

Guidelines *for*



PASTORAL



TRANSITIONS

Prepared for

Virginia Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Published by
Leadership Development Institute
Board of Laity
2009 Revised Edition

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Take the time to read through this booklet carefully.
2. Become aware of what you are responsible to fulfill. Delegate to others when helpful.
3. Become familiar with what is expected from others in this transitional process.
4. Please remember that this is an extremely busy and stressful time for moving pastors and their families.
5. Laity are encouraged to be supportive and helpful with the pastoral change. Pastors are encouraged to carefully plan ahead and be certain all details are covered.
6. These guidelines are provided to assist both laity and clergy in their planning for transitions. There are many details, but with helpful assistance from all, they should not be overwhelming.
7. Call your District Superintendent if you need help in any way during this time of transition.
8. Note for churches with staff: Usually large churches with staff refer to the “PPR Committee” as the “Staff/Parish Committee”. For simplicity, the term “PPR” is used consistently. When appropriate, you are encouraged to make mental note of this transition in reference to the committee.

AN OPEN LETTER

To: Pastors and Local Church Leaders

The time of transition for pastors creates the most difficult segment of United Methodist ministry. We find ourselves filled with both anticipation and sorrow as established relationships are broken in preparation for "beginning again."

Some have found it helpful through the years to consider transition in ministry as though one is reading an interesting novel. We complete one chapter never knowing what the next has to offer. There is always a sense that the author has prepared some nice surprises to follow. So is the case with our "comings" and "goings" of United Methodist pastors. We trust that the mighty power of God moves with those servants who give their lives in ministry.

As always, there are many and varied moves scheduled for the Virginia Conference. In order for healthy transitions to take place, we all have to work together making certain that lots of details are covered. That is the purpose of this booklet. Both the pastor and the laity are to share these responsibilities in order that it all be accomplished. There are no shortcuts! You should be certain before Conference that everything is in order for the new parsonage residents. For those appointments providing a housing allowance, the "parsonage" portion of this material is not applicable.

This information is being provided for pastors and leaders of churches anticipating a move. If there is also a parsonage committee involved, share the information with the chair of that committee as well. Be in touch with one another and decide how to cover all the responsibilities.

Call your District Superintendent if there are any questions related to this material. It is critical that you be intentional about these transitional issues, and do all possible to enable this to be a good move!

SECTION I

ENDINGS

ON SAYING GOODBYE - ROLE OF THE CHURCH

Saying goodbye in appropriate ways is essential for healthy closure. These guidelines are merely suggestive. You are encouraged to be sensitive, creative and generous in saying goodbye.

1. **Chair of Pastor/Parish Relations Committee:**

The chair of the Pastor/Parish Relations Committee is the primary lay person responsible for insuring a healthy farewell for the pastor/family.

2. **Lay Leader and other Officers:**

The chair of the PPR Committee will consult with the committee and work with the Lay Leader, Trustees, Parsonage Committee and others to plan for a smooth transition.

3. **Ways to be supportive:**

The chair of the PPR Committee is encouraged to stay in close contact with the pastor, finding ways to be supportive. The pastor is the one who will feel the most stress and pressure in the move. It is well to remember that:

- a) Every pastor/family touches certain individuals in very special ways. There are always those who grieve when “their” pastor moves.
- b) Pastors/families also grieve knowing they are leaving loved ones behind.
- c) The Pastor/Parish Relations Committee is responsible to make sure the congregation and pastor are given an opportunity to say goodbye in a meaningful, concrete way. **This event should not be the night before a pastor moves.** Your pastor needs packing and cleaning time. **Consult with the pastor to schedule the time.** In some churches, the United Methodist Women or some other group sponsors this moving event. That’s fine. The committee should make sure some group takes the lead and such an event (i.e. a reception or fellowship meal) is held.
- d) The PPR Committee is the group to think through and communicate, with other church leaders, concerning ways in which to express appreciation for the pastor/family. **If there are children in the pastor’s family, you may want to consider ways in which they can be affirmed. Being the “preacher’s kid” is not always easy!**
- e) Be conscious of some members feeling betrayed or hurt by the pastor’s moving. At times people pull away from the pastor to avoid dealing with the pain of separation.
- f) Pray for wisdom to model for others in the congregation ways of facing grief/anger and dealing with these emotions in a healthy way.
- g) Be sure to celebrate some of the high moments of your life together as a congregation with the pastor. Hopefully there will be times for joyful remembrances and laughter as well as tears!

