

WHEN APPOINTMENTS CHANGE

SUGGESTIONS FOR PASTORS AND STAFF/PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEES

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Consultation	Page 3
Suggestions to S/PPR Committee	Page 4
Suggestions to Pastors	Page 5
References to 2016 Discipline	Page 5
Conference Practices Related to Move	Page 6
Salaries	Page 6
Suggestions for Pastors	Page 6
Office Furnishings & Files	Page 6
Computer systems	Page 7
Pastoral Care	Page 7
Pastoral Care Resources	Page 8
Parsonage	Page 8
The Community	Page 8
Financial Matters – The Pastor’s Salary	Page 10
Moving Expenses	Page 10
Allowances & Reimbursements	Page 11
Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct	Page 12
Leaving Well: Social Media	Page 14
Clergy Housing Standards and Policy	Page 15
Clergy/Church Parsonage Agreement	Page 19

CONSULTATION

All pastoral appointments in United Methodist churches involve consultation between the District Superintendent, the pastor and the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (S/PPR). From The Book of Discipline, 2016 ¶426: “Consultation is not merely notification. Consultation is not committee selection or call of a pastor. The role of the committee on pastor-parish relations is advisory. Consultation is both a continuing process and a more intense involvement during the period of change in appointment.” In the Pacific Northwest Conference these are the usual steps of the consultation process:

1. The District Superintendent meets with the S/PPR Committee to get information and feelings about the kind of pastor needed for the church.
2. The Cabinet (the Bishop and the five district superintendents), using the church profile, the information from the S/PPR Committee and their own judgment, acts as a screening committee and decides on the best possible available appointment.
3. A District Superintendent consults with the pastor about a specific appointment.
4. After the District Superintendent has consulted with the pastor. A meeting is arranged with the District Superintendent, the S/PPR Committee and the new pastor. The purpose of this meeting is to share the profile, spend time in conversation and discernment about this appointment and allow the pastor and the committee to get acquainted. This meeting will also begin to lay the groundwork for the transition from one pastor to another. Near the end of this meeting, both the S/PPR chair and the pastor will give the District Superintendent their responses to this initial meeting together.
6. Following the agreement by both the pastor and the S/PPR Committee, the District Superintendent will authorize an appropriate announcement to the congregation of the intention of the Bishop to make this appointment at Annual Conference. This, for practical purposes, is the appointment, though technically speaking it is not final until the Bishop reads it at the Annual Conference.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE S/PPR COMMITTEE

You will want to find appropriate ways to celebrate the ministry of your current pastor and to send them to the new appointment. When the appointment has been announced, there are a number of things that the committee can do to make the transition a positive experience:

- The S/PPR Committee and the present pastor should consult together on what may need to be done to the parsonage to prepare it for the new pastor. If any redecorating is done, please invite the new parsonage family to participate in choosing colors, etc.
- Be sure the pastor's study is clean and ready for occupancy when the new pastor arrives.
- Work with the current pastor to facilitate easy transition at the parsonage with the utility companies.
- See that the local newspapers and other media are given information around July 1, about the new pastor.
- On the day the new pastor arrives, have a committee present to welcome them and to assist in the process of moving in.
- Alert the lay leader (or someone designated by them) to be available on the new pastor's first Sunday to introduce them to the congregation. There are some liturgies available which welcome and celebrate a new pastor's first Sunday in a new parish. Consult the District Superintendent or refer to some of the worship resource materials available. Unless other arrangements are made, the first Sunday of a new pastorate is the first Sunday in July.
- Arrange for name tags for the congregation for the first few Sundays if they are not already being used.
- Work with the outgoing pastor to see that a list is ready with names, addresses, and phone numbers of sick, homebound, or bereaved persons in the congregation. If necessary, have someone go with the pastor to help in locating residences, hospitals, and institutions.
- Plan an all-church reception for the new pastor within the first month of their arrival. Invite clergy and public officials to attend. An alternate or additional way to welcome and get acquainted is to have several neighborhood gatherings in homes with the pastor and family as guests.
- During the pastor's first month or so in the parish, see that invitations are extended, or arrangements made to take the pastor to civic organizations meeting in the community. It is also helpful to see that the pastor is introduced to various leaders of the community.
- The PNW Conference has an official "code of conduct" policy that reinforces healthy transitions, and each pastor (incoming, outgoing) as well as the SPRC chair and DS are asked to sign this form before the appointment effective date. The DS will facilitate this process.

