

Extended Ministerial Leave (Sabbatical)

Permission for Extended Ministerial Leave

Normally Extended Ministerial Leave will not be taken before ten years in ministry or less than ten years since any previous Extended Ministerial Leave. Extended Ministerial Leave is normally 6-12 weeks.

Permission for such leave may be granted by the Diocesan Bishop with the recommendation of the Archdeacon, on a discretionary basis. The possibility of extended leave will usually originate from an individual's Ministerial Development Review.

What is Extended Ministerial Leave?

The Bible contains many illustrations that talk about time, space, seasons and growth. Many of these examples have an agricultural focus. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, for example, focusses on the different seasons there are to life. A period of Extended Ministerial Leave allows a different focus, a different pace to life and ministry – a different season – which in turn can enable growth. For growth to be fruitful and sustained, the different seasons are needed. Even when a field is left fallow, there is a work of renewal and nourishment taking place (often unseen) that will enable new growth to take place.

Extended Ministerial Leave provides space, time and an opportunity to have a renewed focus on our ministry, often from a different perspective.

Within the Ely Diocese, we seek to –

Engage fully and courageously with the needs of our communities, locally and globally.

Grow God's church by finding disciples and nurturing leaders.

Deepen our commitment to God through word, worship and prayer.

Extended Ministerial Leave allows space and time for a different type of engagement, it provides space and time to enable growth in leadership and a vocational reflection and it also creates space and time to renew and deepen an individual's commitment to God.

A brief definition of study leave for Ely Diocese is:

“a period of paid leave of absence from work to study or research with the purpose of renewal of the person and their ministry”.

There are certain characteristics that should feature in all Extended Ministerial Leave:

Freedom from the everyday tasks of work: This can be achieved by taking the study leave away from home or simply by avoiding contact with the work environment.

A clear focus: Everyone proposing to take study leave must answer the questions of focus, outcome and content. The **focus** can be discerned when we answer the following question: What is the area that has become important to me and my ministerial calling? What am I inquisitive about? Why has this areas become important? What impact could there be? (we assume that all learning can lead to personal growth). The **outcomes** could fall into any, or all, of the following categories:

Relational – ministers are human beings created in the image of God to be in relationship with God, themselves, other human beings and creation.

Strategic – ministers are placed in a particular role and context and they have a strategic calling to leadership within that.

Missionary – the church and its ministers called to participate in the mission of God to the whole of creation.

Vocational Discernment – God at times calls individuals to explore the possibility of exercising ministry within new roles and new contexts

The **content** of the Extended Ministerial Leave can be wide and varied. The content itself can provide a structure for the period of Extended Ministerial Leave.

A clear framework and structure: three months will pass incredibly quickly. A clear framework/structure will give the Extended Ministerial Leave a shape and focus. Thinking this through before the start of the leave will ensure that no time is lost.

A review of the resources available: resources may include people and places as well as written materials, but they need to be reviewed in advance and become part of the framework/structure of the leave.

Evaluating/Reflecting upon what has been learned: any experience and learning should be reflected upon in order to that it can feed back into the person's daily work.

Reflections/Learning which can be shared with other people:

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Ephesians 4:15-16

In order to equip and build up the Church, it is important that something can be shared with others. The most common form of such material is a written report, though other forms of communication can be used. The learning could be shared within the Parish, deanery, diocese, or beyond.

Spiritual Refreshment:

An element of Extended Ministerial Leave is that it provides space and time for spiritual refreshment and renewal. Thought should be given to how this may take place, opportunities that there may be in terms of resources and visits/conferences/retreats.

Thinking about study leave

If you wish to take study leave, you need to start planning things well in advance, ideally at least twelve months before the date on which you intend to begin is good. One of the most obvious considerations is to think about what will happen to the jobs you normally do. Which jobs might be done by other ministers within or outside of the parish? Which can be handled by lay people or left to run themselves? Which will need to be suspended or left in abeyance? Responsibility for covering regular Sunday services and occasional offices will be a prime consideration and needs to be dealt with early on.

You may not need to have your PCC of congregations' permission to go on extended leave, but it would be wise to enlist their understanding and co-operation. Helping them understand why you are doing it and the arrangements being made in your absence.

It will be important to talk to the Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry about the focus, structure and framework of your proposals. The Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry will be able to help develop those ideas and it may be that a series of conversations will be needed.

It is important to think about where you will spend your study leave, which in turn will be dependent upon what you plan to study. Working from home can be difficult and you may need to think how you will handle occasional callers or other unplanned interruptions. Extending your time of leave with an annual holiday can sometimes be helpful at the beginning or end.