4. **Informing the Congregation:**

Use your best judgment when deciding how to inform the congregation your pastor is moving. Discuss this with your pastor and District Superintendent. Most likely word has

already spread throughout the community that a change is taking place. The District Superintendent maintains a close contact with the PPR Committee and informs the chair of the Cabinet's decision. The Bishop requests that congregational announcements related to where the pastor is going or who will be coming to your church not be done until the final cabinet meeting in May. After that date, it will be appropriate to provide information in your church publications as well as congregational announcements.

5. Lame Duck:

Please remember that your present pastor is still your pastor until moving day. Do your part in avoiding the problem of the weeks before moving day becoming "lame duck" days.

6. Parsonage Review:

It is often painful for the parsonage family to have people in the church going through the parsonage at different times. **Refer to the document "Policy at the Time of Change of Pastors" located at the back of this transition book.** (If there is no Parsonage Committee organized, then the chair of the PPR Committee is responsible.) You are encouraged to do this with sensitivity but also with honesty. If repairs are needed, work out a schedule for same with the pastor. Try to avoid having members coming in and out of the parsonage as volunteer repair persons. This requires enormous sensitivity: you do not wish to add to the stress of the moving pastor/family, nor do you wish to have a parsonage incomplete for the new pastor/family.

7. Finances:

The chair of the PPR Committee needs to work with the pastor and Finance Committee to make **SURE 50 % OF ALL APPORTIONMENTS, PENSIONS AND SALARIES ARE PAID UP TO DATE THROUGH JUNE 30.** This is **essential.** Failure to do so reflects very negatively on the pastor and congregation. Your present pastor is to be paid in full for the month of June.

8. Goodbye means Goodbye!

Remember that saying goodbye includes an understanding that when the pastor leaves, he/she does not return for pastoral functions. You will have a new pastor for those ministries. Both pastor and laity are encouraged to follow this very important professional procedure. Too often we have new ministry handicapped by this problem.

Celebrate the joys,

forgive the mistakes

and

bid farewell with grace!

ON SAYING GOODBYE - ROLE OF THE PASTOR

The way in which you say goodbye is crucial to both how you will begin your new pastorate and how you will create the environment for your successor. Healthy closure is important for you, your family and congregation. Hopefully you will experience some grief as you prepare to leave. Sometimes there is also relief (and you do not need to feel guilty about that). It is natural to experience excitement as you anticipate your new appointment. Regardless, these weeks before moving will be hectic, full and stressful. You are encouraged to be kind to yourself; to pace yourself so that you can begin your new pastorate with a sense of freshness and energy.

You already know what leaving your pastorate involves. These suggestions are merely reminders. (That's what we do for our congregation every Sunday morning -- invite them to remember what they already know!)

1. **Consulting with PPR Chair:**

Consult fully and frequently with the chair of your PPR Committee regarding all the concerns pertaining to your leaving. It is also well to include at least the Lay Leader in the "loop of information."

2. **Contact your successor:**

Each projected pastor will be invited by the District Superintendent to a "Meet Your Pastor" event. At that time, the projected pastor and his/her family will have an opportunity to meet with the PPR Committee and, also, visit the parsonage. You will need to consult with your present District Superintendent concerning these details.

3. **Share feelings:**

Honestly convey to the chair of your current PPR Committee ways that the congregation can be helpful in the transition. Some pastors/families want help with packing while other pastors/families prefer as much privacy as possible. Share these and other feelings relative to the move with the PPR Committee.