[\(Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct\)](#)

[\(back to table of contents\)](#)

SUGGESTIONS TO PASTORS

- When you have been given a new appointment, check with your current District Superintendent regarding the procedure for notifying your current church. Assure the church that the District Superintendent will be working with them regarding the appointment of your successor. Affirm with them the strength of the itinerant system.
- Be sensitive to the congregation's feelings about your leaving. There is normally a good bit of grief work necessary for a congregation when a pastor leaves. Use your final weeks in the parish to put a closure on your ministry there. Be generous with praise and thanksgiving for the years you have had together. When your successor is known, be positive about them.
- The conference rule is that the first Sunday in the new appointment is the first Sunday in July. Be sure that provision is made for meeting emergency pastoral needs in each church in the transition period.
- Be considerate of your sister/brother pastor by making sure that the parsonage is left in excellent condition.
- Work closely with your new church in making arrangements for moving as easily and inexpensively as possible.
- A new pastor will find difficulty in being accepted in a church if the former pastor returns to the parish. For that reason, former pastors must not accept invitations from laity to perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, do counseling, or perform other pastoral functions (e.g. hospital calling) in a former parish. Explaining this policy (see Guidelines for appropriate conduct) along with its rationale to your church before you leave will make things easier for everyone.
- It is neither realistic nor desirable to assume that friendships cease with a change of appointment. Nevertheless, be sensitive to the fact that returning to a former parish, even for social visits, may be detrimental to your successor's ministry. Out of courtesy, let your successor know if you are visiting in their parish.
- The PNW Conference has an official "code of conduct" policy that reinforces healthy transitions, and each pastor (incoming, outgoing) as well as the SPRC chair and DS are asked to sign this form before the appointment effective date. The DS will facilitate this process.

[*\(Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct\)*](#)

REFERENCES TO 2016 DISCIPLINE

See Paragraphs 425-429 – Consultation is defined; the process of and the criteria used in appointment-making is outlined.

[\(back to table of contents\)](#)

CONFERENCE PRACTICES RELATED TO A MOVE

Every person under Episcopal appointment whose salary paying unit is a local church within this conference, or the Annual Conference itself, is entitled to 4 full weeks of vacation at regular pay during the Conference year (to include Sundays). In addition, our conference rules expand the Book of Discipline allowance for continuing education/spiritual renewal leave to two weeks per year and one month per quadrennium for each pastor. It is important to note that it is normal for a person in their first year under appointment in the Annual Conference to take some of their vacation in the first six months in the new appointment.

SALARIES

Ordinarily the salary paid to an incoming pastor is the same as that paid to the pastor who is leaving (See section on Financial Matters, page 10). Sometimes adjustments between line items that do not alter the total compensation package are appropriate. Any changes in total compensation must be made in consultation with the District Superintendent and with the affirmative vote of the Charge Conference.

– The Pacific Northwest Conference Cabinet

SUGGESTIONS FOR PASTORS

In a survey of pastors experiencing moves, many ideas for preparing the church office for the new pastor emerged. Here are a few to consider from that survey.

OFFICE FURNISHINGS

Let your successor know what equipment is available for the office. Many clergy have their own office furniture, filing cabinets, and computer systems. When they move, it can leave the office bereft of furnishing and equipment.

Consult with the S/PPR Committee about office furnishing needs of which you are aware.

FILES

Files should be left in a neat and orderly fashion. A written “key” to the organization of the filing system may be helpful. Be sure to go through all the files you leave to purge them of personal notes and confidential information that have been entrusted to you. You should plan to retain and move or destroy (don’t just throw away) files concerning your personal pastoral counseling. To allow a successor access to these files raises legal questions about their nature and opens the door for court access to your working files that are usually protected as confidential pastoral communications.

