



Geneva Ministerial Wellbeing Sabbatical Matching Program

Purpose of the Program

Geneva's sabbatical matching program is funded by a grant from the Lilly Foundation.

The program has several goals:

- Making sabbaticals more financially accessible to low-budget, solo-pastor churches and lower-income pastors.
- Incentivizing churches to plan and save for pastoral sabbaticals ahead of time.
- Incentivizing churches to employ best practices (including following Geneva's Call Package Guidelines and consulting with our Financial Planning Advisors) in structuring their pastors' call packages.

To achieve these goals, Geneva will match up to \$5,000 for PCA churches that demonstrate they have dedicated funds for a pastor's sabbatical. **Please note – this is a matching grant, not simply a gift of funds. For qualifying churches, Geneva will only match money dedicated and actually spent by the church to support their pastor's sabbatical.**

Eligibility

Geneva's Sabbatical Matching Fund is designed to benefit PCA pastors who serve in PCA churches. To be considered for a grant, churches must meet the following criteria:

- Be willing to plan and commit church funding toward a sabbatical for an ordained PCA pastor in good standing.
- Demonstrate compliance – or a good faith plan to comply – with financial best practices to ensure the pastor is financially and spiritually healthy.
- Church leadership (elders and any other decision makers) must willingly meet with a Geneva Financial Planning Advisor to assess the pastor's call package and determine compliance with best practices.
- Demonstrate significant financial need (Geneva will give priority to solo pastors and low-income pastors).
- Churches must continue to pay the pastor's salary and benefits during the duration of the sabbatical.

To be considered for a sabbatical matching grant, pastors must agree to the following:

- Pastors must be a solo pastor or a member of one of Geneva's Pastoral Cohorts.
- Pastors must not have taken a sabbatical within five years.
- Pastors must certify their intent to remain in their pastoral role for at least one year after the conclusion of the sabbatical.
- Pastors and their wives must willingly meet with a Geneva Financial Planning Advisor to assess their family's financial health and planning needs.
- Pastors must meet with a Geneva representative prior to, at the end of, and one year after the sabbatical for a snapshot of the wellbeing need for a sabbatical and its benefit to the pastor.

Application Instructions

To schedule a consultation for the purpose of sabbatical planning before completing this application, please contact wellbeing@genevabenefits.org.

To apply, print and fill out this application and return it, along with a copy of your ministry organization's budget, to:

Geneva Benefits Group
1700 North Brown Rd.
Ste. 106
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

To submit your application electronically, attach a single PDF containing the entire application and all supporting documents to wellbeing@genevabenefits.org. In the email subject line, put the following: "[pastor's last name] – sabbatical matching app."

Applications must be received by no later than end of day, October 15, 2026.

Our Sabbatical Awards Committee will meet in early November and applicants will be notified by the end of November 2026. All awards will be distributed in the first quarter of 2027. Checks will be payable to and mailed to the church.

Before an award is distributed, the Session will need to have scheduled their meeting with a Geneva Financial Planner and the Pastor will need to have scheduled their meeting with a Geneva Financial Planner and a Geneva Representative for a Pre-Sabbatical interview.

Joint Application for Sabbatical Matching Funds

PCA Church

Name _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address (if different). _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone # _____ EIN _____

Website URL _____

Email Address _____

For Session Representative:

Name _____ Email Address _____

Telephone # _____

Pastor

Name _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address (if different) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Date of Ordination _____

Date of Last Sabbatical _____ Length of Current Call _____

Signature Page

PCA Church

By signing below, the Church acknowledges the following:

I am authorized to represent this congregation and submit this proposal on its behalf. I affirm that the information contained in the proposal is true and accurate. My signature indicates that the congregation is aware of this proposal, approves of its submission, and is prepared to accept a grant from Geneva Benefits Group. If a grant is awarded, the congregation commits to continue the pastor's full salary and benefits for the duration of the sabbatical.

Session Representative¹

Title

Signature

Date

Please signify your agreement by checking below:

- ☐ We agree to provide \$_____ toward our pastor's sabbatical in addition to our current obligations to him.
- ☐ We agree to meet with a Geneva representative to review our pastor's call package.

