

Sabbath Sabbatical Support Grant
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Yourtowne, PA

• **Summary statement:**

[Note: Page 2 of Application: *Describe the nature and purpose of your proposed sabbatical.*]

The theme of my Sabbatical is *Lift Up My Eyes, Soul, and Head*. The allusion to Psalms 24, 25 and 121 is intentional as I want to shift my personal focus from the darkness and pain of the pandemic and latent within the current culture to see anew the grace, beauty, and promise of God, often hiding in plain sight. In three different setting, I will seek the restorative power of

- seeing the beauty of God's creatures,
- experiencing nourishment of the soul through community,
- considering the worth of humans within the broader context of God's creation.

• **Sabbatical narrative:**

[Note: Page 2 of Application: *Provide a clear rationale for your sabbatical proposal. Keep in mind the definition of sabbatical from the Office of the General Assembly as "this 'extended time' is qualitatively different from 'vacation' or 'days off.' It is an opportunity for the individual to strategically disengage from regular and normal tasks so that ministry and mission may be viewed from a new perspective because of a planned time of focus."*]

Keeping with the theme of *Lift Up My Head, Soul, and Eyes*, I seek to accomplish as follows:

Lift Up My Eyes

To see the beauty of God's creatures, I will go to the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Kempton, PA for the Autumn Hawk Migration (see <https://www.hawkmountain.org/visit/events/autumn-hawk-migration>). Focusing on migrants will allow my mind to be fully alert to these magnificent migrating birds, and not dwell on the issues of congregation and culture. It also will strengthen my body hiking up the mountain each day. Through this I hope to establish a daily discipline of looking for the beauty around me.

Lift Up My Soul

Each October, Montreat Conference Center offers engaging opportunities, i.e., *Better Angels* in 2020, *Holy Shift* in 2023. Montreat also offers Personal Sabbaths for "guests to commune with their Creator, rest their souls, and shed the burdens of everyday life." The fall conference will help lift my spirit and help restore a soul that has been shaken by the demands of ministry within the context of the darkness of the pandemic and social disarray. The added time at Montreat also will provide the opportunity to integrate and process the information gleaned from the conference. Through this I hope to establish a routine of soul strengthening activities throughout the year.

Lift Up My Head

The week of Thanksgiving, our family will gather at a VRBO rental near the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. With the assistance of a guided tour early in the week, we will spend time lifting our heads to more deeply appreciate the flora, fauna, birds, and animals of the GSMNP. Through this activity I intend to establish the mindful practice of being a faithful steward of the greater order of Creation.

• **Timeline, travel, and funding:**

[Note: Page 2 of Application: *Detail the activities and timeline for your sabbatical. Include a brief description and a rationale for each of these activities. List in sequence the proposed date(s) for each activity and the names of any family members or associates who will attend or travel with you as a part of your sabbatical. Include estimated total sabbatical cost, budget, and all funding sources. Note: If you have existing funding that exceeds \$25,000, you will not be eligible for a grant.*

Please specify personal costs vs those for any family members or associates listed.]

Disconnect and Decompress (week one)

Time, away from church, to prepare my family and myself for a different schedule and to begin to prepare for trip to Hawk Mountain through daily hikes and studying field guides for birds.

Subtotal **\$0**

Lift Up My Eyes – Hawk Mountain (week two - 5 days)

Mileage Reimbursement:

travel to Hawk Mountain approx. 200 miles round trip

daily travel to/ from Hawk Mountain from hotel 60 miles.

Total 500 miles x Standard IRS Business Reimbursement Rate \$335

Admission: \$10/ day x 5 \$50

Hotel: \$125/ night x 4 \$500

Meals: (hotel has free breakfast) lunch/ dinner \$75/ day x5 \$375

The binoculars (7x) I own are more suitable for woodland birdwatching, and do not have the optical power (8.5-10x) required for watching migratory raptors. New binoculars = \$740

Subtotal **\$2,000**

Recover and Regroup (week three)

Time to recover from daily climbing of Hawk Mountain and prepare for the next phase of the Sabbatical.

Subtotal **\$0**

Lift Up My Soul (weeks four and five)

Each October, Montreat Conference Center offers engaging opportunities, i.e., *Better Angels* in 2020, *Holy Shift* in 2023. Montreat also offers Personal Sabbaths for “guests to commune with their Creator, rest their souls, and shed the burdens of everyday life.” While I will attend the Conference alone, my spouse, Moore N., will join me for the week of the Personal Sabbath.

Travel approx. 1,000 miles round trip x IRS Business Reimbursement rate	\$670
Conference fees	\$500
Lodging (double occupancy) two weeks	\$1430
Meals \$100/ day (spouse not included)	\$1400
Subtotal	\$4,000

Pause and Refresh (week six)

Time to process the experiences of Hawk Mountain and the Montreat Conferences.

Subtotal \$0

Lift Up My Head (week seven)

My spouse, Moore N., and I will be joined by our children, Iliad Martin and Iris Mae.

Travel approx. 1,000 miles round trip x IRS Business Reimbursement rate	\$670
VRBO Rental 5 days, 4 nights \$2,000 total 4 adults (\$500 for pastor)	\$500
Ingredients for meals for 4 \$200 (\$50 for pastor)	\$50
Weekly Parking Pass for Great Smoky Mountain National Park	\$15
Guided Walk of GSMNP \$75 per person	\$75
Subtotal	\$1,310

Pause and Prepare (week eight)

Time to process the experiences of Hawk Mountain and the Montreat Conferences.

Subtotal \$0

Total \$7,310

Funding Sources

Accumulated Study Leave \$750/ year x 3	\$2,250
Board of Pensions Sabbath Sabbatical Support Grant	\$5,000
Personal Funds	\$60
Total	\$7,310

Note: Yourtowne Presbyterian Church has set aside \$3,000 to pay for pulpit supply, pastoral care, and moderating Session during the 8 weeks of my absence.

• **Mutual benefit:**

[Note: Page 2 of Application: *Describe how this time will benefit you and your congregation.*]

Through the experience of the Sabbath Sabbatical it is my desire to return to Yourtowne with a broader and healthier perspective which will help me lead the Session and congregation to see a brighter future for ourselves as a church in society and for each person as they seek a new vision of what it means to live as a person of faith in the midst of the beauty and wonder of God's creation.

The Presbytery of Presbyteries also requires that each person who goes on a Sabbatical write a report about their experience, which I will share with colleagues in ministry as well as with the leadership and members of Yourtowne Presbyterian Church.