Some specific files need to be readily available to the incoming pastor:

- A current roster of church members and active constituents is vital. Take some time before your move to be sure the list is updated with current addresses, phone numbers and, if possible, places of employment. Generally, it is NOT helpful to leave detailed profiles of members.
- A list of prospective members and families who have recently celebrated a baptism.
- A list of committees and councils with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of officers.
- A list of church organizations and social groups together with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of contact persons.
- Files containing Charge Conference and Administrative Board (Council) Minutes. These should include statements of congregational goals.
- A packet detailing the financial condition of the church. It should include at least the annual budget, a statement of cash flow, a list of memorial or endowment funds, and an up-to-date balance sheet.
- A file of recent bulletins and newsletters.
- A schedule of regular church activities. Include information about special events such as major fund-raising events, holiday special services or “traditions” unique to the church.
- Job descriptions of employed staff. In many churches, dedicated lay persons volunteer for regular “informal” jobs (gardening, handyman work, office volunteers, etc.). A list of those persons should supplement staff job descriptions.
- Written building use contracts and agreements, insurance information and policies about building use.
- A list of businesses with whom the church has accounts or trades regularly.
- A set (or sets) of keys clearly tagged to describe which doors they fit. A cross-referenced list of locks and keys would be useful.
- A detailed description of building operation. In most congregations the pastor is expected to know about the operation of the building. Helpful information might include descriptions of furnace operation and maintenance, maps of circuit breakers, description of timer clocks, unusual lighting systems and switches.
- Keys to the church signboard and letter sets should be readily available. Some report it is helpful if the sign is changed before the arrival of the new pastor. The S/PRC could help by arranging for this.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Membership and financial records should not be maintained on the pastor’s computer. These should be kept current in the church’s computer system or that of the lay leaders elected to care for membership or finance.

PASTORAL CARE

Our survey of pastors in transition indicates that high priority should be given to sharing information on pastoral care needs of the congregation. Be aware that any information given to you in pastoral confidence should not be shared with your successor without the specific permission of the confidant.

Top priority should be an accurate up-to-date list of critical care needs, including those currently hospitalized and those terminally ill. Such a list might also include names of families who have had recent births or deaths. Be sure to indicate where the persons and their family can be located. A pastoral care file should also include lists of homebound members and persons in need of special pastoral care.

PASTORAL CARE RESOURCES

- A list of area hospitals. Include names of contact persons or chaplains and information on finding a religious preference census.
- A list of nursing homes and care facilities. Also include any special information about the facilities, including the chaplain's name.
- Lists of emergency resources. This could include emergency shelters, crisis clinics, women's crisis centers, family service centers and food banks.
- List of competent professionals for referral. Include such things as counselors, physicians, psychologists and psychiatrists. The local emergency mental health clinics should also be included.

PARSONAGE

The most mentioned concern about the parsonage is to leave it clean. Keep the parsonage committee involved so that they can efficiently prepare the home for the next pastoral family. The "Clergy Housing Standards and Policy" may be found on pages 15-18 in this booklet. Some specific suggestions about the parsonage include.

- Information on who to contact for keys and assistance with moving in.
- Specific information on the operation of parsonage equipment including furnace, appliances, lawn care equipment, etc. Note any unusual features of parsonage operation. Leave a file of operating manuals for appliances and other equipment.
- Information about utility companies, sources of heating oil, wood, etc. If there is an irrigation system, leave information about its operation.
- Location of circuit breakers or fuse box.
- Any relevant information on neighbors or neighborhood that will help your successor get acquainted.

THE COMMUNITY

Pastors have suggested many ideas to help an incoming pastor and family feel comfortable in the community.

- A good map of the community, including rural roads and rural areas.
- Information about ministerial fellowships or ecumenical organizations.
- School information – especially helpful are names of contacts within the church who are associated with the school system.
- A list of physicians, dentists, eye care specialists that you have found to be helpful.

