

1a. PARSONAGE STANDARDS

REASONABLE MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A PARSONAGE SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH JULY 2010

The itinerant system is the accepted method of The United Methodist Church by which ordained ministers are appointed by the Bishop to fields of labor. Under this system it is the responsibility of a local church or charge to provide adequate housing for the appointed pastor and family. The current standard for the Susquehanna Conference is the church-owned parsonage.

It shall be the concern of the Charge/Church Conference that the housing of the pastor be consistent with the Reasonable Minimum Standards. Repairs and remodeling shall be done as needed to attain and maintain the parsonage standards. The Chairperson of the Committee on Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance.

It is further recommended that the Board of Trustees, the Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations Committee, and clergy spouse participate in the inspection when appropriate. A report of the inspection shall be made by the Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations Committee to the Charge/Church Conference on forms provided.

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1. PARSONAGE PLANNING AND STANDARDS

One of the key standards to be used for maintaining existing, purchasing replacements, and building new parsonages shall be the current issue of the booklet, "Parsonage Planning," produced by The Mission Education and Cultivation Program of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The standards set forth in this document, when used in consultation with an architect or quality builder, will eliminate many of the commonly encountered difficulties.

1.1. CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

1.1.1. The parsonage shall be of sound construction, located in or near the community served, as negotiated with the Staff/Parish Relations Committee and the District Superintendent.

1.1.2. The parsonage shall meet all local building, utility, and zoning codes.

1.1.3. It is required that the parsonage shall include a kitchen, living room, dining room, bathroom(s), bedrooms (at least three), study/office (if in parsonage), laundry room, garage, and adequate storage. There shall be an additional half bath on each floor, except the attic area.

1.1.4. It is also recommended that the parsonage include a family room.

1.1.5. Entrances

1.1.5.1. Entrances should be sheltered, and doors shall have workable locks, including dead-bolt locks.

1.1.5.2. Keys to entrances shall be the responsibility of the parsonage family.

1.1.5.3. Each parsonage should have a coat closet at least 4 feet long near the front entrance.

1.1.6 Windows and Doors

1.1.6.1. It is recommended that all windows throughout the house should be energy efficient (i.e. "Thermopane"). Suitable window treatment (curtains, drapes, blinds, etc.) shall be provided.

1.1.6.2. All windows and fixtures shall be in good working order.

1.1.6.3. Window/door screens and storm windows/doors shall be provided.

1.1.7. Electrical

Adequate electrical service shall be provided according to the parsonage family's need. When the service is updated, a minimum 200 amp. grounded service with labeled circuit breakers will be required. It is recommended that there be a maximum of 6 receptacles or lights to each breaker.

1.1.8. Heating and Cooling

1.1.8.1. Central automatic heating system must be able to maintain 68 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the house based on local utility recommendations.

1.1.8.2. Insulation shall be provided for comfort and conservation of fuel according to utility recommendations.

1.1.8.3. Central air conditioning, window air conditioners, or fans for each bedroom, shall be provided for summer cooling. A whole-house attic fan is recommended.

1.1.9 Hot Water

An adequate supply of domestic hot water shall be provided.

1.2. LOT STANDARDS

- 1.2.1. The grounds should be well-graded and drained. A relatively flat lot is preferable.
- 1.2.2. The parsonage lot shall include lawn, shade trees, shrubbery, space for garden and flower beds, and hard surface walks to each door.
- 1.2.3. Off street parking should be available for guest automobiles.
- 1.2.4. Provision shall be made for snow removal, lawn service and/or equipment.

1.3. HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY

It is recommended that no bi-level or split level homes be built or purchased for use as parsonages in the Susquehanna Conference. Continued use of such homes as parsonages limits the appointability of some pastors and pastors with family members with handicapping conditions.

- 1.3.1. It is recommended that doorways accommodate wheelchair accessibility.
- 1.3.2. It is recommended that ramped entrances have 2% or less gradient.
- 1.3.3. When a parsonage is bought or built, it shall provide on the ground level: (1) a room suitable as a bedroom; (2) a fully accessible bathroom; (3) a fully accessible laundry facility. In such a situation, we also recommend the consideration of pocket doors where needed/helpful.
- 1.3.4. Provision shall be made for other options which are necessary to a reasonable lifestyle.

