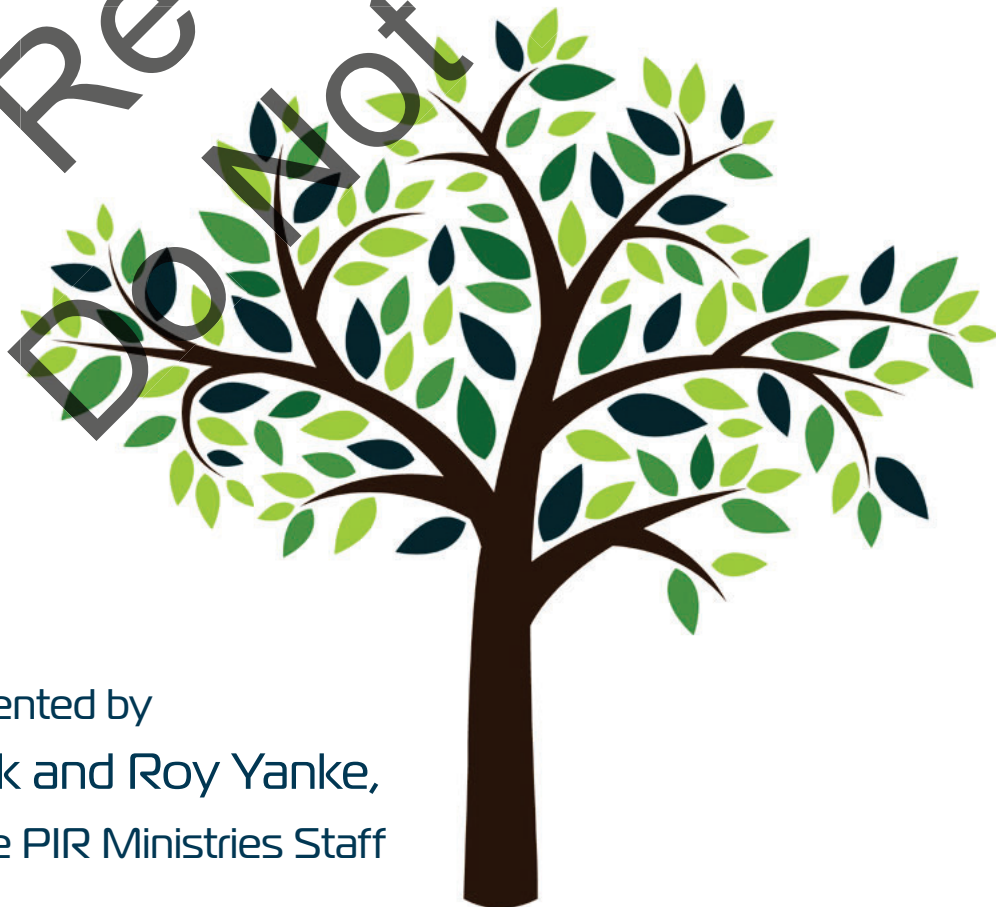


Clergy Sabbatical Toolkit



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with help from the PIR Ministries Staff



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How to Contact PIR Ministries

Getting in touch with us is easy. Use the Contact page on our website, <https://pirministries.org/contact/> and let us know how we can help. Or you can email us at info@pirministries.org. We usually respond to inquiries within a day.

If you prefer to call us, feel free to reach out at 844-585-1234. If you need to leave a voice-mail, we will get back to you as soon as possible.

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About PIR Ministries

Practical Resources for Ministry Health, Resilience, and Restoration

Pastoring Pastors

Listening, supporting, and encouraging are the hallmarks of the relationships we seek to build with pastors. Our shared hope in the gospel is the foundation on which we build.

Pastor-in-Residence (PIR) Program

A program specifically designed for pastors and/or ministry leaders in transition. This restorative process provides a safe environment and a proven process where the pastor—and their family—can work through the loss associated with an exit from ministry.

Refuge Churches

Refuge Churches are the “safe haven” where the PIR program takes place. It is a local church characterized by grace, a vision for restoration, and a willingness to serve God’s servants. Members within the congregation, trained by PIR staff, form the support structure for the program.

