

What's On Your Mind?

Holidays for ministers – Part 2

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Part 1 of this article (see *For Elders*, February 2012) noted that when a minister is called to a congregation, the congregation makes a number of promises to the minister including a pledge “to provide five weeks holiday annually.” In February, three holiday related questions were addressed:

1. How soon after being called to a congregation is a minister entitled to take vacation?
2. May a minister carry holidays over from one year to the next?
3. Does a minister need the permission of the session to take holidays?

This article touches on two more aspects of ministers and holidays.

When a minister finishes ministry in a pastoral charge, is he or she entitled to holidays?

The answer largely depends on when the ministry begins and ends in a particular pastoral charge.

Imagine a minister begins ministry in a pastoral charge on September 1. Normally, the minister would receive and use five holiday weeks between September 1 and the following August 31. Suppose, during the final year of ministry in that pastoral charge, the minister plans to leave at the end of June, that is, after nine months of the “minister’s year” with the pastoral charge. Technically, that entitles the minister to three quarters of the promised holiday time.

Since five weeks divided by three quarters equals three and three quarters weeks, the minister is entitled to at least three, and probably four, weeks of holiday before

the nine months has lapsed. Of course, a session could always offer the full five weeks to the minister as well.

Holidays are important. Ministers need to care for body, mind and spirit by occasionally stepping away from ministry responsibilities for a period of rest and relaxation. This can be a valuable blessing when taken immediately before being called to another pastoral charge or retirement.

Our minister serves half time. Should our minister, therefore, receive half the holiday time?

Whether a minister serves full time or part time, usually he or she will be involved in many weekly events, including the preparation of Sunday worship services. A half-time minister, for example, might lead worship on 45 Sundays or more in a year. In this case, it would be expected that the minister would receive five typical work weeks away. For example, if the minister usually serves the congregation on Sunday plus two other days of the week, then the minister should take five of these usual “three-day weeks” as holidays.

For further guidance regarding part-time ministry, see the *Calling a Minister* resource, Supplement VIII (p. 68-69). Paper copies are available from The Book Room at 50 Wynford Dr. It is also available online at: www.presbyterian.ca/files/webfm/ourresources/mcv/calling_a_minister.pdf

Blessings,

Don Muir

What's on your mind?

Do you have a question about the polity of our church? Are you confused by something that happened at session, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly? Puzzling over a section of the *Book of Forms*?

Send your questions to The Rev. Don Muir and he will strive to answer them in future issues of *Equipping for . . . Elders* in a manner that maintains confidentiality and seeks to be helpful to the church at large.

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