4. **Seeking closure:**

Some pastors will find it helpful to make a list of persons with whom they need to seek closure. A practical way to do this is to list those you want to visit with, eat with, telephone or to whom you want to write a note. Seek closure before you move, for our professional procedures stipulate that we should not return for visits or pastoral duties.

5. **Being sensitive:**

Take the time to reflect on and seek to understand how various ones in the congregation feel about your leaving. Listen with your "inner ear." Some members may tend to be passively aggressive and it is really a reflection of their grief, fear of loss or sense of betrayal that you are now leaving them. This is a time that calls for your finest pastoral graces!

6. **Celebrate!**

Seek to find ways of celebrating the good pieces of your tenure and ministry.

7. Interpret your leaving:

Find ways to interpret to the congregation the appointive process through pastoral letters, newsletters, pulpit and various fellowship occasions. Invite the congregation to rejoice with you in your new opportunity for ministry. Help them to understand that you will not be able to return for visits or pastoral duties, even though it is painful to leave.

8. Informing the PPR Committee:

The District Superintendent will consult with the chair of your present PPR Committee informing them who will follow you. A formal announcement should be made to your congregation, by the chair of your PPR Committee, at an appropriate time established by your District Superintendent.

9. Support for your successor:

Do all that you can to show support for your successor. Tell the congregation that you will cease to be their pastor as of moving day. Do not be misled into believing that the church will fall apart when you leave or that your relationship is so important to former members that you must respond by returning for weddings, funerals or counseling sessions. On moving day, just lay down the pastoral mantle of your present congregation. **Relinquish your keys and your control! Rest your ministry for your present church with God.**

10. Responsibilities relating to the parsonage: (See document at back of booklet)

Remember that the Virginia Conference Cabinet has provided directives for a Parsonage Support Committee be named by the District Superintendent to be on call within each district during this transition time. You are encouraged to invite the Chair of the PPR Committee and a representative of your district Parsonage Support Committee to do a walk-through in the parsonage **as soon as possible** to ascertain what needs to be done in preparation for your leaving and the incoming pastor/family. This can be a painful and difficult exercise but keep in mind that the same procedure is being followed to prepare for you.

11. Be creative:

Discuss with your PPR Committee some of the ways they can prepare for a new pastor--encourage them to be sensitive and creative.

12. No lame duck!

You are the pastor of your present church until you move, and are responsible for what happens on your "watch."

13. Pray!

Above all, pray for patience, sensitivity, understanding and love in working through the transition. God still has a stake in your ministry!

14. Anticipate:

Look to the future with joy and anticipation!

ON SAYING GOODBYE - CHECKLIST FOR PASTORS

This list suggests things to consider as you move. You may have your own checklist that is more useful than this. Nevertheless, please go through this list to be sure all the important items are included on your list.

A. INITIAL PREPARATIONS

- _____ 1. Contact your District Superintendent related to date and details of “Meet Your Pastor” event. Prepare to have your parsonage open for that event. (See Role of Pastor Guidelines)
- _____ 2. Discuss various aspects of moving with PPR Chair.
- _____ 3. Consult with your upcoming PPR Chair, at the time of your “Meet Your Pastor” event, related to making arrangements with a mover. (See moving guidelines sheet.)
- _____ 4. Arrange meeting with Parsonage Committee for parsonage review and inventory.
- _____ 5. Check with treasurer to see that at least 50% of all apportionments are paid prior to your move. This is ESSENTIAL --- contact District Superintendent if there is any shortfall.
- _____ 6. Check with treasurer on paying your full June salary.
- _____ 7. Check with treasurer to see that a certified check (or whatever form of payment is required) is ready for movers of your successor.
- _____ 8. Give definite information to successor as to when you will be out of the parsonage and when he/she should arrange to arrive.
- _____ 9. Send copies of orders of worship, newsletter, pictorial directory, brochures, etc of your church to your successor as soon as possible after “Meet Your Pastor” event.
- _____ 10. Put in writing for your successor all calendar/meetings/weddings/expectations.
- _____ 11. Get change of address cards from Post Office and notify publishers and others of new address.
- _____ 12. Prepare to have someone to greet new pastor/family on moving day with food, flowers, etc. as expressions of welcome and have a check for movers.
- _____ 13. Leave your new address and phone numbers with PPR Chair and new pastor.
- _____ 14. See that parsonage lawn is cut and yard is attractive.