Assessments

- **The PRO-D© Assessment:** This comprehensive and fully validated assessment tool helps a ministry leader gain perspective on their role, enhance their self-awareness, and sharpen their sense of call. The PRO-D Assessment combines an extensive online assessment with a follow-up discussion with a certified consultant. Team Alignments are available for those church staffs or leadership teams that want a purposeful, strategic approach to cultivating, building, and renewing healthy and effective ministry teams.
- **Our Pastoral Health Assessment** can help a pastor or ministry leader identify key areas of growth or risk that may need attention. This can be taken anonymously or can be the jumping off point for a coaching or spiritual direction relationship.

Clergy Coaching

When a ministry leader needs a “thinking partner,” PIR offers coaching in a confidential and supportive environment—often serving as a catalyst for growth. Several options are available, including a series of sessions designed to unpack the implications of the PRO-D Assessment.

Workshops and Seminars

Bringing experience and practical insights to the issues of ministry health, staff members of PIR Ministries are prepared to speak to churches, ministry gatherings, retreats, and conferences on a variety of topics addressing the challenges of ministry life and health. In particular . . .

- Our **Cultivating a Culture of Ministry Health** workshop—a three-part presentation for both pastors and church leaders—has proven effective in encouraging the conversations necessary to move toward a healthy leadership environment.
- The **Pathways to Peace** seminar is designed to assist church leaders understand the nature of conflict, prepare in advance to address the challenges that conflict presents in church settings, and create a

strategy for navigating current conflict situations. The seminar is led by Dr. Dan Borg, Regional Director with PIR Ministries and a trained conflict mediator.

Networking for Ministry Health

PIR Ministries is part of a nationwide network dedicated to the care of ministry leaders, offering a wide range of renewal opportunities for pastors and their families, including retreat locations, counseling resources, and cohorts for the care of the leader's soul.

Sabbatical Planning and Pastoral Renewal Plans

We have assisted a growing number of pastors and church leaders in crafting meaningful and restorative sabbatical strategies leading to greater ministry health. In addition, PIR Ministries can help develop a renewal plan for those pastors actively serving in leadership roles who, in conjunction with their local church leadership, wish to address a significant issue in ministry life proactively—before an exit occurs.

The Mission and Values of PIR Ministries

Our Mission

We partner with God and the Church in the work of pastoral renewal and restoration, to cultivate new hope for healthy ministry lives.

To that end,

- We build relationships with pastors and churches to promote a culture of ministry health.
- We provide a process of restoration when a pastoral family has experienced a forced termination of their ministry.
- We provide proven resources and tools that assist pastors in the challenges they face in ministry life.

Our Core Values

THE GOSPEL

Only God can renew and restore tired and wounded hearts. That's why we partner with God. Only the continued immersion of a ministry leader's heart in the gospel will lead to lasting ministry health.

HOPE

When hope is lost, ministry dies. Cultivating new hope is best expressed when we say, "God is not done with you yet!" Our personal stories reflect the reality of this fundamental truth.

RENEWAL AND RESTORATION

Renewal—what needs to be mended—and restoration—what needs to be rebuilt—are at the heart of gospel hope. We compassionately work to strengthen the soul of God's shepherds, to see them restored when wounded or fallen, and to advocate for their ministry health as well as their just and loving care.

THE REDEMPTIVE QUALITY OF PAIN

Pain is too valuable to waste. In God's gracious hands, it is a means to deeper growth in the life of a pastor. It brings a deeper understanding of God, his care, and his plan. It can equip the ministry leader for greater effectiveness in service to God's people.

RELATIONSHIP

We are in the encouragement business. Building relationships that can encourage ministry resilience for pastors and their families is what we do. It is built from the foundation that we “live what we give,” being committed to each other’s ministry health as a team.

SAFETY

We are committed to creating “sacred spaces” within the relationships we build, where honest conversations can occur, trauma can be processed, and wounds can be healed. This is shaped by a posture of listening well to those we serve and to the God who heals.

LOCAL CHURCH

The local church is the instrument of hope in the life of a ministry leader who is journeying through difficult transition and turmoil, and it is the God-designed instrument for bringing the hope of the gospel in Christ to the world. Healthy pastors lead healthy churches, and healthy churches are engaged in the mission of God.

BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

It is the calling and mission of PIR Ministries to partner with God and the Church in service to pastors, ministry leaders, and their families, of all races, ethnicities, and both genders—all created in the image of God and equal before him.

