

**Q&A FOLLOW-UP FROM
FOURSQUARE FEMALE SR LEADERS FORUM
MAY 22, 2025 – PAUL KUZMA**

(For continued conversation, please feel free to contact Paul at pkuzma@csreast.com or 805.501.1197)

Recommendations for maximizing sabbath rest with less than 24 hours available?

I recommend starting with whatever time you can give to Sabbath. Of the 24 hours, hopefully you are sleeping for at least 8 of them, so there is 1/3 of the 24 already! It's ok to start slow with the goal of reaching 24 hours. I also recommend formatting the Sabbath with the Hebraic components of Stopping, Resting, Delighting & Contemplating. What does it look like for you to do those 4 things every Sabbath?

How do you practically approach or prepare for Sabbath? What does your personal Sabbath look like? Does it change from week-to-week? Is it something you ask Holy Spirit to guide you on as far as ensuring that you're honoring it and not filling it with other things that aren't work, but still keeps it from being a true Sabbath?

I again refer to the 4 components above. I try to be sure they are each incorporated into my Sabbath. Some are surprised when I share that I sometimes mow my lawn on my Sabbath, because it gives me delight to complete something and see its progress. I don't necessarily mow every Sabbath. Sometimes, it's apparent to me that it feels like work. Then I don't mow on those Sabbaths! I try to enjoy my Sabbath on the same day each week, usually Sunday now that I am not pastoring a church. Some Sundays, I speak at churches, and will reschedule my Sabbath those weeks if I can. I definitely ask the Holy Spirit to help me find true Sabbath each week! Jesus' words about Sabbath being made for man, not man for the Sabbath," also ring regularly in my heart and mind. I try to avoid being too religious about my Sabbath, while also not allowing a sense of license to violate its place regularly either.

Someone wrote during our time together that "'mini sabbaths' throughout the week are so important for me so that when the big sabbath comes it's not an overwhelm of the thoughts and emotions that need to be processed." That is so good, and I try to think in terms of mini-Sabbaths throughout each day as well.

I'm all in on sabbath, but I have a hard time with the idea of sabbatical because other people in other vocations do not take sabbaticals. I have a hard time saying, "Yeah but pastoring is just harder". Any thoughts?

Great question! Actually, a number of vocations regularly practice sabbaticals. Some call them sabbaticals (ie. Professors in higher education and pastor sin other enominations) while some don't but still practice them (teachers every Summer, Public Service Workers

who are able to accrue significant amounts of vacation and don't much worry about someone filling their position [Police, Firefighters, etc.]

I think it was Peter Drucker who mentioned many years ago that his research showed that pastoring is one of the most stressful occupations around. I think some of this is due to not many other occupations being so significantly tied to the health of your own soul as a person.

As well, more and more secular businesses are considering the power of sabbaticals for their leaders.

How long is ideal? Shortest / longest best practices

A generally accepted pattern is three months every 5-7 years. This can vary from church to church, maybe even geographically. Some pastors I know incorporate "mini-Sabbaticals" of a full month every year. I think that's a great idea as well, though it is a different experience than 3 months.

Would love to know how to determine an appropriate fee or honorarium to pay a sabbatical coach?

This is a great question! I don't know of a "appropriate fee" structure, but I would consider a gift of at least \$75 per session, which is a generally accepted minimum from my conversations with life coaches of any kind. Some executive coaches charge much more than this. The most appropriate action would be to talk this through openly with whoever you seek coaching from.

How do you financially prepare your church for a Sabbatical? It can feel unobtainable for a small church to fund this.

What is key here is planning well ahead. Consider having the Church Council start a Sabbatical Fund that has a budgeted amount placed in it every month. This can be used for anything from guest speaker honorariums to contributing to the pastors travel while on sabbatical. The opportunities are endless, while also not required.

What are the names of the books you recommend for sabbatical?

Take a look at [this link](#) for that book list and other resources.

If you have a staff, do you suggest giving sabbaticals to all of your staff?

Yes, I do! I believe it models for you, your staff and your church a healthy rhythm of living and leading. Many churches might graduate levels of time for sabbaticals depending on a staff member's role and responsibilities.

How would a month be broken up on a sabbatical? I've heard it is service, study, rest and vacation. And a 3-month I heard it's vacation/study/service. What does Foursquare think?

Well, I can't tell you "what Foursquare thinks." Since we do not currently have a denominational policy, it is important to clarify I am speaking from my experience and not on behalf of Foursquare officially. I hope we will one day have a denominational policy and resources widely available for Pastors and Church Councils to engage in sabbaticals as a healthy way of living. For now, generally, regardless of the amount of time you choose for a sabbatical, I encourage Pastors to think in terms of:

1. Pre-entry

This is a week or two of slowing your schedule down significantly before you begin sabbatical, so it is not such a stark shut down.

2. Sabbatical itself

This is disconnection from all things ministry for the duration of the sabbatical. I encourage the same 4 components of Sabbath that we talked about earlier to be experienced during the Sabbatical: Stopping, Resting, Delighting and Contemplating. What do those components look like for you during the sabbatical?

3. Phased Re-entry

I encourage 1-2 weeks at 50% of energy and activity, 1-2 weeks of 75% of energy and activity, before going to your new 100% of energy and activity.

Are there resource materials for the church council on what the church should cover during sabbatical? What does a well-balanced sabbatical look like?

The Church Council should be sure that if the Pastor is paid vocationally, that pay should continue to be provided during the sabbatical. The Council should assure that they are aware of what the Pastor has planned for the care of his/her responsibilities in their absence to minimize disruptions or surprises.

Are there any resources in helping match up pastors with a coach or counselor? For more of a therapist setting?

Our CSRs are certainly an available option for sabbatical coaching and/or counseling. I also maintain a list of caregivers I can refer you to upon request. Some referrals you might consider would be [Dan White at KINEO Center](#) (tell him I sent you!), [Bill & Kristie Gaultiere at Soul Shepherding](#), [Alan Briggs at Sabbatical Coaching Group](#), or our own David Pinkston or Larry Spousta, both certified Spiritual Directors.

I get a lot of question from pastors on how to do a sabbatical with small children. Any suggestions? And what might sabbatical look like for your kids when they are also engaged in ministry and fully into church life?

Include them! And, exclude them! It is important to do whatever is necessary to help you recharge. And when it comes to kids, it is helpful to use whatever resources you have around you to include them, as well as be able to get away on your own. If you are married with kids, talk through what sabbatical looks like for you with your spouse. The kids need you to regularly be the parent without wearing the pastor hat. The same thing would be true for your relationship with your adult kids. Talk through the boundaries of your sabbatical and what kind of conversations are okay and which are not, so that they respect your time away.