



SABBATICAL INFORMATIONAL PACK

DAN FRANCIS, SENIOR PASTOR
May 19, 2025 — August 10, 2025

Sabbatical Leave Request

On November 18, 2024, Pastor Dan formally requested to the Elder Board a Sabbatical Leave in 2025. After over twenty years in ministry—including eight years at Christ Community Church—he requested to utilize CCC’s Sabbatical Policy to focus on professional development, spiritual renewal, personal rest, family connection, and improved physical health.

This packet provides insight for the congregation as to what a sabbatical is, how we practice it, and Pastor Dan’s proposed plan during his sabbatical.

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CCC Sabbatical Policy

PHILOSOPHY

We believe healthy churches require healthy leaders. One method of nurturing and caring for our leaders is through Sabbatical leaves after a certain length of faithful ministry service.

RESPONSIBILITY

Elder Board and Senior Pastor

PURPOSE

To spend time with family, strengthen and stretch the church, encourage ministerial development, and provide the opportunities for rest, personal renewal, and reflection.

ELIGIBILITY

Pastors and other full time Ministry Directors. Length of time and budgets to be approved by the Elder Board upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

PROCESS

Request for sabbatical leave, including the anticipated focus and personal improvement plan for the Sabbatical time, shall be submitted by the employee to the employee's supervisor six months in advance and should be planned in the department's budget accordingly. Once the supervisor has approved the Sabbatical, the Elder Board must be notified of the approved Sabbatical and the plan to ensure CCC's pastoral, administrative, and other work duties.

The focus and plan should be written and no longer than one page to include:

- Dates of Sabbatical
- Primary Focuses
- Desired outcomes for the person taking the sabbatical
- Desired outcomes for CCC
- Sharing the results of the sabbatical with CCC
- Plan for job responsibilities coverage while on sabbatical
- Proposed Budget

Sabbatical FAQs

What is a sabbatical and why does Christ Community Church value sabbaticals for their Pastors and Ministry Directors? Read the sabbatical FAQ article below.

WHAT IS A SABBATICAL?

A sabbatical is an extended time away from the routines of normal ministry for enrichment, rest, renewal, and personal growth.

WHERE DOES THE IDEA OF A SABBATICAL DERIVE?

The primary purpose of a sabbatical is *rest*. The word “sabbatical” has its roots in the Biblical concept of “Sabbath” (Hebrew: *sabat* = to cease, to rest). Instituted and modeled by God in Genesis 2:2-3, when He consecrated the seventh day of the week as a day of rest (*sabat*) and in Leviticus 25:1-5 when God commanded Moses to set aside every seventh year as a year of solemn rest (*sabat*). Biblically, every seventh day and every seventh year should include a time of rest.

Sabbaticals are common in church settings, but the benefits are also recognized in academia as well. Many institutions of higher education offer tenured employees sabbaticals for continued education, professional development, and research projects.

WHY DOES CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH HAVE A SABBATICAL POLICY?

A church’s spiritual health begins with spiritually healthy leaders and spreads throughout the whole body. One method of nurturing healthy church leaders is by offering sabbatical leave after a certain length of faithful ministry service.

The purpose of sabbatical leave is to spend time with family, strengthen and stretch the church, encourage ministerial development, and provide the opportunities for rest, personal renewal, and reflection.

We desire to proactively protect and care for our staff in hopes of increasing their longevity and effectiveness. There are many studies and statistics that point to the adverse, long-term effects of pastoral ministry without rest.

IS SABBATICAL LEAVE CODE FOR SOMETHING IS WRONG?

Absolutely not. Sabbatical leave is a benefit, not a punishment. Sabbaticals are planned and approved months in advance and are given in appreciation of ministry service to faithful ministers.

IS SABBATICAL LEAVE SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE?

Yes! A sabbatical recognizes the demanding nature of full-time pastoral ministry both for the individual and his family. A sabbatical fulfills the Scriptural admonition in 1 Timothy 5:17 that we are to give double honor to those who labor well among us. Based on our belief that we work hard for the Lord and then rest, we believe it is wise to offer a special time of rest after an extended period of hard work.

THE CORPORATE WORLD DOESN'T OFFER A 3-MONTH HIATUS/VACATION TO EMPLOYEES. WHY DO PASTORS GET A SABBATICAL?