Donating to PIR Ministries

We are grateful for everyone who supports our work through their prayers and donations. PIR is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization accredited by the ECFA and committed to making sure your financial partnership directly impacts the lives of pastors and their families through our staff and services.

You can become a Sustaining Partner today! Online donations can be made by credit/debit card or ACH through our website at <https://pirministries.org/donate/>. Checks can be mailed to our office at:

PIR Ministries
27996 Halsted Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48331

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PIR Clergy Sabbatical Toolkit

Table of Contents

How to Use This Toolkit 1

Video Guide 5

- (01) Part 1—Introduction 7
 - (02) What Is a Sabbatical? 8
 - (03) Biblical Foundations for Sabbatical 9
 - (04) The Nature of Pastoral Ministry 10
- (05) Part 2—For the Church 11
 - (06) Objections to Clergy Sabbatical 12
 - (07) Elements of a Sabbatical Policy 14
 - (08) The Purpose of Sabbatical 15
 - (09) Financial Considerations 16
 - (10) What to Do While Your Pastor Is Away 17
 - (11) Accountability and Support 18
 - (12) Congregational Care During Sabbatical 19
 - (13) Reentry from Sabbatical 20
- (14) Part 3—For the Pastor 21
 - (15a) Sabbatical Planning Template 22
 - (15b) Your DREAM Sabbatical 23
 - (16) Ideas for Your Sabbatical 24
 - (17) Places to Go While on Sabbatical 25
 - (18) Preparing for the Unexpected 26
 - (19) Rhythms of Work and Rest 27
 - (20) Self-Care and Soul Care 28
 - (21) Coaching, Counseling, and Spiritual Direction 29
 - (22) Reentry into Ministry 30

- (23) Part 4—Special Considerations 31
 - (24) Sabbatical and Family 32
 - (25) Part-Time Pastors 33
 - (26) Sabbaticals in the Workplace 34
 - (27) Sabbaticals for Other Church Staff 35
 - (28) Non-Sabbatical Leave 36
 - (29) Assessments 37
- (30) Conclusion 38

Bonus Audio 39

Toolkit Documents 40

- A Biblical Foundation for Sabbatical: A Quick Scripture Reference Guide 41
- Sample Sabbatical Policy 44
- PIR Sabbatical Planning Template 49
- Your DREAM Sabbatical 53

Sabbatical Planning Worksheets 60

- Sabbatical Budgeting Worksheet for Church 61
- Sabbatical Budgeting Worksheet for Pastor 62
- Sabbatical Planning Lists 63

Additional Resources 67

- Retreat Centers and Ministries 68
- Sabbatical Grants 71

Articles 74

- 4 Common Objections to Pastor Sabbatical 75
- 7 Ways to Nourish Your Soul Through Bible Reading 77
- A High-Risk Profession: Pastors and PTSD 79
- Biblical Foundations for Sabbatical 82
- Creating a Rule of Life 85
- Goals for Your Sabbatical 87
- How to Find a Good Ministry Coach 91
- How to Pay for Your Pastor's Sabbatical 93
- How to Pray for Your Pastor While They Are on Sabbatical 95
- Invest in Your Pastor's Joy 97

Praying Like Jesus for Your Pastor	99
Relief from the Pressure to Produce	101
Retreats for Pastors and Their Families: How to Find the Right One	105
Sabbaticals for Church Staff	108
Sabbaticals in the Workplace	110
Seeking God's Will: A Plan for Discernment in Community	112
Seeking God's Will: Preparing for a Discernment Community Meeting	117
Signs Your Pastor Needs Rest	119
The Tax Implications of a Ministry Sabbatical	122
The Relentlessness of Pastoral Ministry	125
How to Structure a Sabbatical for Your Pastor	128
What to Expect on a Prayer Retreat	132
Why Sabbaticals Are Good for Your Church	135
Why You Should Make Your Pastor Take a Sabbatical	139
Your Pastor's Constant Burden	141

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How to Use This Toolkit



Welcome to the PIR Ministries Clergy Sabbatical Toolkit!

This toolkit is designed to take you through the entire process of developing a robust sabbatical policy for your church, help your pastor plan their sabbatical, and think through many of the issues you may face along the way. Not every church will need the whole toolkit, and it's designed like an à la carte menu—feel free to pick and choose what looks helpful to you. You do not have to do everything in the toolkit, but it is designed to walk you through the entire process of developing your sabbatical policies and plans. The toolkit is organized into five basic parts.

