Ideas:

• Pray for them every waking hour on the hour during the month of October
• Give them Columbus Day Weekend off on top of their regular vacation time
• Give them gift cards to local restaurants for dinners out
• Tend to their yard work during fall landscaping season
• Write a song or a skit in their honor
• Bring dinner over at least once a week during the month
• Ban complaints for a month
• Give them a bonus
• Fill up their gas tank
• Have different members send a card of thanks every day
• Wash and wax their cars
• Encourage them by providing affirmation from various members three times a day during October
• Create an album filled with cards of appreciation
• Prepare a photo slide show in their honor
• Put an article of praise in a local newspaper
• Send the whole family to Disney World
• Give them movie tickets
• Host an Ice Cream Social at church to celebrate their ministry
• Provide a gift for each person in the family

More Info:

For additional ideas and resources, check out ThrivingPastor.Com, Focusonthefamily.com, or Biblegateway.com. You can also find Facebook and Pinterest pages devoted to pastor/staff appreciation.

“*The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.*”

– 1 Timothy 5:17

“*Respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.*”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

“*Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.*”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:11a
A lot of people think pastors work just one day a week. The reality is quite the opposite. Most pastors are fortunate to get one day off per week and many are on call 24/7. When it comes to an erratic schedule, a pastor is like a firefighter or police officer except he or she has to stop at red lights.

What Pastors Do:

- Praying, sermon preparation, practice and presentation for weekly worship, funerals, weddings, and other special services.
- Caring for members through a variety of needs: celebrating the birth of a child, holding the hand of a member who is dying, crisis care for someone who is suicidal, marriage counseling, caring for a widow or widower, looking for a runaway, to name just a few.
- Vision-casting, overseeing staff, motivating volunteers, working with leaders of the church, and moving the agenda of the church forward.
- Helping the church be the face of Jesus in the community, caring for the least, lost, and last, identifying needs, and partnering with other ministers and ministries to get God’s work done.

Being a pastor in a society where there is a shift away from the centrality of faith brings increasing challenges to every pastor. The stress is greater than you would imagine.

Consider These Statistics:

- Of every 20 pastors who enter the ordained ministry, only 5 retire from ministry.
- 1,500 (yes, 1,500) pastors leave ministry each month.
- 50% of mainline denomination pastors quit the ministry before their third year.
- Pastors work in the profession with the second-highest divorce rate.
- 90% of pastors feel they are inadequately trained to cope with the ministry demands and said the ministry was completely different than they thought it would be.
- 70% of pastors fight depression and 50% feel so discouraged they would leave ministry if they could.
- 80% of pastors believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families and 80% of spouses feel left out and underappreciated by church members.
- 50% of pastors feel unable to meet the demands of their job.


Focus on the Family named and began emphasizing October as Clergy Appreciation Month in 1994. It was established with the mission of uplifting and encouraging pastors, missionaries and religious workers.

What have you done for your pastor(s), their family, and/or your congregation’s staff members lately, aside from paying them and giving them much-needed vacation time? October is a great month to show your appreciation. Consider making October 2015 the time you start doing more things to care for your pastor(s) and their family members. If this is the first year your congregation is participating in Clergy & Staff Appreciation Month, then consider making it a tradition for years to come!