

Commissioning for Sabbatical

L: On the seventh day God rested and celebrated all of creation. God surveyed all that God had made and said, "It is good."

C: Pastor (name of Pastor), we work together in ministry here at (name of congregation), and have much to celebrate. We celebrate your encouragement, direction, and leadership in our work together as God's people in this place. Of this ministry together we say with confidence, "It is good."

L: We send you now on this Sabbatical journey confident that God will bless your every step, refresh your spirit, renew your mind, strengthen your body, and return you to us empowered for our continued task of ministry in (name of congregational city/town), and in the world.

C: We will miss you, even as we faithfully carry out with joy and hope the ministry to which we are called. As you attend to your Sabbatical, please know that our thoughts and prayers will be with you, that we support you in every way, and that we look forward with joy to your return.

P: I, too, look forward to that day when I will return and share in our ministry together. I will miss you as well, and I will pray for you whenever you come to mind. Thank you for creating this opportunity for a time of Sabbath rest in my ministry.

C: Go, now, with our blessing, and with the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The "L" (leader) part of this brief service could be a co-pastor, congregational president, or anyone else representing the ministry of the sending congregation. This commissioning may be used after the Post Communion Blessing and before the Closing Hymn on the Sunday prior to the Sabbatical commencement. Please use this service freely, and encourage Sabbaticals for pastors and lay staff within your congregations).