1. Videos and Video Guide

The heart of this toolkit is the thirty videos that are broken down into four parts: (1) Introduction to Sabbatical, (2) For the Church, (3) For the Pastor, and (4) Special Considerations. A few of the more important videos are longer, but most are short, so you can spend most of your time in discussion and planning. You should have received a link and code to access these videos when you purchased this toolkit. If for some reason you did not, please contact PIR Ministries.

The Video Guide contains notes, discussion questions, and things to do for each video. We recommend that every person involved have their own copy of this workbook so they may each take notes.

2. Planning Documents

Following the video guide is a selection of documents that will be very helpful to your planning: (1) A Biblical Foundation for Sabbatical: A Quick Scripture Reference Guide; (2) Sample Sabbatical Policy; (3) Sabbatical Planning Template; and (4) Your DREAM Sabbatical. Each of these documents will be referenced in specific videos. It's a good idea to read through them together.

3. Planning Worksheets

These worksheets are simple aids to your budgeting and planning. You may make extra copies of these worksheets for your planning use.

4. Additional Resources

This section contains information on sabbatical grants and places to stay. These resources may change over time, but they will be a great help in your planning and budgeting.

5. Articles

The final section of this toolkit is a curated collection of articles to aid in your sabbatical planning. Some are for the church, and some are for the pastor. We believe these articles will help deepen your understanding of many of the topics covered in the videos. They are intended to supplement and enhance the teaching videos.

Free Sabbatical Planning Consultations

We trust this toolkit will be helpful in planning a good sabbatical experience, but you may have additional questions, wish to further discuss an aspect of sabbatical planning, or need some help with questions from your church leadership. PIR Ministries offers assistance as you explore and anticipate engaging in a sabbatical. A complimentary meeting with an experienced PIR staff member can help answer questions, clarify expectations, and begin to set direction. We offer two free sabbatical consultations to work through those sticky questions—one for church leadership and one just for the pastor.

You can start the process of scheduling your consultations by contacting us through our website at <https://pirministries.org/contact/> or emailing us at info@pirministries.org.

Preparing for Your Consultation

A pastor may meet one-on-one for a 60-minute conversation. Church leadership teams/boards may meet as a group with PIR Staff for a 60-to-90-minute conversation.

To best prepare for this time, consider thinking and praying through the following (write down your answers for easy reference during the meeting):

For Pastors:

- What do you understand a sabbatical to be?
- Why is engaging in a sabbatical important for you at this time?
- What are your expectations for a sabbatical? What do you hope for from a sabbatical?
- What are the major concerns you have about engaging in a sabbatical? What are the roadblocks?
- Are there any aspects of the sabbatical that are already decided or in place (including dates)?
- How will your family be connected to your sabbatical?

For Leadership Teams/Boards:

- What is your level of support for a sabbatical? How unified are you with your pastor?
- What objections or reservations do you or your congregation have about sabbatical?
- What do you understand the purpose of sabbatical to be?
- How involved do you expect to be in the planning and communicating of the sabbatical?
- What might the greatest challenges be for staff and the congregation during the sabbatical?
- What resources do you have in place to support a sabbatical? What else might be needed?

These questions can create a helpful framework for an initial discussion. If you choose to use your consultations later in the planning process, some of these questions may already be answered.

Additional Services from PIR

PIR also offers Sabbatical Coaching for the pastor (six sessions spread out before, during, and after the sabbatical). You can learn more about this in the Clergy Coaching section below. We can be available to coach church leadership teams/boards in their work as well. These contracted services can be modified to best fit your church's needs and budget.

Clergy Coaching

PIR Ministries Clergy Coaching may be different from what you assume coaching will look like. We work with pastors from churches of all different sizes and Christian denominations. Though we may offer wisdom or advice, we are not here primarily to preach, teach, control, or correct. Coaching is *a partnering environment* meant to facilitate wisdom and be a catalyst for growth. It is also *a confidential and supportive experience*. This one-on-one relationship allows the focus to be totally on you, and there is no prepackaged set of answers. We are your “thinking partners” in this process, which means we are good listeners and curious people who ask penetrating questions to open awareness and draw out clarity from within you. If you feel stuck, wounded, burned-out, or you just need to be heard, our experienced and trained coaches will help you find the way forward.

Before You Begin . . .

