

Sabbatical Plans

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Theme

Rest and Reconnection

As I begin this sabbatical, the first I have ever been offered since ordination in 2001 (23 years ago!), and full-time ministry through four calls since, I want to make full use of the time I have focusing on the themes of rest and reconnection. I am ineligible for all sabbatical grants except from the Board of Pensions because my current ministry is in judicatory work, so this is sabbatical on a budget!

After the last two years which have been challenging both professionally and personally, I definitely feel like I am at the “mid-point” in ministry and in life. This sabbatical opportunity is well-timed for where I am today. Additionally, I have completed my Doctor of Ministry this spring and at the General Assembly this summer, I will have completed nine years of service on the Presbyterian Mission Agency board, the last four years in leadership. I need some time to just rest, and simply “be” and also some time to reconnect with some of my primary sources of call, which are around theological and justice issues related to the environment and my former human rights work in South America.

I see the sabbatical themes of Rest and Reconnection as guideposts to help me focus on “now what?” which is really my deepest question around ministry and life these days. This feels like a very normal and healthy mid-point sort of a question. My plans, I hope, are a mix of practical, theological and deepening of call.

My plan is to visit some of the places that have been important touchpoints for me in ministry up until this point (relationships with the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia) and those I anticipate that will be important in the next phase of my ministry (connections with international ministry initiatives that the Rev. Jed Koball is leading up for the PCUSA). I essentially will have a “clean plate” of ministry when I return from sabbatical, and want to be intentional about what I put on it beyond my call in the Presbytery of Southern New England. My Doctor of Ministry project was in the areas of ecology and ministry, and so this will figure into my sabbatical discernment through visits to partners in Peru, Bolivia and Colombia, but also those engaged in eco-ministry. I also have some outlines of a book I want to work on.

My intention is to use the sabbatical time to prayerfully consider my ministry goals and also to have time for my own spirit to rest and renew.

Dates

October 27, 2024 through February 15, 2025. Three months (November - January) and using one week of vacation at the beginning and one week of both vacation and continuing education time at the end of the sabbatical for winding down and beginning again in healthy ways.

Plan

October 27-31, 2024, Week 1, Mindful Entering into Sabbatical - One week of retreat and sabbatical intention-setting at Kripalu Yoga Center in the Berkshires.

November 2024 - Travel to Colombia, 1 week of acclimation, organization, and then time in Peru and Bolivia along the Incan Trail, visiting with seminary friend and colleague, the Rev. Jed Koball, and friends along the way. Attending my niece's high school graduation in Bogotá, Colombia.

December 1-15 2024 - Return to Colombia. Travel in some of the national parks, visiting with colleagues in the Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia, PCUSA staff and friends in the North Coast and Urabá Presbyteries.

December 15, 2024- January 10, 2025 - Time completely focused on family over the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

January 10-31, 2025 - Continued time in national parks in Colombia and at our family homes for rest and writing projects.

February 1-7, 2025, Week 1, Mindful Returning - Return to the United States, getting reacquainted at home.

February 7-14, 2025 - Week 2, Mindful Returning - Getting reacquainted with PSNE with staff and leaders, closing retreat at Kripalu to end.

Finances and Use of Funds

Income		Expenses	
BOP Grant	\$5,000.00	Airfare	\$1,700.00
PSNE Funds 2024	\$2,500.00	Travel in Colombia	\$3,000.00
PSNE Funds 2025	\$3,000.00	Travel in Peru/Bolivia	\$4,000.00
Personal Funds	\$1,000.00	Spiritual Direction	\$900.00
		Kripalu	\$1,500.00
		Misc	\$400.00
Totals:	\$11,500.00		\$11,500.00

Proposed Gap Leadership for PSNE

The Personnel Committee is working on this plan.

Boundaries

In order to hold appropriate boundaries, I would log-off all social media accounts for the Presbytery during this time and my email would have an out of office directing people in appropriate directions. My password to PSNE email and Google drive would be changed when I begin sabbatical and then returned to me at the beginning of Week 2 of reentry. Our Communications Manager can take a look at my email weekly to see if there is anything urgent to be forwarded to the right person(s).

This plan conforms to the Sabbatical Policies of the Presbytery and has been worked out in consultation with the Personnel Committee, Commission on Ministry, and the Presbytery Roundtable. To be presented to the Presbytery in May 2024 for approval.