1.4. EXTERIOR STANDARDS

It is recommended that the exterior finish be of low maintenance materials, such as, brick, stone, or durable non-asbestos siding.

- 1.4.1. All surfaces shall be kept in good repair including: painting of siding and trim, repointing brick or stone, and caulking of windows.
- 1.4.2. The parsonage roof shall be of good quality and inspected and repaired regularly to prevent leaks and interior damage.
- 1.4.3. Sidewalks shall be smooth and of concrete or other durable surface.
- 1.4.4. **Garage**
 - 1.4.4.1. Two-car capacity is preferable (rented, if necessary).
 - 1.4.4.2. Space for storage of lawn and garden equipment and work space.
 - 1.4.4.3. The garage floor and driveway shall be of hard surface in good repair.
 - 1.4.4.4. There shall be adequate overhead lighting and access lighting, with at least 3 GFI protected outlets.
 - 1.4.4.5. There shall be an easy operating overhead door and an alternate access door. Consideration should be given to an automatic garage door opener.
- 1.4.5. **Basement (where applicable)**
 - 1.4.5.1. The area shall be clean and dry, of either concrete or block construction, painted with watersealing masonry paint, with a sealed or covered concrete floor.
 - 1.4.5.2. The area shall be regularly tested for radon and treated as needed.
 - 1.4.5.3. Dry, water free space shall be available for storage of personal items and moving wardrobes. A dehumidifier shall be furnished if necessary to provide dry area.
 - 1.4.5.4. Adequate lighting and Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) outlets shall be provided for exterior cleaning and watering.

1.5. INTERIOR ROOM STANDARDS

Interior walls of the parsonage shall be painted or papered in good taste — preferably in neutral colors. The use of bonded plastic coated paneling is discouraged, since it limits color coordination and is difficult to repair or replace.

1.5.1. Kitchen

- 1.5.1.1. A family sized (20-22 cu. ft.) frost-free refrigerator shall be provided.
- 1.5.1.2. A high efficiency self-cleaning range shall be provided.
- 1.5.1.3. A double sink with mixing faucets is preferable.
- 1.5.1.4. Kitchen cabinets shall be of standard size and quality with drawers and shelving equivalent to the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association guidelines. Counter space, covered with easily maintained surface of ceramic, laminate, or Corian type material, shall be provided at the range, refrigerator and sink.
- 1.5.1.5. Sufficient storage space for food, dishes and cooking utensils shall be provided.
- 1.5.1.6. At least three GFI electrical outlets shall be provided above the counters. A minimum of two circuits for the area should be provided, and consideration should be given to dedicated circuits for the refrigerator, dishwasher, and a microwave oven. An attractive ceiling light shall be provided.
- 1.5.1.7. Floors shall be covered with non-skid linoleum/tile or stain resistant carpet.
- 1.5.1.8. A dishwasher shall be provided where possible.
- 1.5.1.9. A garbage disposal shall be provided where possible.
- 1.5.1.10. There should be adequate space for a dinette or breakfast bar in the kitchen.

1.5.2. Living Room

- 1.5.2.1. Should provide a minimum of 180 sq. ft. (Example: 15 feet x12 feet) or larger.
- 1.5.2.2. Wall to wall carpeting or hardwood floor with area rug shall be provided.

1.5.3 Dining Room

- 1.5.3.1. Shall be easily accessible for family dining and entertaining guests.
- 1.5.3.2. Wall to wall carpeting or hardwood floor with area rug shall be provided.
- 1.5.3.3. There shall be an attractive ceiling light in the dining area.

1.5.4 Bathrooms

- 1.5.4.1. All bathrooms should be located in such a way as to respect privacy. When compelled by the appointment, at least one bathroom shall be made handicapped accessible: 36-inch doorway, grab bars, raised toilet, tub.
- 1.5.4.2. Tile, linoleum, or carpeted floors shall be provided.
- 1.5.4.3. Modern, workable fixtures shall be provided.
- 1.5.4.4. A switch controlled ceiling light and ventilation fan shall be provided.
- 1.5.4.5. **Family Bath**
 - 1.5.4.5.1. Shall be on the same floor as most of the bedrooms.
 - 1.5.4.5.2. Tub w/shower in good working condition shall be provided.
 - 1.5.4.5.3. A mirror, medicine cabinet, or combination thereof shall be provided.
 - 1.5.4.5.4. Four standard towel bars shall be provided.
 - 1.5.4.5.5. Adequate linen storage shall be provided.
- 1.5.4.6. **Half Bath (additional)**
 - 1.5.4.6.1. Should be provided with each additional floor, except the attic area, one to be near the study/office (if in the parsonage).
 - 1.5.4.6.2. Shall have a mirror and towel bar.