Pastor

By signing this application, the applying pastor acknowledges the following:

I affirm that the information contained in the proposal is true and accurate. If a grant is awarded, I commit to serve this congregation or ministry for at least one year after the end of the sabbatical.

Please signify your agreement by checking below:

- ☐ I give Geneva consent to share my story, including information in this application, publicly and with the Lilly Endowment. (**Please let us know if you want us to keep your identity anonymous**).
- ☐ My wife and I agree to meet with a Geneva financial planner to evaluate my retirement readiness and a Geneva representative for a pre-sabbatical interview, as well as one month and one year post-sabbatical.

Signature

Date

¹ The Congregational Representative must be a currently active Teaching or Ruling Elder, other than the applying pastor, who is authorized to represent the Session in this application.

General Information

Number of Communing Members _____ Average Attendance _____

Annual Operating Budget \$ _____

Is the applying pastor bi-vocational? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, how many hours per week does he spend on pastoral duties? _____

Financial Best Practices

In order to receive sabbatical matching funds, ministries must demonstrate current compliance with, or a good faith plan to comply with, practices that will enable the applying pastor to thrive financially. This section provides baseline information for Geneva to make this determination.

Please provide the following for the Applying Pastor:

Call Package Breakdown

Annual Salary \$ _____

Housing Allowance \$ _____

SECA Allowance² \$ _____

Retirement Contribution \$ _____

Does the Church or Ministry Provide the following:

Health Insurance Yes ☐ No ☐

Life Insurance Yes ☐ No ☐

Long-Term Disability Yes ☐ No ☐

Short-Term Disability Yes ☐ No ☐

Access to Counseling Yes ☐ No ☐

Please attach a copy of your church's most recent annual budget.

²The amount a ministry employer contributes to a minister's wages to offset the taxes he is required to pay as an employee considered self-employed with respect to Social Security and Medicare.

Sabbatical Narrative Description

Instructions: Pastors and churches should submit separate narratives that answer the questions below. **Please organize your responses in the same format as the questions.**

For Pastors

Pastors, please write a narrative description of your proposed sabbatical that answers the questions below. Narrative descriptions should not exceed 5 typewritten, double-spaced pages and should be printed in 12-point, Times New Roman font.

1. **Goals** – what do you hope to achieve by taking this sabbatical (give careful thought to a few (2 to 4) specific goals)? How will you know if they have been achieved?
2. **Sabbatical Activities** – how will you spend your time during your sabbatical? Where will you go, what will you do, and with whom?
3. **Relationship** – how is each activity designed to help you achieve one or more of your goals?

For Churches

Please describe your plans for this sabbatical by answering the following questions. Narrative descriptions should not exceed 5 typewritten, double-spaced pages and should be printed in 12 point, Times New Roman font.

1. **Goals** – what goals do you have for your ministry during the pastor's sabbatical?
2. **Sabbatical Activities** – how will the ministry spend its time during the pastor's sabbatical? How will you cover the pastor's duties in his absence?
3. **Protection** – How do you plan to protect the time of your pastor and his family from ministry responsibilities so they can truly be away to rest and recharge?

Pastors, use the following to present a chronological outline of your proposed sabbatical activities.

DatesSabbatical Activities	

Proposed Budget

In the space below, please submit a line-item budget that addresses how the congregation will use the sabbatical matching funds. Please enclose a brief narrative describing how the amounts in this budget proposal were calculated.

Pulpit Supply	\$ _____
Community events related to sabbatical	\$ _____
Payments to the pastor to support his sabbatical plans ³	\$ _____
Other expenses ⁴	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

³ Payments to a pastor to support sabbatical activities will be taxable under most circumstances. Pastors should work with the a tax adviser to determine the potential impact of this grant on the pastor's personal income tax. When determining the potential tax impact, note that the grant will be paid by Geneva Benefits Group to the church, not directly to the pastor. Geneva Benefits Group does not provide advice about the tax implications of grant awards.

⁴ If the ministry plans to spend the grant proceeds on any activity not listed above, please detail those activities in the narrative description above.