

FAQ Sheet about Pastor Marissa's Maternity Leave

Q: When is Pastor Marissa due?

A: Baby Boy Harrison is due October 28th

Q: When will Pastor Marissa be gone on Maternity Leave?

A: Pastor Marissa's last Sunday will be October 19th with her last day of work on October 22nd. There are pastors "on deck" for Sunday, October 12th and Sunday, October 19th if baby comes early. Pastor Marissa will supplement maternity leave with vacation time. Her first day back to work will be Sunday, February 1st, 2026.

Q: How does this align with the Northeastern Ohio Synod's (ELCA) practices?

A: Northeastern Ohio Synod Compensation Standards states, "Congregations are encouraged to offer up to twelve (12) weeks of leave with full benefits to align with the federal standard. If additional family leave beyond the defined number of weeks is desired, it shall be negotiated with the Congregation Council and is typically either paid vacation time or unpaid leave."

Q: Who will cover pastoral duties while Pastor Marissa is on Maternity Leave?

A: Good Soil will be contracting for services with Pastor Jim Kulma to serve as the Pastor of Presence while Pastor Marissa is away. He will be handling all ministry, pastoral care, and administrative needs, including worship leadership, parishioner visits, and staff and council meetings. Pastor Jim Kulma's contact information is:

Email: jkulma@cox.net

Cell #: [216-221-7333](tel:216-221-7333)

Q: Will we receive an update when the baby comes?

A: Yes! Pastor Marissa and Trey look forward to sharing an update with the congregation about how mom and baby are doing once Baby Harrison arrives.

Q: Will I be able to communicate with Pastor Marissa while she is away?

Once on leave, there will be no contact between pastor and congregation (not accepting visits and not checking email). However, Pastor Jim will contact Pastor Marissa if there's a death in the congregation so she can be holding the family in her prayers. She will be praying for the congregation in the meantime, and she welcomes your prayers for them as a new family too. Looking forward to reuniting on February 1st!