- You will be connected to one or more of our coaches for an initial phone or video call (at no cost) to determine if that coach fits your needs.
- Coaching sessions are conducted over the phone, by video conference, or in person, and are typically one hour long.
- The coaching relationship will be designed together. Coaching is not advice, therapy, consulting, or counseling. The role of your coach will be to ask meaningful questions and come alongside as your thought partner. Together we will work through challenges and issues and design actions to move you toward your desired goals. There may be times when mentoring is blended with coaching.
- The purpose of our interaction is to hold your focus on your desired outcome so you can stay clear, take action, and experience change in the process.

A Plan Tailored to You

You can select from the following coaching packages, depending on the number and type of sessions you feel will meet your need.

1. **Clergy Coaching Standard.** Six 60-minute coaching sessions dedicated to a current ministry or life challenge. (\$600.00)
2. **PRO-D Mini.** Combining the PRO-D Assessment and consult with three 30-minute coaching sessions to do some basic follow-up on insights gained from the assessment. (\$400.00)
3. **PRO-D Plus.** Combines the PRO-D Assessment and consultation with six 60-minute coaching sessions. This allows for further exploration of insights gained from the assessment, as well as related topics or issues. (\$850.00)
4. **Clergy Coaching Modified.** Allows you the option of selecting the number of full coaching sessions at a frequency and cost that is agreed upon in advance.
5. **Coaching for Spiritual Formation.** Six 60-minute coaching sessions dedicated to increasing your awareness and responsiveness to God's presence. (\$600.00)

Coaching for Spiritual Formation—Sacred Space for Your Sacred Journey

“The assumption of spirituality is that God is always doing something before I know it. So, the task is not to try to get God to do something I think needs to be done, but to become aware of what God is doing so that I can respond to it and participate and take delight in it.”

—Eugene Peterson

Coaching for Spiritual Formation is a Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered process that honors the personal journey we are on. It starts with the assumption that God is always present and always at work and that he meets us where we are.

The goal is to help increase your awareness of God's presence and to take notice of his activity in your life. It also invites you to notice your own personal responses and reactions to whatever God is doing. It provides a place of honesty, grace, and expectation. Some of the foundational questions of this kind of coaching are:

- Where are you, God?
- What are you up to?

- What are you saying to me?
- Is there an invitation for me?

Our approach uses probing questions, Scripture, prayer, space to reflect, times of silence, and honest sharing. It consistently invites a person into a deeper relationship with God in whatever they are experiencing both in their life and in their heart.

Sabbatical Coaching

Often, a pastor planning a sabbatical can benefit from an experienced coach to help plan a healthy sabbatical or to check in with during the sabbatical. PIR Ministries staff are trained coaches and can assist in asking good questions to make your sabbatical the best it can be. We also offer coaching for any pastor who is facing a ministry challenge or just wants to stay sharp. If you would benefit from having a “thinking partner” as you plan your sabbatical, we would be honored to be that for you. Please contact us at <https://pirministries.org/contact/> and ask about sabbatical coaching, or email us at info@pirministries.org. Sabbatical Coaching *may* be available free of charge or at a reduced rate (based on need).

Coaching Cost: The cost per coaching session is \$100.00. The cost for the PRO-D Assessment is \$250.00. Because we believe in the value of the coaching experience for all who want it, we want you to talk to us about any extenuating circumstances that may affect how and when payments are made.

Every pastor needs a coach!

Assessments

Pastor's Health Assessment

PIR Ministries is dedicated to helping pastors live healthy ministry lives. We have developed a Pastor's Health Assessment to give every pastor a snapshot of their current level of ministry health, with an opportunity to talk with us if that level needs some work.

You can access the assessment on our home page at <https://pirministries.org>. Just scroll down and click “Take the Assessment.”