- A list of merchants, auto mechanics, etc. that you have trusted.
- A list of child care resources.
- Work with the S/PPRC to alert the Welcome Wagon or similar organization; also, to see that there is a press release sent to the local news media about the new pastor.
- A list of service clubs and community organizations which your successor might wish to contact.
- Suggest to your S/PPRC that a mail subscription to the local newspaper be provided for your successor. It could begin as soon as the Bishop's intention to appoint is public. Be sure to also add your successor to your newsletter mailing list.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

THE PASTOR'S SALARY

Normally the incoming pastor receives the same compensation package that their predecessor has received, although there are some exceptions. Congregations may have negotiated with the District Superintendent for a different package because of changed conditions within the parish or because they have changed the expectations of the pastor. For example, a congregation that has normally received entry level clergy may seek a pastor of more experience who commands a higher salary. Or, a church may add an associate pastor and create a new compensation package for the senior pastor.

The key is good, direct communication. No one wants to be viewed as pecuniary when pastoral relationships are being established. District superintendents, pastors, and S/PPRC's should expect that there will be frank and open discussions about compensation. If a realignment of the compensation package is needed (i.e. to designate a housing allowance, tax-deferred annuity, etc.), a Charge Conference is required. Contact the District Superintendent for more information.

Be sure that all parties are involved and understand the arrangements. Sometimes S/PPR Committees are not in direct communication with church treasurers. Some congregations pay monthly, others bi-monthly. Matters concerning the payment of the health insurance or voluntary pension contributions need to be cleared with the person writing the paycheck.

A visit early in the pastor's appointment with the church treasurer about their paycheck can avert later awkward moments. If there are concerns, communicate with your District Superintendent.

All appointments are July 1 through June 30th. The expectation is that the pastor will be paid as such unless other arrangements are made in writing to the satisfaction of the District Superintendent, church and clergy involved.

MOVING EXPENSES

Expenses for moving clergy and their families shall be administered under the following policies. These policies apply to the amount of reimbursement that will be paid by the Conference and the maximum amount required of the local congregation.

- The moving fund shall assist in paying the moving expenses for household goods, office furniture, and equipment of itinerant clergy appointed to a pastoral charge, a conference staff position or as district superintendent. Clergy included in this provision shall include full members, probationary members, associate members, local pastors, seminary students appointed to a local charge, a retiring clergy person to their retirement residence and those under disability leave. If a clergy person receives payment for a retirement move and later is appointed to serve a local charge, additional retirement moves will not be paid.
- Clergy moving to the Pacific Northwest from outside the boundary of the Conference may be eligible for reimbursement under the allowances below.

MOVING ALLOWANCE

The recommended moving allowance schedule for 2017 is:

Intra-conference up to \$1,600 (Rule XI, Sec. 2(a)).

Retiring minister up to \$1,600 (Rule XXI, Sec. 2(b)).

Surviving spouse up to \$1,600 (Rule XI, Sec 2(b)).

Minister on Disability Leave, up to \$1,600 (Rule XI, Sec. 2(b)).

Seminary students returning for local church appointment will be reimbursed on the basis of receipts for moving expenses, including meals and lodging en route, as approved by the District Superintendent with the following dollar limits, based on the one-way mileage from the seminary to the appointment (Rule XI, Sec. 2

(c):	Over 2,500 miles - up to \$4,400	801 to 1,000 miles - up to \$2,900
	1,501 to 2,500 miles - up to \$4,0400	501 to 800 miles - up to \$2,200
	1,001 to 1,500 miles - up to \$3,600	500 miles or less - up to \$1,700

Candidates for ministry or ministerial members (including paragraph 337.1) transferring in shall be reimbursed up to the seminary students' limits (E) with the provision that the Cabinet may authorize expenditures of up to 150% of the seminary student limit (RuleXI, Sec. 2(c)).

PASTORAL MOVING ALLOWANCE

When a pastor is moving within the conference to a new appointment the receiving church is the responsible party for administering the expense reimbursement.

The PNW Annual Conference will reimburse the local church up to \$1,600. The pastor, SPRC/PPR, and the DS should understand each other’s expectations prior to the move Anything beyond the Conference \$1,600 allowance is the responsibility of the receiving church. All expenses need to be backed by receipts.

