

BREAVEMENT LEAVE FOR MINISTERS IN CONGREGATIONS

(A&P 2017, p. 405–406, 21)

Proposed Bereavement Leave Policy

The following policy is proposed to apply to bereavement leaves of ministers serving in congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by call or by presbytery appointment.

Bereavement Leave Policy for Ministers Serving in Congregations

Purpose

To support ministers serving in congregations during times of loss, bereavement leave is provided to those who require it.

In this policy, the term “minister” refers exclusively to ministers serving in congregations by call or by presbytery appointment. The term “paid” refers to the stipend and allowances the congregation provides its minister under the terms of the call or appointment.

Bereavement leave grants paid leave of absence from work to permit ministers to be with their loved ones; to make arrangements for the funeral of a family member; to attend the funeral of a family member; and/or to grieve the loss of a family member whose funeral cannot be attended by the minister.

Policy

Up to one week including one Sunday is provided to all ministers, serving full-time or part-time, upon the death of a member of their immediate family.

The immediate family is normally considered to be the minister’s spouse or one of the following relatives of the minister or the minister’s spouse: child, step-child, birth or adoptive parent, sibling or step-sibling, grandparent or step-grandparent.

Bereavement leave is paid leave and does not use vacation or any allowed sick days.

Notwithstanding the above, a minister may choose to take vacation immediately following a bereavement leave, in consultation with the session.

During a bereavement leave, the congregation covers the cost of pulpit supply or other replacement ministerial staffing, if required.

Depending on the circumstances, additional leave, with or without pay, may be granted to the minister by the presbytery on compassionate grounds.

The church is reminded that there is always room for grace. As they care for their ministers and their ministers’ families, sessions and presbyteries are free to offer more than the requirements outlined in this policy.

Conclusion

In light of the need for a bereavement leave policy for ministers serving in congregations, the following recommendations are presented.

Recommendation No. 10 (adopted, p. 21)

That the Bereavement Leave Policy for Ministers Serving in Congregations outlined above be adopted.

Recommendation No. 11 (adopted, p. 21)

That the prayer of Overture No. 17, 2016 re develop a bereavement leave policy be answered in terms of the preceding report.