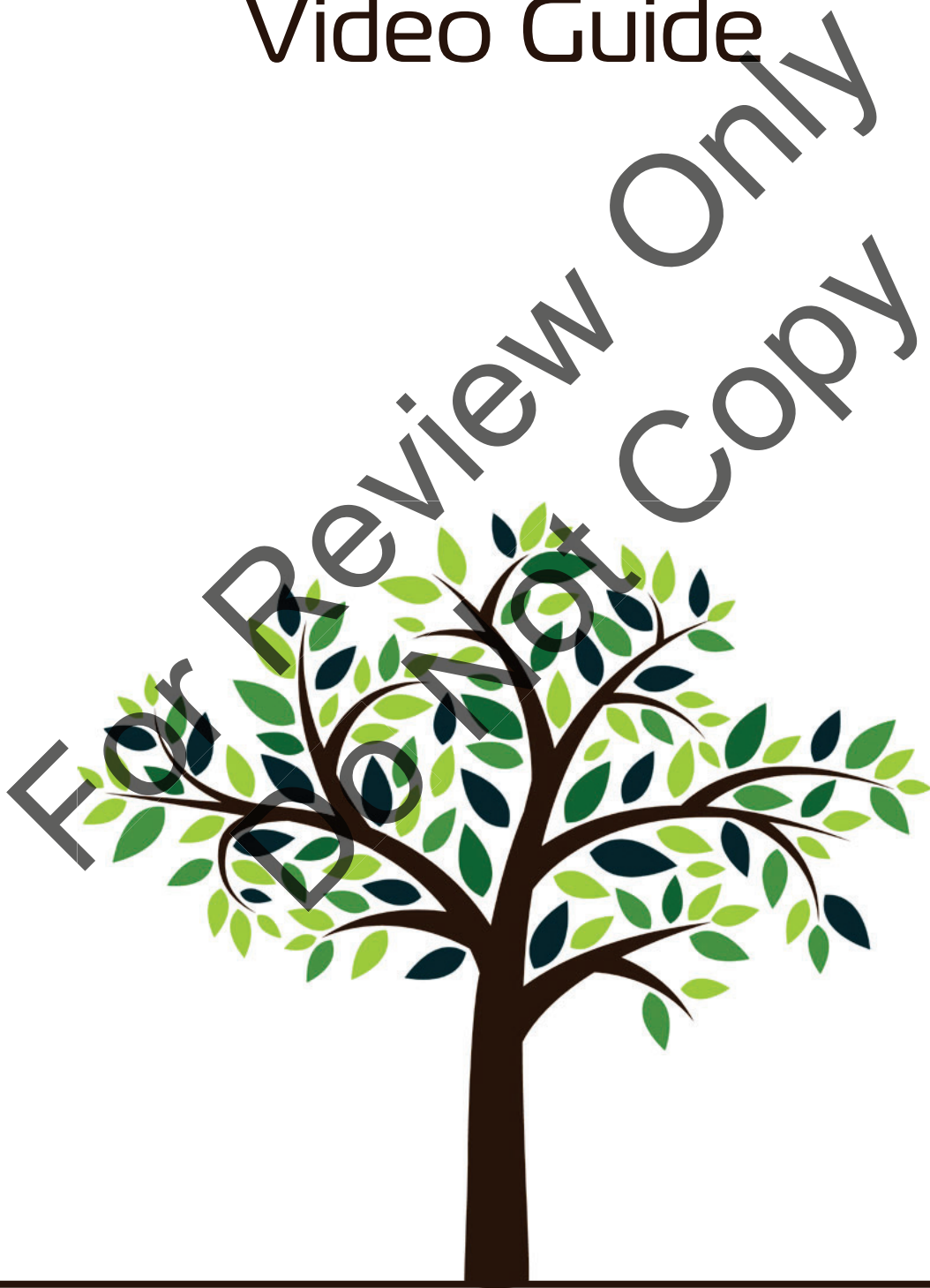
Your information is secure with us and will not be used in any form that will disclose your identity and will not be shared with any third parties.

The PRO-D Assessment

The PRO-D Assessment is a state-of-the-art, professional development instrument for leaders that helps individuals understand how their unique set of missions, competencies, and styles integrate and contribute to their overall self-awareness and leadership effectiveness.

The PRO-D Assessment has proven invaluable in helping pastors, seminarians, those anticipating ordination, and church leaders better define their calling in light of their roles and responsibilities within the church. (Cost: \$250.00)

Video Guide



01 Part 1—Introduction

Notes

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Discussion Questions

1. Talk about your hopes for this toolkit and how it will help your church or pastor.
2. Share your presuppositions or assumptions about clergy sabbatical.

Things to Do

1. Look through the section in this toolkit about PIR Ministries. Familiarize yourself with how to contact PIR and what resources are available to your church.
2. Appoint a contact person who will handle your communications with PIR Ministries.

