

clergy appreciation month

Clergy Appreciation Month is a designated time for congregations to celebrate the ministry and presence of their pastors (and families) and to offer appreciation to all clergy (elders, deacons, local pastors, chaplains, extension ministers, etc.) for their sacrificial dedication to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **Clergy Appreciation Month** is usually scheduled in October, but can be planned for anytime that is convenient for the congregation and the community.

Pastors and their families experience pressures unique to their vocation. Their lives are on display, with eyes on their every move. They are expected to be perfect people with perfect families, always available, never discouraged, and always having the right answers to life's most profound questions! These unrealistic expectations can lead to overwhelming situations for pastors and their families. Simple acts of appreciation can be the key to healthy relationships and effective ministry. As the apostle Paul writes:

"Appreciate those who diligently labor among you and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction." (1 Thessalonians 5:12)

Clergy Appreciation Month is one way that congregations can encourage and inspire spiritual leaders with the positive affirmation that is so crucial to their well-being. Here are some ideas for celebrating the clergy leaders of your congregation:

- Honor your pastor in worship with prayer, laying on of hands, anointing, or a favorite hymn or choir anthem followed by an all-church lunch or brunch.
- Give your pastor a day (or weekend) away with recreation and restaurant gift cards.
- Encourage your pastor with notes and cards from the congregation and community.
- Celebrate the pastor's family with a thoughtful gift or note.
- Recommend and provide an increase in the pastor's compensation package (salary, continuing education, course of study, etc.).
- Google "clergy appreciation month" to find lots of great ideas online!

As you plan for **Clergy Appreciation Month**, don't forget to include all of the clergy, in addition to your primary pastor, who are associated with your congregation in part-time or full-time responsibilities such as deacons, associate pastors, seminary students.

Clergy Appreciation Month offers a designated, intentional opportunity for honoring your pastoral leadership. It is also a reminder that we seek to have a culture of appreciation in our congregations. The lay leadership of the church is encouraged to set a standard of mutual support and constructive interaction between the pastor and the congregation so that the ongoing challenges of ministry take place in an atmosphere of collaboration and Christian community.

Thank you for caring for your pastor and family during **Clergy Appreciation Month!**

This material prepared by East Ohio Board of Ordained Ministry Continuing Clergy Formation Task Force.