If the pastor is coming from seminary or from out of conference a conversation with the District superintendent about other reimbursement options is in order.

For retiring pastors, the Conference allowance will be paid to them directly and it will be taxable.

The PNW Conference has an ongoing relationship with Hansen Brother’s Moving and Storage and they can be reached at 206-365-8183 for information and quotes.

REIMBURSEMENTS

The receiving church or charge is responsible for payment of the approved reimbursements. The Conference Treasurer shall reimburse the church or charge, the allowed reimbursement amount upon receiving the moving receipts. Often local churches are asked to support the pastoral move by contributing additional funds. This is worked out in advance of the move in agreement with the clergy, local church leaders, and the District Superintendent.

[\(back to table of contents\)](#)

GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE CONDUCT BY CURRENT AND FORMER PASTORS

Produced jointly by the Cabinets and Boards of Ordained Ministry, Greater Northwest Area, United Methodist Church

In the Greater Northwest Area, we serve as colleagues in a covenant community. We all wrestle with the complexity of pastoral relationships and friendships with parishioners that require us to be sensitive and clear, especially during a change of appointment. We know some communities find it difficult to disengage from their former pastors. The behavior guidelines included here are for the health of pastors and congregations. Consequences, even in retirement, in regard to this policy are based on the 2016 UMC Discipline, Par. 2702.1 (f) where clergy may be charged and tried for “relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor.”

1. Honor the work or lifestyle of a predecessor, successor or other ministers with statements that do not disparage.
2. Practice the same ministerial code of ethics with pastors and congregations of other denominations as would be expected in the United Methodist Church.
3. Perform no pastoral functions in any church or charge to which the minister is not appointed, except at the request and under the direction of the pastor in charge.
4. Upon leaving the appointment, including retirement, sever all pastoral relationships with the parish, recognizing that all future weddings, baptisms, communions, counseling, visitations and funerals should be fulfilled by the successor pastor, unless an unusual situation exists and is approved by the successor pastor. To be clear: When you receive a request from a former parishioner, you will always refer them, without comment, to their current pastor. You will only agree to any involvement after the appointed pastor invites you to participate.
5. For the health and welfare of the church, it is important that the former pastor and family, when they will be residing in the same community following serving as pastor, find another church to attend. The former pastor’s continued presence in the life of the church almost always hinders the congregation and the incoming pastor in developing the necessary relationship for successful ministry. This can be a difficult and painful event for the former pastor and family. However, considering the needs of the church, the best interests of all involved are better served by the former pastor and family participating in another church. Reconsideration of this may happen after a minimum of one-year absence in consultation with the District Superintendent and current pastor.
6. The former pastor shall avoid all conversation and communication with church members about a new pastor, as well as problems and issues regarding the former church. If approached, the former pastor needs to tactfully explain that ethics do not permit such a discussion.

7. Continued personal relationships and social media connection with congregants do not assist in the health and welfare of the local church and are therefore discouraged. Exceptions to any ongoing relationships and regular contact with former parishioners need to be openly shared and negotiated with the current pastor and District Superintendent.
8. Before leaving, the exiting pastor will clearly communicate from the pulpit, in writing and on social media that they will no longer be able to function in any pastoral way with the congregation.
9. An exiting pastor shall not be present or participate in worship, events or church groups for a minimum of one year. Immediate family members are discouraged from this as well. In the case of any exceptions, a written agreement will be reached by the District Superintendent and both clergies. In longer appointments, the District Superintendent can require a longer period of absence. The currently appointed pastor is also expected to be sensitive, gracious and appropriately inclusive of former pastors.

The District Superintendent will initiate the signing of this covenant with all parties.

