly believe will result in many blessings to the parish through my ministry and through the ideas, experiences, study, and reflection I will bring back from my time away.

I am blessed – Thank you – thank you to our diocese that includes this standard in Letters of Agreement and to the vestry for seeing the wisdom in granting me this time!

I already feel a spiritual pull toward profound renewal and spiritual experience!

## II. KENT'S GOALS FOR THE SABBATICAL

1. Time with family – too many times when pastoral needs, church needs pulled me away
2. Time away to rest, reflect, pray – get perspective – journaling and just being a Christian, a worshipper
3. Make pilgrimage to two very holy and places – on pilgrimage –  
Holy Island – Lindisfarne  
Skellig Michael – Ireland

# KENT'S GOALS CONT.

## 4. Study the connection between Celtic Christianity and the birth of Fresh Expressions

Fresh Expressions – getting outside of the walls to do ministry

Rowan Williams support of the initiative

20% of C of E are fresh expressions

## 5. Experience a variety of worship, esp. Anglican worship in other settings

Daily Eucharist in Oxford

Evensong/HTB/Scottish Episcopal

## 6. Spark Creativity and Work on Some Writing Projects

## 7. Professional Development

# PAST EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS

My previous retreats to Death Valley and Lindisfarne have renewed me with greater energy, zeal and ideas....but they have been short-term – this promises to be much more lasting!

# WHAT IS “FRESH EXPRESSIONS”?

From Fx U.K. website:

“Fresh Expressions are new forms of church that emerge within contemporary culture and engage primarily with those who don’t ‘go to church.’ Believing that God is already at work in the world, Fresh Expressions reimagine how the Body of Christ can live and work in diverse and changing contexts.

Over 3000 Fresh Expressions are now active around the world. From the initial vision of Archbishop Rowan Williams and the Mission Shaped Church report (2004) a growing movement of practitioners and pioneers have formed Fresh Expressions of Church in the UK, across Europe and in North America.”

# WHY CELTIC?

- My first exposure at Lindisfarne – was an experience for the whole person –  
Lectures, tours, musical concert/drama, instruction in art and prayer experiences.
- Outside the Roman Model – which is institution heavy
- Affirming of whole person – art, music, story, experience
- Relational
- Combines the best of various strands of tradition: charismatic, evangelical, liturgical, high-church, creative, care for the earth, affirming of women
- Highly successful at engaging and converting non-Christian England and Ireland
- Ideas/strategies for the church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – in an increasingly “institution-wary” and “post-Christian” culture

# III. THE SABBATICAL PLAN

## MAY: FAMILY TIME

Time with Family including:

- My brother in Atlanta
- My younger son Stephen, graduation, move-out of IU and move into OLO
- My older Son Philip & his wife Tiffany in Indiana
- My mom in Pittsburgh and
- Time with friends I've had since kindergarten!



# SABBATICAL PLAN JUNE: OXFORD

Research, Study and Rest

In residence at St. Stephen's House (Anglican) at Oxford

- studying with the Vice-Principal guided research
- research in the Oxford University Library
- regular chapel worship, evensong
- Class through Wycliffe Hall Oxford
  - focus on C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and Dorothy Sayers
  - (talk about creativity!)

Already reading – Celtic Gifts was fascinating

# TUTOR NOTES

Father James Lawson, Vice Principal of St. Stephen's House Oxford University and Charles Marriott Director of Pastoral Studies, studied history and theology at the University of Edinburgh, and went on to do a doctorate at New College Oxford, where he studied St Augustine's reconfiguration of the Platonic ascent of the soul in the City of God. Previously served as a vicar in the Church of England.

# FACULTY NOTES WYCLIFFE HALL COURSE

- Alistar McGrath – author of numerous books, Anglican scholar, Andreas Idreos Professorship in Science and Religion in the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Oxford,
- Amy Orr-Ewing – Director of Oxford Center for Apologetics and Middle East/Europe director for Ravi Zacharias ministries (Dphil Oxford)
- Tom Price – Academic tutor Oxford Center for Apologetics and Ravi Zacharias Ministries

# SABBATICAL PLAN JULY – EDINBURGH, HOLY ISLAND AND WESTERN IRELAND

June 27 to July 11 Edinburgh, Scotland

Preside for two weeks at 1929 Prayer Book Scottish Episcopal Church

Thanks to Dr. Gordon Graham (who will be here on Ascension Day!)

July 11 to July 18 Holy Island, Lindisfarne – Pilgrimage

Rest, prayer, walking the peaceful island, visiting leaders of Northumbria Community

July 18-Aug 2 Southwestern Ireland within View of Skellig Michael – pilgrimage

Rest, prayer, study, visit Skellig Michael, natural wonders, dark sky

# HOLY ISLAND



# SKELLIG MICHAEL



# SABBATICAL PLAN AUGUST -- BERLIN

- Fuller Doctor of Ministry Course Audit – Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- In Bonhoeffer house
- Focus esp. on his view of youth ministry

# BONHOEFFER AND BERLIN



# UPDATES AND QUESTIONS

Check the new St. Luke's website – rector's corner

And occasionally on Facebook – send friend request if interested

Questions?