02 What Is a Sabbatical?

- A sabbatical is an extended period of time away from work.
- *Sabbatical* literally means “year of rest.”
- Ministry sabbatical is part of a *healthy rhythm of work and rest for sustainable long-term ministry*.
- Duration: 12 to 16 weeks (three to four months)
- Frequency: Every five to seven years
- Pastors who fail to have a healthy sabbatical rhythm will often leave their church for another ministry because it’s easier to recharge that way.

Notes

Discussion Questions

1. What rhythms of work and rest does your pastor currently have?
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Seasonal
 - Yearly
 - Every five to seven years
2. How does your pastor feel about sabbaticals? What would they find helpful?
3. How do you feel about the three-to-four-month time frame?
4. How would a sabbatical rhythm of every five to seven years benefit your pastor and church?
5. List some objections you have toward clergy sabbatical (save this list for later).
6. List some possibilities you can see for your pastor’s sabbatical.

Things to Do

1. Start compiling a list of things to discuss in your church consultation with your PIR Regional Director. You will keep this list handy and add to it throughout the first two parts of the toolkit or until your consultation.
2. Start praying together to seek God’s will for your church as it relates to sabbatical and care of your pastor.

03 Biblical Foundations for Sabbatical

- The Sabbath is a period of ceasing from our productivity for intimacy with God and others. It's a chance to receive God and his good gifts.
- A sabbatical is an extended Sabbath.
- Sabbatical is derived from the Sabbath year explained in Leviticus 25:1–7.
- Ezekiel 20:12 tells us how Sabbaths remind us that God is Lord and that we are holy to God.
- Israel was sent into exile, in part, for failure to observe the Sabbath year.
- Moses, Elijah, Jesus, and Paul each took extended times away to be with God—to learn his will, to fast and pray, and to prepare for their next season of ministry.

Notes

Discussion Questions

1. How is the Sabbath good for us?
2. Why do you think Israel failed to observe the Sabbath year and the Year of Jubilee?
3. Review this list of things that sabbatical teaches us. How are these good for us, our church, and our pastor?
 - Jesus is Lord of our church's and our pastor's ministry.
 - Ceasing from work for a time of refreshment in God is good for our pastor and church.
 - God is in control, and he will care for us.
 - A well-planned sabbatical will prepare our pastor for the next season in ministry.

Things to Do

1. Review the document “Biblical Foundations for Sabbatical” in the Toolkit Documents section. Search the Scriptures for additional teachings on the Sabbath.
2. Begin to develop your own document on the biblical basis for sabbatical.

04 The Nature of Pastoral Ministry

- Every pastor bears a heavy weight of responsibility or concern.
- 2 Corinthians 11:28 and Hebrews 13:17 talk about this concern and responsibility.
- Unreasonable expectations cause ministry stress, shame, and burnout.
- Pastors have few places where they can be merely human instead of feeling pressure to be superhuman.
- The pastor’s job description is often in tension with their gifts and calling from God.
- Leadership can be lonely or isolating.

Notes

Discussion Questions

1. How can you shape your pastor’s job description to be more in line with their gifts and calling from God?
2. What are the unspoken or unreasonable expectations that your pastor might carry? From the leadership? From the congregation? From the community? From within themselves?
3. What can your church do to allow your pastor to get out of “ministry mode” and just be a human being?
4. How can your church encourage your pastor to have friendships outside the church?

Things to Do

1. Read and discuss the article “Your Pastor’s Constant Burden” at the end of this toolkit.
2. Begin talking about how you can lessen the burden of responsibility, expectation, and criticism that your pastor carries.

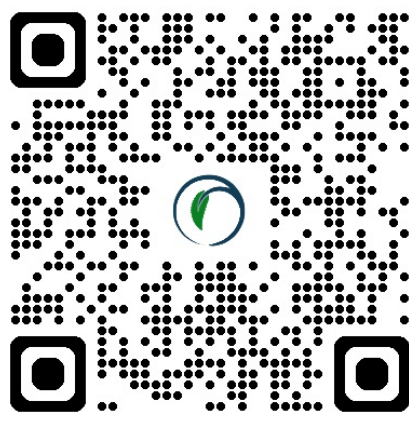
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 - * Video Guide
 - * Planning Documents
 - * Grant Information
 - * Retreat Centers
 - * Helpful Articles
- 30 Videos
- Bonus Audio
- 2 Consultations with PIR Ministries

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