

## ***“Clergy Renewal”***

The Faith Personnel Committee is developing an innovative approach to pastoral support - Clergy Renewal. This note is intended to introduce you to the concept. In addition to this article, we will schedule face-to-face information meetings as well as other mailings prior to the congregational meeting. Please look for these as they happen.

In order to give you some preliminary information, here are some Q&A's.

**What is clergy renewal?** It's a significant period of time for the pastor to receive rest, restoration, renewal and rebirth to return revitalized for the ministry. It is not a vacation. It's a time for physical, emotional and spiritual rebuilding.

**Why is a renewal period needed?** Some would call this time a sabbatical. A sabbatical has its roots in the biblical concept of Sabbath – a time to rest and nourish the body, soul and spirit. There are many examples in the Bible - God rested on the seventh day, Jesus went out into the wilderness for 40 days after his baptism.

**Why is now a good time for this renewal time?** Rick has been ordained for 30 years and has been at Faith Church for 16 years without a significant time for renewal. As in the model of Sabbath, many pastors are provided a renewal period every 7 years.

**Are there other reasons for renewal at this time?** We believe that God has prepared Rick and Faith Church for this renewal time. Chris and the other staff members have the experience, skills, ability and support of the congregation to move the ministry forward. We also believe there are many members of the congregation who have or who will take leadership positions during Rick's absence.

**Are there other pastors who have been given this renewal time?** Yes, there are and there are increasingly more and more. The Personnel Committee has spoken with Rev. Andrew Barton and an elder from Woodbury Presbyterian about the renewal time that Rev Barton had in 2003. Both are highly supportive of offering this opportunity to Rick.

**Are there others who are provided renewal time?** Yes, it is not uncommon for people in the academic, business and social occupations to receive renewal or sabbatical periods.

**When and for how long are we considering the renewal time?** We believe that a 3-month period is necessary for adequate renewal. The actual time away from the church may be a little longer if vacation is combined with the renewal. The timing is still to be finalized, but we are planning for this to take place in 2008.

**What will Rick do during this time?** A pastor's support team has already been formed and will help him plan. It will be a time of personal renewal, spiritual growth and new insights. Some pastors travel, some study, some go on a mission. It is not a time to fill with activity, but a time to create physical, emotional and spiritual renewal. He will worship elsewhere and will only be available during mutually agreed times.

**Will there be additional costs during this time?** There may be some marginally increased costs to bring in other pastors for preaching or for various activities. We don't think these will be significant, however, we are applying for grant money to help offset any additional costs.

**Has the Session approved this?** At their February 2007 meeting, Session authorized the Personnel Committee to develop a Clergy Renewal plan to be considered at a future meeting.

**Will the congregation need to approve this?** Yes, by way of approval of the overall terms of call for 2007-2008.

**What will need to be done to prepare?** Lots. We'll need to form planning committee(s), work out responsibilities during Rick's absence, plan the going away and the returning, establish the budget, review with Presbytery, engage additional pastoral support as needed, and above all else, communicate with you, the members of the church

**What if I have questions now?** The Personnel Committee is currently the focal point for communications, so you can contact Dan Hoyt, Pat Cohill,, Becky McGrath, John Lynch or Steve Carter if you have questions.