Allow plenty of time for reflection. The diocese asks that you produce a 'report' on your sabbatical project in a form that is most helpful to you. This 'report' could also form the basis of a wider communication of your learning to others. Experience tells us that it is usually very difficult to find the time to write up a project after you return to 'normal' ministry rhythms.

Diocesan Allowances

Study leave ought to be for a period of not less than six weeks and not more than twelve weeks away from normal duties. Stipend will continue as normal. Financial assistance of up to £500 can be offered, subject to a clear estimate of costs being submitted in advance, though applicants are encouraged to apply to other funding bodies as well.

There is a standard proposal form for Extended Ministerial Leave which is attached to this document. Please complete it and return it to: missionandministry@elydiocese.org

Peter Leech

Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry

email: peter.leech@elydiocese.org

mobile: 07944091813

landline: 01353 652733

Diocese of Ely – Extended Ministerial Leave Application

The Process:

Usually, applications for Extended Ministerial Leave will be identified within an individual’s MDR.

Initial permission to proceed should be through a conversation with the Archdeacon.

If the Archdeacon is happy to support the application, this form should be completed and sent to missionandministry@elydiocese.org and the Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry will make contact for a conversation and to help develop the focus/shape of the Extended Ministerial Leave.

Contact will be made with the Rural Dean/Team Rector to ensure that cover has been adequately considered.

The Bishop must sign to signal their approval before the Extended Ministerial Leave can be taken.

Name of Applicant:.....

APPROVALS

(Please confirm the aspects below are satisfactory by ticking the box)

Archdeacon

Diocesan Responsibilities Covered	
Appropriate Timing	

Comments:

Signature:

Bishop:

Approval Date:

Signature:

Rural Dean/Team Rector

Parish Cover Arrangement	
Timing	

Comments:

Signature:

Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry:

Focus	
Framework and Structure	
Resources	
Spiritual Refreshment	
Financial Arrangements	
Practical details considered	

Comments:

Signature:

Extended Ministerial Leave: Proposal and Request for Financial Assistance

Please ensure that you have discussed your proposals with the Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry before completing this form.

When completed please seek the support of the Archdeacon.

Completed forms should be sent to the Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry (missionandministry@elydiocese.org)

Personal Information

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Present Post:

How long have you been in this post?

Have you undertaken Extended Ministerial Leave (sabbatical) before, either in this diocese or elsewhere?

YES / NO

If yes, please indicate:

In which Year

Duration

Diocese

Briefly outline the focus of your last extended leave, your reflections and its connection, if any, with your present application.

Extended Ministerial Leave Proposal – Focus

In the space below, outline what you intend to focus on?

What is the area that has become important to me and my ministerial calling?

What am I inquisitive about?

Why has this area become important?

What impact could there be?

The **outcomes** should fall into any, or all, of the following categories – state where your focus will be:

Relational – ministers are human beings created in the image of God to be in relationship with God, themselves, other human beings and creation.

Strategic – ministers are placed in a particular role and context and they have a strategic calling to leadership within that.

Missionary – the church and its ministers are called to participate in the mission of God to the whole of creation.

Vocational Discernment – God at times calls individuals to explore the possibility of exercising ministry within new roles and new contexts.

The **content** of the Extended Ministerial Leave can be wide and varied.

Framework and Structure:

Please outline the structure/framework of your proposed Extended Ministerial Leave.

Date you intend to begin your study leave:

Date you intend to finish (including writing-up?):

Where do you intend to be during this time?

Personal Action and Reflection:

All learning involves both times of action and times of reflection. This should be reflected in the shape of how you will use the time.

How will you communicate about How will you share what you have learnt both locally and in the Diocese?

Practicalities:

Arrangements for everyday duties in your absence

What arrangements have you made for covering your regular work?

Sunday services:

Weekday Services and Occasional Offices:

Regular pastoral duties (including part-time chaplaincies):

Other responsibilities you hold (e.g. within the community):

Pastoral emergencies:

Meetings:

Anything else?:

Resources

Briefly outline the resources you intend to access.

It sometimes helps to ask someone to act as coach/mentor during this time.

Finance

List the principal financial commitments involved in undertaking this study leave project, including travel, accommodation, resource costs.

Total: £

What applications have you made to other grant-making bodies for funds, and with what results to date? (See list of trusts attached to this document and include pending claims):

Total: £

How much financial assistance are you asking the diocese to make towards this project?

Total: £

BACS details:

Bank Account Name:

Bank Account number:

Bank Sort Code:

Reflections/Learning which can be shared with others.

You are asked to contribute to the building up and equipping of the church through your personal learning and reflections. This could be in a variety of forms, e.g. a written report, a journal, the development of training materials etc.

Please indicate below you expect to complete this phase:

Other considerations:

Please note down below anything else about your Extended Ministerial Leave that you think might be important to consider further.

Signature of applicant:

Date:
