

PARSONAGE GUIDELINES FOR THE CONGREGATION

The Staff/Parish Relations chair is the one primarily responsible to work with the out-going pastor/family, incoming pastor/family, Trustees and Parsonage Committee. Parsonage issues are the most sensitive areas in the entire transitional process. Honesty and sensitivity are equally required. Some things that the church can be aware of:

1. Find out from your District Superintendent (DS) the exact week for moving.
2. Check with your DS on specific details. The following suggestions may assist you in this matter:
 - Visit the parsonage weeks before the move and schedule with present pastor when certain repairs can be done.
 - Consult with the incoming pastor related to moving arrangements. Moves can often be frustrating but if the pastor has made his/her own arrangements, he/she takes responsibility for a good move.
 - Chair of Staff/Parish Relations Committee or someone designated by the chair (such as chair of Parsonage Committee) needs to be present when the current pastor/family leaves, to agree that the parsonage is left ready for the new pastor or proper arrangements have been made to have it ready. It is important for everyone to be specific about this matter.
 - Have someone on hand to greet the new pastor/family. Generally it is an act of kindness to ask if there is anything you can help with and then leave so the pastor/family has some privacy as they begin to make the church house their home. If there are young children involved in the move, offer to arrange for playmates at someone's house while the parents unpack.
 - An additional act of kindness is to have an evening meal provided for the pastor/family and some food for breakfast. One reason it is an act of kindness is that it lifts some of the pressure from the pastor who generally cannot even begin to move in until the afternoon. Frequently on moving day there are church emergencies that must receive attention.
 - Consider having cut flowers or special welcome treats for the children/youth at the parsonage. Use your imagination to guide you in creating a warm welcome.

PARSONAGE GUIDELINES FOR THE INCOMING PASTOR

1. Find out from your District Superintendent (DS) the exact week for moving.

2. Advance Visit to Parsonage:

Hopefully, you have already visited the parsonage or have satisfied yourself with what to expect. Obviously, this is one of the most awkward parts in the transition: *how to express concern for what needs to be done before you arrive without appearing demanding*. There is no easy way through this. Yet, in most cases, you can come to an understanding with the Staff/Parish Relations Committee on what to expect and what will be satisfactory.

3. Inform Chair of Staff/Parish Relations Committee:

Inform the chair of your new Staff/Parish Relations Committee of your moving arrangements and scheduled arrival time.

PARSONAGE INVENTORY

Date: _____

A. GENERAL

Charge: _____

Directions for finding the Parsonage: _____

Mailing Address of Parsonage: _____

Parsonage Telephone No: _____ Church Telephone No(s): _____

Is there a separate phone in parsonage for church use? Yes ___ No ___; No: _____

B. ROOMS IN PARSONAGE

Name of Room (As Applicable)	Dimensions (feet)	What Floor	Number of Closets	Comment (e.g., Not Heated) (List Furnishings in Section G)
Foyer, Entry Hall	x	B 1 2 3		
Living Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Sitting Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Den	x	B 1 2 3		
Recreation, Family Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Recreation, Family Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Pastor's Study	x	B 1 2 3		If in Parsonage
Office	x	B 1 2 3		If in Parsonage
Dining Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Breakfast Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Kitchen	x	B 1 2 3		
Bedroom #1	x	B 1 2 3		
Bedroom #2	x	B 1 2 3		
Bedroom #3	x	B 1 2 3		
Additional Bedroom	x	B 1 2 3		
Additional Bedroom	x	B 1 2 3		
Bathroom #1	x	B 1 2 3		Tub __; Shower __; Number Sinks __
Bathroom #2	x	B 1 2 3		Tub __; Shower __; Number Sinks __
Additional Bathroom	x	B 1 2 3		Tub __; Shower __; Number Sinks __
Porch	x	B 1 2 3		Screened? __; Encl. w/ Windows? __
Hallway #1	x	B 1 2 3		
Hallway #2	x	B 1 2 3		
Laundry Room	x	B 1 2 3		
Garage (G)	x			Attached? __; Detached? __
Shop	x	B 1 2 3 G		
Carport	x			

C. DETAILS FOR UTILITIES

1. Does Parsonage have central heating? Yes ___ No ___ If Yes, identify heating type(s):
Gas ___; Fuel Oil ___; Electricity ___; Coal ___; Other ___;
(Specify: _____).
2. Is Parsonage heated by individual room heaters? Yes ___ No ___ If Yes, provide numbers of each type:
Gas ___; Electricity ___; Coal ___; Wood ___; Kerosene ___; Fireplace ___;
Other ___ : Specify: _____).
3. Does Electrical Cabinet use Fuses? ___; Circuit Breakers? ___;
Fuse Size(s) _____(amps); Are fuses/circuit breakers individually la-
beled? ___; Location: _____
4. Water Shutoff Valve(s): Please provide location(s):

D. PARSONAGE FACILITIES AND APPLIANCES

1. Air Conditioning Central A/C ___; I Room A/C ___ (Number of Units: ___); None ___
2. Telephone Local Service Provider _____
Long Distance Provider _____
2. Internet Provider _____
4. Electricity Yes ___; No ___ Service Provider _____;
Wired for 220 volts? _____
4. Sewage Disposal Municipal ___; Septic Tank and Field ___; Outhouse ___
6. Running Water Municipal ___; Well ___; Other (Specify) _____;
None ___
7. Trash Collection Municipal ___; Private ___; How Often _____;
None ___
8. Type of Cooking Stove Electric ___; Gas ___; Other (Specify Type)

9. Other Appliances and Equipment Provided Refrigerator ___; Vacuum Cleaner ___;
Garbage Disposal Unit ___; Freezer (Separate from Refrigerator) ___; Dishwasher ___; Hand
Lawn Mower ___; Power Lawn Mower ___; Storm Windows; Other (Specify)

10. Yard Partially Fenced Yard ___; Fully Enclosed and Fenced Yard ___; Space for Flower
Garden ___; Space for Vegetable Garden ___; Shed for Lawn and Gardening Tools ___;
Other(Specify))

11. Other(Specify)

E. STORAGE AREAS (Check and Describe As Applicable)

1. Attic Attic Reached by Fixed Stairs ____; Attic Reached by Pull-Down Stairs ____;
Attic Reached by Ladder ____.
2. Other Storage Dry Basement Storage ____; Other Storage Space
(Specify) _____
3. Furniture Storage Is any of the above storage space so arranged as to admit storage of large pieces of furniture?

F. SCHOOLS

1. Name of County or City in whose school area Parsonage is Located: _____
2. Distance (miles) to: Public Elementary School ____; Public Middle (or Intermediate) School ____; High School ____; Other (Describe) _____
3. Are buses provided to: Elementary School ____; Middle (or Intermediate School ____; High School ____; Other (Describe) _____

G. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

1. Distance (miles) from Parsonage to nearest public transportation: _____
2. Distance (miles) to nearest full-service shopping area: _____
3. Is there a grocery store within walking distance? _____. How far? _____
4. How far is Parsonage from the Church (if a circuit, give distance to nearest church in circuit)?

5. Distance (miles) from Parsonage to nearest Hospital: _____
6. Distance (miles) from Parsonage to the Rescue Squad: _____
7. How far is the nearest neighbor? _____

List furniture, lamps, mirrors, rugs, carpets, drapes, custom pads or table linens for dining room, etc.

Room	Items in Room	Purchase Date/Cost
Living Room		
Dining Room		
Kitchen		
Bedroom #1		

Room	Items in Room	Purchase Date/Cost
Bedroom #2		
Bedroom #3		
Extra Bedroom		
Other		

SIGNATURES:

Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Chairperson, Trustees

Pastor

Date _____



ON LEAVING THE PARSONAGE

A CHECKLIST FOR PASTORS

Give a copy of this completed form to Chair of Trustees, Chair of Staff/Parish Relations, and/or Chair of Parsonage Committee.

General Cleaning for each room

Windows

Washed inside and out _____

Clean screens _____

Clean window sills _____

Clean blinds or shades _____

Wash or have curtains cleaned _____

Woodwork

Wipe down all woodwork, baseboards _____

Doors, Door Facings, Stair Railings _____

Walls

Clean off any spots _____

Remove nails where pictures were and fill holes _____

Furniture

Dust and vacuum _____

Clean or have cleaned any soiled upholstery _____

Floors

Carpet (Vacuum and clean or have cleaned) _____

If you have pets, deodorize carpets and be certain that no fleas or flea eggs are left.

Vinyl (scrub and wax) (Get the corners and kick spaces) _____

Hard Wood (cleaned and waxed) _____

Shelves

Dust and clean shelves, cabinets _____

Remove drawers and vacuum behind them.

You'd be amazed at what is often behind them.

Air Duct Filters - replace with new filters if needed _____

Kitchen

If any appliance is not working properly, please notify Trustees or Parsonage Committee in a timely manner so the problem can be fixed prior to the next family moving in.