1.5.5. Bedrooms

- 1.5.5.1. All bedrooms shall be individually accessible. (No need to move through one to enter another.)
- 1.5.5.2. Each room shall have at least 4 ft. of full length closet space per occupant.
- 1.5.5.3. Wall to wall carpeting or hardwood floors with area rugs shall be provided.
- 1.5.5.4. Each room should be large enough for ease of movement around furniture. Suggested minimums: Master Bedroom: 180 sq. ft. or larger. Other Bedrooms: 144 sq. ft. or larger.
- 1.5.5.5. There shall be an attractive ceiling light or at least one wall-switched outlet provided.

1.5.6. Pastor's Study/Office

- 1.5.6.1. Minimum equipment shall include: desk, desk chair, two side chairs, file cabinet, work table or counter space and a computer system.
- 1.5.6.2. High Speed Internet Service
- 1.5.6.3. Wall to wall carpeting or hardwood floor with area rug shall be provided.
- 1.5.6.4. There shall be an attractive ceiling light or at least one switch controlled outlet provided.

1.5.7. Study/Charge Office Combined

- 1.5.7.1. Shall be located away from family living area, with a separate exterior entrance.
- 1.5.7.2. Shall have minimum combined space of 280 sq. ft. or larger, adequate for two persons to work and for 4 persons to meet. It is preferable that separate office space be provided for the pastor and the secretary.
- 1.5.7.3. Counter/work space shall be provided for copying and storage of related supplies.
- 1.5.7.4. Additional requirements are: a telephone line w/answering machine (separate from the parsonage), bookshelves (10' L X 1' W X 6' H), and enclosed storage for related supplies.
- 1.5.7.5. A half bath shall be provided adjoining or within the study/office area.
- 1.5.7.6. A separate desk and a chair shall be provided for a secretary.
- 1.5.7.7. High Speed Internet service

1.5.8. Family Room

- 1.5.8.1. An enclosed closet with adjustable shelving is recommended.
- 1.5.8.2. Wall to wall carpeting or hardwood floor with area rug shall be provided.
- 1.5.8.3. An attractive ceiling light or at least one wall-switched outlet shall be provided.

1.5.9. Laundry Room

- 1.5.9.1. An automatic washer with water-saving features shall be provided.
- 1.5.9.2. An automatic clothes dryer/ exterior venting shall be provided. (Check local code requirements.)
- 1.5.9.3. There shall be adequate lighting, work space for folding.
- 1.5.9.4. A sink for hand-washed items and an area for ironing is recommended.

2. PROVIDED UTILITIES

- 2.1 Heating costs including cleaning and service [at least annually]
- 2.2. Electricity
- 2.3. Gas (natural or LP)
- 2.4. Sewer Rental
- 2.5. Refuse storage and collection costs at community standard
- 2.6. Water fees
 - 2.6.1. City or private
 - 2.6.2. Private water treatment equipment and supplies
 - 2.6.3. Bottled drinking water, if needed.
- 2.7. Basic private telephone service and equipment (each floor)
- 2.8. TV cable installation or antenna
- 2.9. Functional smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors on each floor
- 2.10. All purpose (ABC) fire extinguishers on each floor

3. MAINTENANCE

3.1. REGULAR

- 3.1.1. The pastor and family may do maintenance when needed, but shall not be required to do it. Materials and supplies shall be provided by the church/charge.
- 3.1.2. Interior painting should be done:
 - 3.1.2.1. every five years
 - 3.1.2.2. or, when walls/trim become stained and cleaning will not restore them
 - 3.1.2.3. or, at the change of pastoral appointment.
- 3.1.3. Discarded items and replaced appliances shall be removed from the parsonage or church property within 3 weeks after replacement.
- 3.1.4. Chimney examination and cleaning shall be done at least annually, especially in the case of fireplace or woodburning stoves.
- 3.1.5. Sewer and septic systems shall be examined and cleaned regularly. (Some areas have specific requirements.)
- 3.1.6. Private water supplies shall be adequate and tested annually for nitrates and coliform bacteria as per the PA Department of Environmental Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommendations.
- 3.1.7. Major renovations/remodeling shall be performed as quickly as possible and coordinated with the pastoral family schedule. If major renovations/remodeling are planned for a moving year, they shall be coordinated with both the outgoing and incoming pastors to minimize the disruption to both families.
- 3.1.8. Have all smoke, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers checked and in proper working order, annually.
- 3.1.9 It is strongly urged that lead testing be done on all parsonages. Results of the testing will be kept in the parsonage records and a copy sent to the appropriate District Superintendent. If tests indicate the presence of lead in paint, dust, or pipes, repairs will be made to bring the parsonage within acceptable standards as provided by the local Health Department[s].
- 3.1.10 We urge inspecting the parsonage for mold. If mold is found, it should be remediated by qualified personnel and underlying cause removed.

3.2. ONGOING

- 3.2.1. The church shall budget funds annually, equal to 1% or 2% of the replacement value of the parsonage, for repairs, renovations, remodeling, or replacement as specified in the annual parsonage inspection. A discretionary parsonage repair fund for the use of the parsonage family is recommended. (A minimum of \$500.00 is suggested.)
- 3.2.2. Surplus funds in the annual budget for repairs shall be kept in escrow for future larger repairs, renovations, or replacement. A line in the annual Parsonage Inspection Report and annual Treasurer's Report shall include the amount spent to date and record of escrow funds.
- 3.2.3. When needed repairs and renovations exceed 10% of the replacement value of the parsonage, the District Board of Church Location and Building shall be consulted before funds are committed to repairs or renovations.

3.3. VERMIN CONTROL

- 3.3.1. Foundation walls, attic eaves, and soffit areas shall be secure to keep out rats, mice, bats, birds and squirrels.
- 3.3.2. Termite and other insects shall be controlled through certified annual inspections and treatment.

4. MOVING CONCERNS

4.1. Responsibilities of outgoing parsonage family at the time of a move:

- 4.1.1. Remove all personal property from the parsonage.
- 4.1.2. Leave the house clean, particularly appliances, closets, cabinets and bathrooms.
- 4.1.3. Remove or arrange for removal of all trash and discarded items.
- 4.1.4. Sanitize the house for pet odors and treat for fleas.
- 4.1.5. Collect all parsonage keys and give them to the incoming pastoral family. Be certain that all keys (church and parsonage) are clearly identified.

4.2. Responsibilities of church/charge at the time of a move:

- 4.2.1. Wash curtains, dry clean drapes and window coverings or replace as needed, and wash all windows.
- 4.2.2. Have all carpets cleaned immediately following the incoming move. Treat hardwood floors as applicable.
- 4.2.3. Have all smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers checked and in proper working order.
- 4.2.4. Have all appliances in good repair and working order.
- 4.2.5. Have all faucets, drains, and drain closures in good working order.
- 4.2.6. Do painting and repairs

5. PROPOSED TIME LINE FOR STANDARDS

All Reasonable Minimum Standards shall be effective with the Susquehanna Conference determining.

5.1. Procedure Recap:

- 5.1.1. Annual inspection by Chairperson of Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations Committee, Chairperson of Board of Trustees, Pastor.
- 5.1.2. Complete Parsonage Inspection and Compliance with Requirements Report.

- 5.1.3. Chairperson of Pastor (Staff) Parish Relations Committee shall report compliance and inspection needs/recommendations to the charge conference via the Parsonage Inspection Report and the Compliance with Requirements Report.
- 5.1.4. Following approval of the Parsonage Inspection Report by the charge conference, recommended repairs and renovations shall be prioritized for completion.
- 5.1.5. The District Superintendent, as needed, may call for a 6 month repairs and compliance progress report.
- 5.2. All parsonages in the conference shall be progressively improved or replaced as quickly as possible in compliance with the Reasonable Minimum Standards.