Great question. Sabbaticals are common in spiritual settings, but the benefits of sabbatical leave are also recognized and encouraged in academia and business. Many institutions and organizations offer tenured employees sabbatical leave for continued education, professional development, and research projects.

WHO WILL OVERSEE THE PASTOR DAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES DURING HIS ABSENCE?

We are grateful for committed Elders, talented Pastors, and a competent staff. Pastor Dan oversees three primary areas that will need to be covered during his absence: preaching, shepherding, vision-casting.

The Pastoral Team will provide preaching coverage along with several guest preachers. Pastor Dan has worked with the Pastoral Team to develop a thirteen-week preaching series focused on practical, spiritual disciplines.

The Elders and Executive Leadership Team will provide continued advancement of our vision during Pastor Dan's absence. Pastor Dan has helped develop a Vision Implementation Plan with specific goals and desired objectives.

The Executive Director of Operations, Jonathan Lewis, will provide representation on the Elder Board and oversight of the staff; leading meetings and providing supervision to weekly duties while Pastor Dan is away.

Sabbatical Plan

Dates of Sabbatical: Monday, May 19, 2025 – Sunday, August 10, 2025

FOCUSES

Professional Development

- The National Conference on Preaching in Atlanta, GA (May 20-22)
- EFCA One Conference in Des Moines, IA (June 24-26)
- Visit Various Local Churches
- Future Sermon Series Development (1 Corinthians)
- Developing a Series of Missional Relationship Workshops with Janelle

Spiritual Renewal

- Silent Retreat at Abbey of Gethsemane in Trappist, KY

Personal Rest

- Recalibrating rhythms of margin and rest in personal life.
- Emotional reset absent of decision fatigue.

Family Connection

- Twentieth Wedding Anniversary (May 30-June 5)
- Cross Country Trip (June 19-July 20)

Physical Health

- Lose Weight
- Annual Physical Exam

DESIRED PERSONAL OUTCOMES

- Better Preacher
- Spiritual Renewal
- Settled Soul
- Connected Family
- Healthy Body

DESIRED CHURCH OUTCOMES

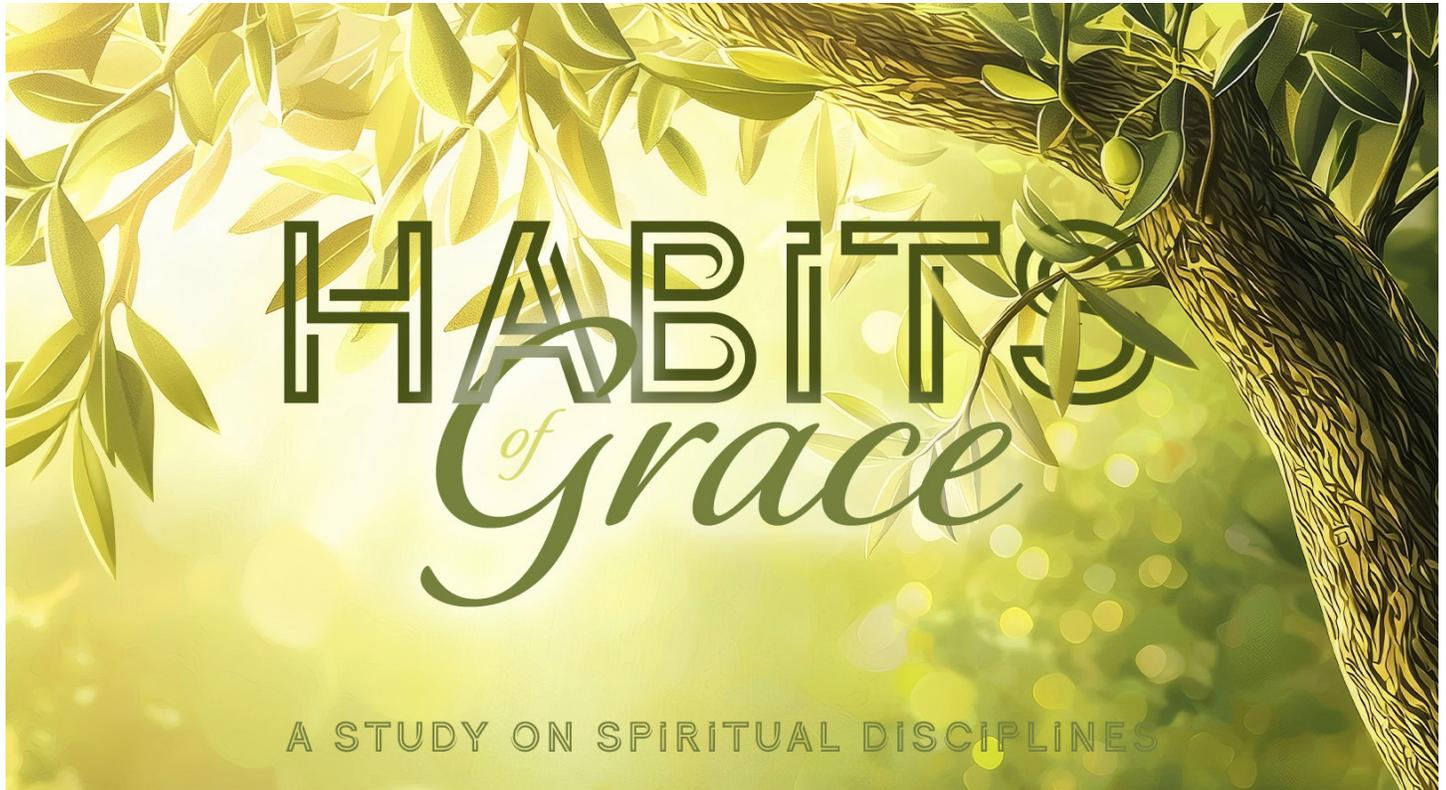
- Longevity of the Senior Pastor
- Pastoral Preaching & Teaching Development
- Vision Advancement by Elders
- Healthier Church Staff



