



Dear City Church Family,

Our purpose as the Board of Overseers is to guide the decisions of City Church while also stewarding well the gifts and resources God has graciously provided over the past nine years.

As part of caring for the Church and its leadership, we knew our pastors would need a built-in sabbatical rhythm to help refresh and restore them so they can continue leading well. The goal, from the beginning, has been to provide sabbatical time every seven years. This rhythm is meant to make sure each sabbatical isn't reactive, but proactively planned for the benefit of our pastors. We simply want to avoid burnout instead of responding to it.

Ultimately, the decision to make sabbaticals a rhythm of pastoral leadership here at City Church is strongly rooted in Biblical principles. We're structuring our pattern of pastoral sabbaticals after the seventh-day rest of the Old Testament. This means every seven years, a pastor takes sabbatical leave.

Two years ago, the leadership of City Church was prepared to offer our Pastor of Teaching & Vision, Kent Bateman, an official sabbatical, in line with our seven year rhythm. And while that would have been ideal, we also recognized that City Church required stability during a season marked by uncertainty, so we made the difficult decision to delay Kent's sabbatical.

But now, by God's provision, City Church is healthy and growing. We're so thankful. With that in mind, we know it's the best time to gift Kent an official sabbatical.

Starting on May 11, this 12-week period is an invitation to step away from his responsibilities at City Church and allow Kent to rest, seek physical, spiritual, and emotional renewal, and return refreshed and rejuvenated for the work God has ahead in our church.

Will you partner in praying with us for Kent and his family during this intentional time? We're asking God to provide deep rest and meaningful time together. And will you also pray for the Leadership Team here at City Church as we continue leading with expectation and excitement into what God has next for our church?

Thank you for your faithfulness, support, and love for this church. We look forward to all God has in store in the coming months and to welcoming Kent and his family back with joy when his sabbatical concludes.

With gratitude and expectation,

The Pastors & Board of Overseers of City Church

# City Church Sabbatical FAQ

## How long will Kent be gone?

Kent's Sabbatical will be 12 weeks, beginning May 11 through July 27.

## What will Kent do?

Since Sabbaticals are meant to be a time of rest and refreshment, Kent worked with his family and the Board of Overseers to develop a plan that includes a travel schedule and general goals as guidelines. Much of this time will center around family, physical rest, personal study, pursuing healthy rhythms and reflection. A couple of things Kent's excited about during this time: Silence & Solitude Retreat and a short getaway with Ana later in the summer.

## **Because City Church is such a family, we recognize many of you may spend time with the Batemans while Kent is on Sabbatical, so what topics should you avoid if you do hang out?**

Ideally? Anything City Church related. :) We find it to be a kindness not to "talk shop" with any of our pastors or leadership who take Sabbaticals. We want to set this precedent in an effort to shield Kent from any news that will drive his thoughts and energy toward leading City Church during this intentional time away.

Great questions to ask him would be questions like "How are you?" "How's the Sabbatical?" "How's your family?" Bad questions to ask would be things like "Can I express concern about something happening at City Church while you've been gone?" or "Did you hear about what happened with [City Church member or leader] recently?"

## **Will Kent still be a part of LifeGroup?**

Because it would be difficult to engage with a LifeGroup and not be engaged with the ongoing work of City Church, Kent will not attend his LifeGroup throughout these 12 weeks. Part of his personal rhythms will be meeting monthly for personal and professional coaching with his mentor and engaging with his counselor every 2-3 weeks. God has also been gracious in providing Kent with numerous friendships inside and outside of City Church that he will continue to maintain.

### **Will Kent's family still be at church on Sundays?**

Because the Batemans love City Church so much (and because Ana suffers from FOMO), you can expect to see Kent's family in and out throughout these 12-weeks depending on their travel schedule. But you likely won't see Kent with them.

### **Who will teach while Kent is on Sabbatical?**

We've developed a teaching schedule that includes many of our own leadership team as well as some guest speakers as we continue Year of the Bible together. We're excited for what's to come!

[For more on the practice of Sabbaticals, read this article.](#)