

## *Helping pastors and other professional church workers stay healthy in the midst of the increasing pressures and complexities of congregation ministry.*

Wheat Ridge Ministries believes that sabbatical leave for rest and renewal is a primary way that congregations can support church worker health and hope. Ministry Sabbaticals can help workers stay healthy in the midst of the pressures and complexities of ministry. One way we hope to do this is to provide resources for sabbatical rest and renewal to those in professional ministry through our online **Ministry Sabbatical Resource Center** at [www.wheatridge.org](http://www.wheatridge.org).

A sabbatical is defined as: "A period of time (usually 3 months) when professional church workers set aside their normal responsibilities at their congregation for the purpose of renewal and sustained excellence in ministry."

### **Experts say:**

Roy Oswald of the Alban Institute suggests that the rapid change and complexity of congregational life and ministry raises the need for three months of sabbatical rest and renewal every four to seven years. He believes that 20% to 30% of any professional ministry audience he addresses is in a state of severe burnout. Another 20% of the same audience is on the way to severe burnout.

In their Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning, "Clergy Renewal," Richard Bullock and Richard Bruesehoff suggest some strong motivations for considering a ministry sabbatical.

- The very nature of being an effective minister involves continual spiritual growth.
- The rapid changes in parish ministry. The danger that without renewal those in ministry face a stronger chance of exhibiting the key characteristics of burnout.
- The lethal effect of burnout that makes ministry and the minister, dull, hollow and uninteresting.
- The pastoral role that involves long, hard hours without weekends off.
- The opportunity for congregations to examine their tendency to become overly dependent on their professional church workers.

### **Wheat Ridge Ministries Sabbatical Goals**

Wheat Ridge encourages the use of sabbaticals for professional church workers in congregations by:

- Providing the resource website - [www.wheatridge.org/projects](http://www.wheatridge.org/projects)
- Providing coaching to those creating a sabbatical plan
- Offering partnership grants to encourage sabbaticals

### **Useful links you'll find on the website as you explore Ministry Sabbaticals:**

- Tutorial - Questions that will guide you in sabbatical planning and communication
- A Biblical Perspective on Sabbaticals
- Introduction to Ministry Sabbatical Thinking and Planning
- Sabbatical Policy Development
- Links to other Sabbatical/Renewal Resources
- Coaching Services
- Sabbatical Interim Network



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**Or visit - [www.wheatridge.org/projects](http://www.wheatridge.org/projects)**