

SABBATICAL



Healthy **Bodies**



Healthy **Minds**



Healthy **Spirits**



Healthy **Relationships**

RENEWAL

Why a sabbatical?

Sabbatical and Sabbath have the same root word, Shabbat, the Hebrew word for “ceasing.” Just as God calls us to cease our busy lives one day each week to focus on our faith, sabbaticals give people the opportunity to pause the busyness that keeps us from focusing on the heart of our work. A sabbatical is an extended leave from work to pursue a break, renew, and refresh. Kevin was eligible for a sabbatical five years ago per his call agreement with us, so goodness knows he deserves the break!

But Parkway UCC is far more than a pastor—we get a sabbatical/renewal time too! During Kevin's sabbatical, we will be focusing on four core areas: Mind, Body, Spirit and Relationships. Guest ministers will lead us in new worship experiences. As always, adult education opportunities will help us appreciate the diversity in our congregation's theology, beliefs and experiences. Special opportunities will take us to new settings, both real and in our imaginations, to view God's world in new, invigorating ways.

KEVIN'S PART IN SABBATICAL

What will Kevin be doing on his sabbatical?

- Silent retreats;
- Travel, including a family mission trip to the Dominican Republic with Discover Corps (related to the Peace Corps) and the UCC/DOC National Youth Event at Disney World;
- Certification Program in Church Renewal – classes, cohort group, retreat;
- Volunteering with local mission partners such as Emmaus Homes, Ready Readers, Joint Neighborhood Ministries, Caroline Mission;
- Visits to local UCC congregations and our UCC siblings in Boston, Atlanta, Memphis, Chicago, Dallas;
- Reading, journaling and more.

Who will be handling Kevin's duties while he's gone?

All of us are invited to lend a hand and help out, but there are some responsibilities we need a minister to carry out. Rev. Dr. Mark Robinson will be our pastor during Kevin's sabbatical. Mark will plan and lead worship with the input from guest speakers/pastors, music staff and lay leaders. Mark will preach about half of the Sundays. He will lead Adult Ed on several other Sundays, while several guest pastors, a mix of returning guests and first-time visitors to Parkway, will lead our services. Mark will provide pastoral care, conduct funerals and officiate sacraments. Mark will be with us twenty hours per week. As this is not enough time to cover everything Kevin does, the original sabbatical team of Marsha Peek, Dottie Dwyer, John Russell and Ross Livengood along with new additions to the team and the Church Council will be responsible for covering Kevin's other duties during the sabbatical.

What if I need to contact Kevin during the sabbatical?

Don't! One of the core principles of a sabbatical is that the person taking the break gets a complete break. In the event Kevin must be contacted, the sabbatical team will initiate that contact. Please do not contact Kevin during his sabbatical.

What about Carmen and the kids?

The family will be away together for the month of July. High School sports tryouts start on August 1 and school resumes on August 10. Carmen is co-convenor of our Christian Education Commission with Liz Lyons so she and the kids will be around a great deal in late summer and throughout the fall.

Other than Sunday mornings, how can we contact Mark?

Mark will be in the office 1:00-5:00pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and 9:00am-noon Thursday except for the second Thursday of the month, when he will come in shortly after noon following the St Louis Association Committee on Ministry: Oversight meeting. Otherwise Mark will be in by appointment, including scheduled meetings. It is always best to arrange a time to meet with him. Mark's email address is mark@parkwayucc.org. In the event of a pastoral emergency, call Mark directly on his cell at (314) 853-9385.

OUR PART IN SABBATICAL

I'm happy Kevin gets to take this sabbatical, but I'm also jealous.

What's in it for me?

We will also have opportunities to focus on the sabbatical theme: Healthy Bodies, Minds, Spirits, and Relationships. Some of those events will be held at Parkway and others will be in and around the St. Louis area. We're even planning a few road trips! There will be a special place in the newsletter where we will share information concerning these events and activities. Some ideas include prayer partners, a movie night to watch *Inside Out*, yoga, a retreat to Shannondale in the Ozarks, JHTLB4, and blood pressure screening on a Sunday morning.

OK, that's pretty cool. The idea of a road trip/retreat is neat. Anything like that I can do?

Dates aren't set yet, but we're organizing three excursions:

- Chicago, Trinity United Church of Christ: Otis Moss III is a nationally recognized minister on Chicago's South Side.
- Memphis, First Congregational Church: Get a close-up look at this mission-focused congregation.
- Shannondale: Shannondale is a mission project of the Missouri Mid-South Conference UCC serving the spiritual, educational and economic needs of Shannon County, Mo., and surrounding counties. It's about an hour south of Rolla on Highway 19.

Stay tuned for more information about these excursions and other opportunities to join Parkway at different sites around St. Louis over the next few months.

If you'd like to take your own mini-retreat, here are a few options within an hour's drive of the church:

- Peace Tree Spirituality Center (Florissant) peacetreecenter.org
- Mercy Center (Frontenac) mercycenterstl.org
- White House (Oakville) wheretreat.org
- King's House (Belleville, Ill.) kingsretreatcenter.org

You said we're all welcome to help out. What do you mean by that?

Parkway UCC runs on volunteers, and the time during Kevin's sabbatical is no exception. The Church Council, commissions, committees, and other volunteers have been briefed on what additional duties will be asked of them over the next several months. If you've ever been curious about how a particular part of our church works, this is a great time to volunteer and find out.

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

What will the church office schedule be during the sabbatical?

The open office hours will remain the same—Monday through Thursday from 10am-3:00pm and by appointment. Mona will continue to work after 3:00pm and full day Fridays on more intense and creative projects such as the newsletter, website updates and upgrades.

Surely VBS is still happening, right? Right?

Of course VBS is still happening! MAD Camp will be August 1-5, from 9:00am-12:30pm each day. If you want to volunteer, there's a place for you! We also could use some more help with Youth Mission Week in mid-July! Please contact our Christian Education and Youth Director, Barb Kuhlmann for more info—barbk@parkwayucc.org

Who will be writing the newsletter and leading church communications?

As always, Mona Herberg will produce the newsletter, bulletin, and emails. Please contact Mona if you have a contribution to the newsletter on the themes Healthy Body – Mind – Spirit – Relationships, or if you have any other ideas for submissions. Mona will share the newsletter submission guidelines that make designing the newsletter and emails much easier... mona@parkwayucc.org

I remember hearing a request for books, movies, or other field trips related to the sabbatical. Is it too late to share those?

You can still share those opportunities, and we'll see how they fit in with the larger themes of the sabbatical. Contact Marsha Peek (mjpeek@earthlink.net) or Dottie Dwyer (dkdwyer@comcast.net).

Sabbatical timeline

See insert regarding worship and adult education...keep it handy for the next several months!



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