Stove: Be sure it's in good working order _____

Clean outside, around and under all burners _____

Replace drip pans, if they can't be cleaned _____

Hood over stove—clean (especially grease filter and fan) _____

Oven—clean inside _____

Refrigerator—be sure it's in good working order _____

Clean outside (especially top) and inside _____

Take out shelves and drawers to clean properly _____

Remove all food items _____

Freezer—thaw, remove all food and clean _____

Cabinets—clean inside and out (polish outside of wooden cabinets) _____

Shelves—wipe down _____

- Counter tops—clean and remove stains if possible _____
- Sink—clean (leave a bar of unopened soap for next family) _____
- Dishwasher—clean inside and out (leave a small amount of
dishwasher detergent for next family) _____
- Exhaust Fans—clean _____
- Hot and cold air ducts—clean _____
- Bathrooms**
- Commode—clean inside and out _____
- Lavatory—clean _____
- Tub and shower _____
- Clean glass sliding door for shower (include the track) _____
- Shower curtains (replace with new) _____
- Medicine Cabinet—remove all items and clean _____
- Drawers and counter tops—clean _____
- Mirrors—clean _____
- (Please leave behind a full roll of toilet paper, new soap)* _____
- Laundry Room**
- Washer—clean inside and out _____
- Dryer—clean inside and out (clean filter) _____
- Attic and Basement**
- Sweep _____
- Remove all discarded items _____
- Yard**
- Cut Grass _____
- Trim Shrubbery _____
- Haul away clippings and yard debris _____
- Extras**
- Leave a flower arrangement or potted plant to welcome the new family.
- Remind Parsonage Committee to have food in the house for the new family.
- Remind Church to organize a welcoming reception for the new family.
- Leave parsonage in condition you hope to find the parsonage you will be moving to.

Confirmation of Parsonage Inspection

We find the parsonage of _____ United Methodist Church to have
been left in proper condition.

Date _____

Pastor _____

Parsonage Committee Chair _____

Staff/Parish Relations Chair _____

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE PARSONAGE

In order to thrive, every pastor must have respected, private space. Every church/charge must provide housing or an adequate housing allowance for its full time pastor(s).

The *2012 Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church states that the Church Council shall "review the recommendation of the committee on Staff/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." (§252.4e)

The Staff/Parish Relations Committee also has consultative power and responsibilities for the parsonage except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefits plan (§258.2g(16)). This committee is to consult with the Church Council to provide for "housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference.)" This paragraph also includes these words: "The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family."

The Board of Trustees of the local church is charged with supervision, oversight and care of property, including the church-owned parsonage. The Charge Conference may assign some of these duties to the chair of a Parsonage Committee.

The church today demands the clergy to be not only a preacher, as was the early circuit rider, but a resident pastor and responsible citizen in the community. In order to meet these felt needs, and to call men and women to a dedicated ministry, the church must provide living conditions that will establish an adequate base from which to operate. It is the privilege and responsibility of the members of each congregation to provide a physical setting which will give the parsonage family the comfort and convenience so that the energies of the pastor may be more concentrated on his or her task and willing service in the church of God. It is the responsibility of the parsonage family to provide cleaning and care of the parsonage, which will protect the interior facilities and amenities such as paint and floor coverings. Because the parsonage, like the church building, reflects upon the congregation and pastor, it should be in such condition that all concerned can be justifiably proud of it. In view of this, parsonages must meet the **Conference Parsonage Standards** which can be found in the 2015 Conference Journal, J14-J15 or it can be located on our website in the report of the committee on Equitable Compensation

Parsonages should be large enough to accommodate the pastor's family, and provide adequate space for the entertainment of guests. The following **minimum standards** are recommended:

- 1800 square feet living space
- 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms
- Adequate major appliances (stove, refrigerator, washer, and dryer)
- Hot and cold running water in bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry
- Adequate heating and air conditioning
- Adequate closet and storage space
- Adequate garage or carport space with outdoor storage area
- Proper sewer disposal
- Fire extinguisher in kitchen
- Smoke detectors for kitchen, living, and bedroom areas
- Window covering, drapes, curtains, and/or blinds

As of 2008, parsonage families in the Texas Annual Conference provide all furniture. In 2016, the Annual

Conference adopted a resolution stating: In the case of no parsonage, the minimum housing allowance amount for clergy (and clergy couples) will be set using a rate of 25% of pension cash for each clergy. The calculated allowance is compared to an amount (i.e. annual cost) determined to be the fair market value for homes in the respective neighborhood where the clergy home is located. If the annual cost for fair market value is greater than the calculated housing allowance, then the allowance is increased to equate to the fair market cost.

Note: The above Clergy Housing Allowance Policy and the requirement for either a parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage pertain only to fulltime elders (including provisional elders) and full-time local pastors. The primary concern in establishing a minimum housing allowance amount was to ensure that clergy at the lower end of the compensation range and that clergy couples each receive an adequate housing allowance.

If parsonage family is expected to maintain the lawn, the church should provide a mower, lawn tools, and hoses. The congregation should insure the parsonage; the parsonage family may insure personal property with tenant homeowners' insurance. The parsonage(s) should be inspected at least once a year, and maintained in good condition. Congregations must remember that the parsonage is the pastor's home and all necessary inspections, repairs, and service visits should be scheduled in advance to meet the convenience of the parsonage family.