VISITING CHURCHES

- May 25 Grace Church, Southern Pines, NC
- June 15 Summit Church, Raleigh, NC
- June 22 Kossuth Street Baptist Church, Lafayette, IN
- June 29 First Evangelical Free Church, Colorado Springs, CO
- July 6 Immanuel Church, Fulerton, CA
- July 13 Alamo Ranch Community Church, San Antonio, TX
- July 20 North Point Community Church, Alpharetta, GA
- July 27 New Covenant Fellowship, Carthage, NC
- August 3 Seven Lakes Baptist Church, Seven Lakes, NC
- August 10 First Baptist Church, Pinehurst, NC

CCC Summer Series Plan



May 22 & 25

Full Service of Communion & Baptism

May 29 & June 1

Habits of Grace

Bible Reading
Gary Steffaniak, Discipleship Pastor

June 5 & 8

Habits of Grace

Scripture Memory & Meditation
Allen Williams, Student Ministry Pastor

June 12 & 15

Habits of Grace

Prayer
Brian Duggan, Executive Vice President ReachGlobal, EFCA

June 19 & 22

Habits of Grace

Worship
Clay Thomas, Community Care Pastor

June 19 & 22

Habits of Grace

Silence & Solitude
Josh Cassellius, Outreach Pastor

July 3 & 6

Habits of Grace

Submission & Obedience
Jonathan Lewis, Executive Director of Operations

July 10 & 13

Habits of Grace

Moderation & Self-Denial
Bill Korver, President of Carolina College of Biblical Studies

July 17 & 20

Habits of Grace

Serving
Allen Williams, Student Ministry Pastor

July 24 & 27

Habits of Grace

Sabbath Rest
Carlton Harris, Acting President Evangelical Free Church of America

July 31 & August 3

Habits of Grace

Confession & Repentance
Gary Steffaniak, Discipleship Pastor

August 7 & 10

Habits of Grace

Fasting
Marc Ramirez, District Superintendent, Southeast District, EFCA

August 14 & 17

Habits of Grace

Guidance & Discernment
Jonathan Lewis, Executive Director of Operations

August 21 & 24

Habits of Grace

Stewardship
Clay Thomas, Community Care Pastor

August 27 & 31

Full Service of Communion

September 4 & 7

Sabbatical Report

Find Rest My Soul in God Alone
Dan Francis, Senior Pastor



CHRIST COMMUNITY
CHURCH