

Where in the World are Mark and Erica Going? Sabbatical FAQs

What is a Sabbatical?

The word sabbatical has its roots in the biblical concept of Sabbath (“to rest” or “to cease”). Sabbath keeping is setting aside time that God consecrates and makes holy.

Sabbatical is a time for our pastors to shift gears in order to rest, disengage, study, reflect, and travel in order to return to minister among us refreshed and renewed in body, mind, and spirit.

Erica and Mark have served Pres House since 2004, through a period of dramatic change and transformation. This will be their first Sabbatical in more than seven years of service.

Sabbatical is more than a vacation from meetings, budgets, sermons, and people in need. It is a time for Erica and Mark to receive spiritual nourishment and a change in perspective, to deepen their relationships with God, one another, and their children—it is a season of spiritual growth. This special time will also be a season of growth for the Pres House community.

How long will Erica and Mark be gone?

Sunday, February 26th will be their last worship service and day at Pres House. Erica and Mark were awarded a Sabbatical Grant from the Louisville Institute and will be attending a conference on February 27-29th in Louisville, KY, that will prepare them for their Sabbatical. Their Sabbatical period will commence on **March 1st, 2012** and end on **June 30th, 2012**. Their first day back at Pres House will be on Sunday, July 1st, 2012.

What will they be doing on their Sabbatical?

Mark and Erica put together a proposal for the Louisville Sabbatical Grant program which they will follow. Most of their time will be spent living in Hexham, England, where they will engage in spiritual, physical, and mental renewal practices. Their children will go with them and attend a local school in Hexham during this period.

Will they be in contact with Pres House during their Sabbatical?

An important part of a sabbatical is to make a complete break from normal routines. In addition to taking a break from e-mail, texting, and phone calls, Mark and Erica will deactivate their Facebook accounts. They will send periodic updates to Pres House to share what they are learning with the community. In the unlikely event that some extraordinary news absolutely must be communicated to them, staff will notify Erica and Mark.

Who will cover Mark and Erica's roles while they are away on Sabbatical?

Pres House has made arrangements for interim staffing during Mark and Erica's absence. Bob Sorensen will serve as the Interim Executive Director and Rev. Jessica Nylund Salt will be the Interim Pastor. Worship services will be led by Pastor Jessica along with guest preachers. Travis Serebin will be serving as Interim Student Intern from mid-January through the summer. All three of these interim staff will have regular office hours at Pres House.

The remaining permanent Pres House staff will also help cover responsibilities during this period. The Pres House Board and Student Leadership Council will continue to meet and execute the various ministries of Pres House during this period. Pres House is well positioned to continue to thrive during Mark and Erica's sabbatical.

Dr. Robert P. Sorensen (Bob) - Interim Executive Director



Bob earned three degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Stout (Industrial Technology, Industrial Education, Master in Vocational/Technical Education) and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has served as President of the Moraine Park Technical College, the State Director of the Wisconsin Technical College System, and as the Associate Director of the Center on Education and Work at UW-Madison. Bob served six years on the Pres House Board, including a year as President.

Rev. Dr. Jessica Nylund Salt - Interim Pastor



Jessica is a member-at-large of the John Knox Presbytery. She is a graduate of the University of Puget Sound, near Seattle, Washington, received her Master's of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, and received her Doctorate from Columbia Theological Seminary near Atlanta, Georgia. Jessica is married to Rick Salt (member of Covenant, Madison) and together they enjoy two young daughters (ages 3 ½ and 1). Jessica's hobbies include reading, cooking, outdoor recreation, music, spending time with family and friends, and walking their spirited yellow lab, Ruah.

Travis Serebin - Interim Student Intern



"I am currently finishing up my last semester at the University of Wisconsin with degrees in International Studies and Political Science. Like many of you, I am also attempting to discern where I should be taking my talents next. Two of my favorite things are coffee and meeting new people (well, and the Green Bay Packers), and I am always available to be a listening ear or talk about whatever. Feel free to come on by!"