LEAVING WELL: SOCIAL MEDIA

- Send a “final” email out to folks (at least leaders and staff) so it is clear when you have begun this new phase. Email conversations can go on and on, so it is important to offer a mark of finality.
- Create an autoresponder for your church email list that directs folks to new church connections as well as a way for non-church contacts to remain connected.
- Remove yourself from internal communication lists, groups, docs, etc. on Google, Yahoo and other sharing platforms. With so many ways that people communicate, share docs, etc. it is important, for your own sanity, to not see conversations that you are no longer meant to be part of.
- Delete any groups or lists that you created that set aside congregation members in your news and updated streams. Have your administrative access removed from all congregational social media platforms. This might include having the church change passwords and other access points.
- Facebook Friend Lists: This is a powerful tool, because it allows you to organize and categorize your Facebook friends, but it also allows you to unsubscribe from updates from specific lists, and it allows you to both post status updates to specific lists or hide updates from specific lists.
 - ◆ When you leave a church, you can put everyone associated with that church into one Friend List. Then when you go in to edit the settings for that list, you can simply uncheck all of the Update Types for that friend list, and then you will no longer see the status updates posted from that group of people.
 - ◆ Unfriending People: You may indeed need to unfriend a few people from your congregation, but that is always a case-by-case situation. The cleanest break is to unfriend all those associated with the church you are leaving and your ministry there. Experts are not in agreement about doing this, so you must do what you think is best.
- Other Social Media Platforms: There are similar steps that can be taken on all social media sites to these for Facebook. Follow them to help set boundaries for there as well.
- Remove all church social media accounts from your computer, iPhone or other media devices: To prevent accidentally posting from a church account after you’ve left, and to remove any temptation to post, or check on things that are happening at the church, go through your computer, iPhone, iPad and any other media devices that might be connected to the Twitter or Facebook profiles, and delete those accounts. This will help give you a cleaner break from the church’s social media life.
- Talk about your plan: Talk to the church leadership about boundaries and your plan. It shows that you’re being pro-active and thinking through these issues. Be specific. Let them know what you’re planning to do about Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and any other social media platforms that you’ve used to connect with folks at the church. Make a plan, and then communicate that with the appropriate parties involved.
- Church computer should be cleaned up: remove personal email addresses, correspondence, family photos, and "favorite" browser sites
- Email friends, family if email address is changing

CLERGY HOUSING STANDARDS AND POLICY

- I. Responsibility for housing to be used by clergy of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference.
 - A. The primary responsibility for clergy housing resides with the Church Council (Administrative Board). One of the responsibilities, as defined by the 2016 Discipline, ¶252.4(e), is to “review the recommendation of the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s), and report the same to the charge conference for approval. Housing provisions shall comply with the annual conference housing policy and parsonage standards. Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefit plans.” See II below for church- owned parsonage standards, and III below for housing allowance standards.
 - B. The Church Council may delegate administrative responsibility for clergy housing to the S/PPR Committee or to a Parsonage Committee. However, it is understood that ultimate responsibility resides with the Church Council.
 - C. If a housing allowance is provided in lieu of a parsonage, it shall be reviewed annually prior to the adoption of the clergy salary package for the coming year by the S/PPR Committee. Provision shall be made for an adequate allowance. (see III below)
 - D. “The Chairperson of the board of trustees or the chairperson of the parsonage committee, if one exists, the chairperson of the committee on pastor-parish relations, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to ensure proper maintenance.” (2016 Discipline ¶2533.4)
 - E. Parsonage recommendations and the definition of an adequate housing allowance (see III.a) should apply to all clergy under appointment to a local church regardless of marital status or family size.
 - F. If a church or charge does not have a parsonage, and no provision has been made to provide housing allowance, the church should either:
 1. Develop a plan to acquire a suitable parsonage with sufficient funding for the purchase, or
 2. Provide for an adequate housing allowance for the clergy. (see III.a).
 - G. During the Annual Charge Conference, the District Superintendent may ask if the housing allowance provided by the local church complies with conference standards. Each local church is to be provided with a copy of the Clergy Housing Standards and Policy.
- II. Church-Owned Parsonage Standards. (see 1980 Disciple, Par.266.2.f) (4)
 - A. The House
 1. Ownership and Privacy. The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the clergy family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the clergy family.
 2. Suggested minimum number of rooms: 3 bedrooms, dining area, kitchen, one and one-half (preferably two) baths, with adequate closet space in each, linen storage, garage and/or carport for a minimum of two automobiles, and storage for lawn equipment.