6. PET CARE

- 6.1. While it is recognized as a right of the parsonage family to have pets, it is also recognized that the ownership of pets requires the pastor and his/her family to assume responsibility for these pets. With regard to the parsonage, this involves the following:
 - 6.1.1. Caring for the pets in a manner approved by the humane society as well as complying with local and state government codes/guidelines related to the maintenance of pets.
 - 6.1.2. Assuming the financial responsibility for and assuming the permission of local church as well as local government agencies (where applicable) with regard to the construction and maintenance of pet facilities, i.e. fence, dog house, etc.
 - 6.1.3. Dismantling and removing any facility constructed by the pastor/family upon his/her reappointment, unless permission is secured from the local church and incoming pastor as to its remaining intact.
 - 6.1.4. Replacing/repairing any damage done by the pets to the carpets, flooring, drapes, doors, lawns, etc., assuming all financial costs by the pastor.
 - 6.1.5. Upon moving, the pastor/family must do a thorough job of cleaning areas where the pet(s) resided, including pest control (fleas most particularly), meeting the approval of the chairpersons of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees.
 - 6.1.6. If the parsonage is not cleaned/deodorized to the satisfaction of the above mentioned chairpersons, the outgoing pastor shall be billed for the cleaning expenses by the local church with the knowledge and support of the Cabinet.
- 6.2. Any non-compliance by the pastor and/or family with the above responsibilities may result in a billing for costs of repairs and/or services to the pastor. If not satisfactorily resolved, disciplinary charges may result.

PURPOSE AND CONTENTS OF PARSONAGE NOTEBOOK

Purpose:

- 1) to enable the parsonage family to keep accurate records of maintenance, repairs and improvements to the parsonage, so they can be documented at any moment.
- 2) to enable the Parsonage Trustees and the Chair of P/SPR Committee to have an accurate record of the maintenance, repairs and improvements on the parsonage, so that a well-planned program will continue.
- 3) to enable the district superintendent to share the notebook with the incoming pastor and family at the time of a pastoral change.
- 4) to enable the incoming pastor and family to become acquainted with the design, the condition and the needs of the parsonage before arriving.
- 5) to enable the incoming pastor and family to be aware of community information to make their arrival more comfortable.

Contents:

- a. **Reasonable Minimum Standards** to guide churches in the construction of new parsonages and the upgrading of present parsonages.
- b. A Parsonage Inspection Flow Chart to guide local church officers, district superintendents and district committees of Church Location and Building clarify responsibilities for the care of parsonages.
- c. A Yearly Parsonage Inspection Chart to guide the Parsonage Trustees and P/SPR Committee in reporting the condition and plans for repairs and improvements to the Charge Conference.
- d. A Parsonage Compliance with Requirements Report which includes all areas in the Yearly Inspection Chart and can be enlarged to be completed as soon as possible and then updated as work is done on the parsonage.
- e. A sample Community Information Sheet, to which other items of interest can be added.
- f. A sample Parsonage Sketch — approximate floor plan and exterior design and photographs.
- g. A Parsonage Inspection Report at the Time of Transition which is to be completed prior to the pastor exiting, so that all responsibilities are cared for when the new pastor arrives.
- h. An inventory of charge-owned furnishings and appliances be kept along with date of purchase and cost.

PARSONAGE INSPECTION REPORT AT THE TIME OF TRANSITION

CHURCH/CHARGE _____

PASTOR _____

ADDRESS _____

DATE OF INSPECTION _____ DATE OF MOVE _____

The pastor and a designated representative of the trustees of the parsonage and a designated representative of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall make an inspection prior to the leaving of the pastor at a time agreed upon.

1. All items belonging to the pastor have been removed from the parsonage property.

Yes ___ No ___

Concerns: _____

2. All areas are clean, including walls, closets, and appliances, etc., and the home is ready to move into: Yes ___ No ___

Concerns: _____

Note: If pets were kept inside, the home should be sanitized of any odors.

3. The cleaning of floors, carpets, etc. (after pastor moves out) will be or have been completed on _____

(date).

4. The following damage was noted and is the responsibility of the exiting pastor:

5. The following items/areas are in need of repair/improvement and are recommended to the Parsonage Trustees:

Pastor _____

Representative of Trustees Representative of PPRC

(Please mail one copy to District Superintendent within one week following move.)