

## Formational & Spiritual Growth Leave / Renewal /Study Leave or Sabbatical Leave

### Funding for Clergy

#### DESCRIPTION / DEFINITION

The Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Board of Ordained Ministry administers a fund for clergy for the following “organized educational and spiritual growth activities”:

A formational and spiritual growth program, which according to the 2016 Book of Discipline Paragraph 350.3 may be up to six months while continuing to hold an appointment, and available to clergy who have held full time appointments for at least six years and who have received the approval of the Committee on Staff-Parish, the Church Council, and the District Superintendent.

A renewal and study leave, according to the 2016 Book of Discipline Paragraph 420 is available to District Superintendents once during the time of his or her term as superintendent for the purpose of reflection, study, and self-renewal. This leave may be up to three months and the Bishop and Cabinet, in consultation with the committee on district superintendency, coordinates details pertaining to such leaves.

A sabbatical leave, which according to the 2016 Book of Discipline Paragraph 351 may be up to one full year, and available to clergy who have been serving a full-time appointment for at least six consecutive years (or in less than full time appointment for an equivalent of six consecutive years). This leave differs from the others in that the appointment to sabbatical leave is an appointment made by the bishop. (See 2016 Book of Discipline Paragraph 351 for details on requesting a sabbatical leave.) This leave is also different in that it effects one’s pension contributions.

#### PURPOSE

Clergy may do in-depth study in a particular ministry area in order to sharpen and strengthen their skills for congregational transformation. We are particularly interested in supporting clergy development in one or more of the following transformational areas:

Leadership development

Worship

Christian education

Effective congregational witness and action in the community

Action in the community may include community development, community organizing, economic development, community planning, or other ministries by the church to address issues within the community

Discipleship

Organizational development

Personal and congregational spirituality

Stewardship

Churches in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference may benefit from the strengthened skills of clergy

#### ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

In addition to the criteria mentioned in the definitions above, individuals requesting funds from BOOM must have:

Completed Healing the Wounds or Changing Racism training

A commitment to serve at least eighteen months in the same appointment after the leave. It is recognized that clergy serve in an appointment from year to year, but to be considered, the clergy person must communicate to his/her district superintendent the desire to serve in the same appointment at least for the next eighteen months to share and carry out the new learning.

A portion of the expense for the leave is to be provided by the clergy person and the ministry that he/she serves

Time on the leave should be allocated so that at least 15% of the time is spent in Sabbath rest.

The necessary approvals as stated in the 2016 Book of Discipline or by other supervisory bodies (Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations, the church council, and the district superintendent).

#### FINANCING

Funding for the “organized educational and spiritual growth activities” is from the Board of Ordained Ministry’s Ministerial Education Funds. These funds are received through Eastern Pennsylvania local churches’ connectional ministry giving.

Grants up to \$5,000 will be made to individual clergy for expenses related to reasonable costs related to the leave. These expenses may include travel, lodging, registration fees and pulpit/pastoral care supply.

#### FOLLOW-UP

Each recipient who receives funding must complete the following within ninety days of the leave:

A plan for how the learning will be shared and used in the local church (a copy of the plan is to be given to the church council or appropriate body and Board of Ordained Ministry continuing education chairperson)

An article submitted to the *New Spirit* that describes the new learning for congregational transformation.

A workshop opened to Eastern Pennsylvania Conference clergy and laity. A report to the Board of Ordained Ministry outlining the activities of the leave, learning and use of funds (accounting for the use of funds is to be shared in relation to the budget as originally proposed).

A letter from the Instructor/ Adviser to the Board of Ordained Ministry continuing education chairperson describing the relationship of accountability during your leave.

Ten percent of the grant will be held until the above items are completed. If the items are not completed within the ninety days, the remaining ten percent will be forfeited.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications must be received by May 20th for summer and fall “organized educational and spiritual growth activities” and October 20th for winter and spring “organized educational and spiritual growth activities” Applications are to include the following items (Please use the outline below restating the outline and the information requested.):

Personal information –

- a. Name, address, phone, and email address
- b. Present appointment and number of years in this appointment
- c. Previous appointments and years served

Summary of the proposed “organized educational and spiritual growth activities”

Proposed dates for the leave

Why the leave is critical at this time of the applicant’s ministry and the church’s ministry and indicate a willingness to serve eighteen months after the leave in the present appointment

How the “organized educational and spiritual growth activities” will enhance congregational transformation (result in growth in one or more of the following – new disciples, new leaders, new people engaged in church and community ministry, worship attendance, giving, and confession of faith)

Three to five objectives to be accomplished through the leave

The activities and actions to reach the objectives

Proposed follow-up plans to implement the learning

A detailed budget that outlines both income and expenses; including whether or not you have applied for other sources of funding (e.g. foundations)

A letter of support from the church council or other appropriate body, signed by the chair person of the council and Staff/Parish Committee chairperson or other personnel committee chairperson

A letter of support from the district superintendent

A letter from Instructor(s)/Adviser(s) to whom you will be accountable describing their role in your renewal/study leave.

Applications are to be sent to the Board of Ordained Ministry continuing education chairperson: Rev. Robin G. Fisher 122 E. Plainfield Ave Pen Argyl PA 18072 570-534-4588  
[servingwithgreateffortumc@outlook.com](mailto:servingwithgreateffortumc@outlook.com)

Applications will be reviewed and the funding determined by the Executive Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

#### Additional Sabbatical Funding

Sabbatical funding possibilities are also available through others sources. While many of these sources are competitive funding programs, most clergy in the conference meet the criteria to at least apply. Two such places are

The Louisville Institute <http://www.louisville-institute.org>

Lilly Endowment <http://www.lillyendowment.org>