3. Additional desirable features: Family room, extra bedroom or study space, bookshelves, fireplace with glass door and tools (alternative: modern wood-burning stove and accessories).
4. Energy Efficiency: Adequate heating plant with annual maintenance and modifications for current technology. Insulated windows and adequate insulation in walls and ceiling are essential. Air conditioning should be provided in any locality where the climate requires it. An energy audit should be made, and recommendations referred to the Board of Trustees.
5. Additional Essential Features
 - a. All Church-owned furnishings and equipment should be in good condition with regard to appearance and usability.
 - b. Adequate electrical outlets should be provided, including those for refrigerator freezer facilities, air conditioning, television, and other devices.
 - c. All windows should have blinds and/or draperies in good condition.
 - d. Windows should provide adequate ventilation, and those which open should have accompanying screens.
 - e. Floor covering in all areas should be in good condition and up to date. Consideration should be given to ease of maintenance.
 - f. Fencing should be installed and maintained where necessary to provide protection, containment, and ample area for activities for small children.
 - g. Dead-bolt locks, television antenna or cable installation, smoke alarm(s), and working doorbells should be provided.

B. Furnishings and Equipment to be provided

1. Kitchen: Electric or gas range, refrigerator with minimum of 17 to 21 cubic feet of space, with a freezing compartment or separate freezer; adequate cupboard space; adequate counter space with good finish. A dishwasher and disposal are highly recommended. Outlet and space for a microwave oven should be provided.
2. Laundry Area: Current models of automatic washer and dryer, in good operating condition.
3. Yard Care: Power lawn mower, garden hoses, sprinklers, garden tools and equipment.
4. Telephone: Two telephones should be provided. The telephone deposit and connection should be maintained by the church to prevent interruption between pastorates.
5. Consideration should be given to providing floor lamps in parsonages that have no overhead lights.
6. Condition: When furnishings and equipment are no longer in good condition with regard to appearance and usability, they should be removed and replaced as soon as practical. Out-of-date items or the discards of others should not be placed in the parsonage. Decisions in this regard should reside with the Parsonage Committee and clergy.
7. Inventory: An up-to-date list of all parsonage furnishings, including dates of purchase, serial numbers and related data should be kept, with copies to be filed with the Parsonage Committee, church office and the District Superintendent.

C. Care of Property

1. Insurance: Coverage is normally provided by the church for all fire and casualty losses, including public liability, including the replacement cost of the parsonage and church owned furnishings and equipment. Clergy are responsible for insuring personal property, including furniture. Repairs: An amount shall be provided in the local church budget for repairs and maintenance of the parsonage. (An amount equivalent to two percent [2%] of the value of the parsonage is recommended. This can be achieved by paying one-twelfth [1/12th] of the yearly amount each month into a special reserve, which should be cumulative.)
2. Interior and exterior painting should be provided as required to keep the house in good condition and appearance.

3. Operating Procedures

- a. A formal agreement between the pastor and the church may be instituted. The agreement should clarify the expectations of both the church and the pastor with regard to the matters listed in this policy statement. A review upon the arrival and just before the departure of the pastor is in order to conform to the agreement. (See the sample form at the end of this document.)
- b. The S/PPR Committee/Parsonage Committee in cooperation with the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for seeing that all necessary work is done to keep the parsonage up to these recommendations.
- c. An annual review should be made of the agreement, involving the S/PPRC/Parsonage Committee and Board of Trustees, with the clergy family.
- d. The parsonage family should be consulted in the selection of appliances and furnishings, and their taste considered in determining color and plans for interior decorating. Neutral colors for drapes and carpets are recommended to fit with whatever color décor of furnishings the parsonage family may bring into the parsonage.
- e. A parsonage history should be kept in the church files, providing age of the building, its assessed evaluation, dates and types of improvement, including purchases of appliances and a list of church-owned furnishings. Photos are desirable.
- f. The following information should be supplied to the parsonage family by the Parsonage Committee.
Where to find:
 - Water shut-off valves for outside faucets and for the entire house, fuse or breaker panel, with specific breakers labeled, including the main breaker, various seasonal permanent plants.
 - Whom to call in case of fire, accident, etc.
 - How to fix or repair equipment.
 - Instruction booklets for appliances and where they can be serviced.
 - Any problem situation – e.g., watering too close to the house may cause seepage in basement, etc.

D. General Suggestions

- Clergy are encouraged to live in the parsonage provided by the local church where the parsonage is ade-

[\(back to table of contents\)](#)

quate according to these guidelines. Consultation between the church, the District Superintendent, and the clergy should occur if the parsonage is not appropriate. The parsonage is the home of the clergy and family, and their rights and privacy should always be respected by members of the congregation. With rights come responsibilities for the appearance and condition of the parsonage. The clergy family and the Parsonage Committee should work together to exercise good care of all parsonage property. (see II.A. and II.C. above)

- When the clergy moves, the S/PPR Committee/ Parsonage Committee should see that the lights, telephone and water are left connected. The deposit for public utilities should be provided by the church.
- If a gift of furniture or furnishings is made, the donor should designate specifically if it is to remain in the parsonage or is a personal gift to the clergy.

III. Housing Allowance Standards

- A. An adequate housing allowance is defined as an amount sufficient to rent a house in the community that would meet the standards for a church-owned parsonage.
- B. Churches are encouraged to be attentive and responsive to the individual needs of ministers in regard to housing.
- C. In the event that a church and its pastor are considering a shift from parsonage to a housing allowance, this should be done in consultation with the District Superintendent and the District Board of Church Location and Building. Thorough attention should be given to the advantages and disadvantages of such a shift. The church shall be prepared, through careful preservation of adequate assets, to provide housing for future pastors that meets Conference standards.
- D. Where a housing allowance is provided and in order to allow the pastor maximum benefits allowed by the Internal Revenue Service code, the following guidelines shall be observed:
 - For church reporting to Charge Conference and the District Superintendent, the amount designated for Housing Allowance shall be the amount required to rent a house in the community that would meet the standards for a church-owned parsonage. Other amounts designated for housing allowance may be mutually agreed upon between the pastor and the church with the consent of the District Superintendent.
 - For Federal Income Tax purposes, it is recommended that the PPR Committee make a separate allocation of total compensation including Housing Allowance as set by the Charge Conference in order to reflect the actual cost of providing a home. This designation shall be made in a letter to the pastor in advance of the effective date.

CLERGY/CHURCH PARSONAGE AGREEMENT

(Example)

We recommend that churches and clergy enter into a formal agreement for the care and upkeep of the church parsonage before, during, and after a pastoral appointment to a charge. Here are some helpful recommendations to guide you as you create your agreement.

- It is the responsibility of the incoming clergy to note the condition and cleanliness of the parsonage. A written inventory is recommended.
- It is the responsibility of the clergy to maintain the parsonage grounds, keeping them presentable at all times: e.g. mowing and watering the lawn, trimming and maintaining shrubs, removing leaves, shoveling snow in the winter, etc.
- The clergy shall be responsible to replace or pay for broken and/or misused items.
- It is the responsibility of the local church to maintain and replace for normal wear and usage all permanent parsonage furnishings and equipment.
- The cost of damage to the parsonage resulting from the activity of pets shall be the responsibility of the clergy.
- A meeting of the clergy, Trustees Chair, and S/PPR Committee/Parsonage Committee shall be held annually for review of the parsonage.
- It is the responsibility of the outgoing pastor to assure that the parsonage is clean for the incoming pastor. Expenses for painting and repairs resulting from normal wear and tear are the responsibility of the church.
- Prior to moving out of a parsonage, the parsonage family shall clean or arrange and pay for the cleaning of the house, including carpets and rugs. If this is not done the Parsonage Committee shall have the option of hiring the work done and sending a bill to the outgoing clergy.

[\(back to table of contents\)](#)