- _____ 15. Utilities (NOTHING IS TO BE TURNED OFF -- DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO INSURE ALL UTILITIES ARE ON FOR NEW PASTOR)
- a. Phone (retain current number for new pastor - ask that service be "suppressed.")
Inform new pastor if he/she is to make contact with telephone company too.
 - b. Electricity
 - c. Water
 - d. Gas
 - e. Trash pick-up
 - f. Cable TV

Note: Give utility companies the date you will move and have them bill you as of that date. (Give them your new address.) Advise companies of the name of your successor and date of move after this information is released by your District Superintendent.

B. SOME FINAL PREPARATIONS

- _____ 16. Arrange for cleaning of parsonage – (see “Checklist for Leaving Parsonage” at back of booklet.
- _____ 17. Leave set of labeled keys for parsonage and church.
- _____ 18. Leave information about mail delivery system.
- _____ 19. Up-date Parsonage Inventory (at back of book) with current information.
- _____ 20. Leave information on service companies to call.
- _____ 21. Identify fuse box locations and provide information on special items like garage door openers, lawn mowers, washers, dryers, etc.
- _____ 22. List of doctors, dentists, etc., that might be immediately helpful.

C. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- _____ 23. List of homebound persons with addresses/phone numbers.
- _____ 24. List of those currently in the hospital and those needing close pastoral care. Explain.
- _____ 25. List of those who have died in past year: date/name/address/phone numbers of remaining families.
- _____ 26. List of members of PPR Committee with phone numbers.

- _____ 27. List of names/phone numbers for church leaders, Chair of Trustees and Administrative Board/Council, etc.
- _____ 28. Current membership list.
- _____ 29. Up-to-date listing of prospective members (Provide information on follow up procedures for first-time visitors).
- _____ 30. List of college students and where.
- _____ 31. Up-to-date records on baptisms, membership, marriages, etc.
- _____ 32. Church calendar with all projected dates.
- _____ 33. Information on welcome plans, receptions, etc. Who are contact persons?
- _____ 34. Provide information on traditions that are unique to your congregation.
- _____ 35. When and how is Holy Communion celebrated?
- _____ 36. Information on ecumenical services in which your church shares participates.
- _____ 37. Information on Charge Conference records, filing system, sources for information, Order of Worship file.
- _____ 38. A history of the church.
- _____ 39. Copies of newsletters for past year.
- _____ 40. Who prepares bulletins and newsletter; information on deadlines.
- _____ 41. Fellowship events celebrated weekly/monthly/yearly.
- _____ 42. Important reports that will be helpful for charge conference and long range planning.
- _____ 43. Copy of financial reports for past 12 months.
- _____ 44. Copy of current budget.

D. CHURCH BUILDING/GROUNDS

- _____ 45. Information on who opens/closes building on Sunday and other days.
- _____ 46. List of instructions regarding lights, fuse box, alarm systems, cooling/heating systems and contact persons/companies if problems.

- _____ 47. Information on who maintains the grounds -- responsible for snow removal, lawn care, etc.
- _____ 48. Who cleans the building and their schedule?
- _____ 49. Pastor's study/office cleaned and proper office furniture in place for successor.

E. PARSONAGE FAMILY

Note: Many of the items concerning the parsonage are addressed under the "Initial" and "Final" preparations section and under Parsonage Information.

- _____ 50. List of nearby neighbors
- _____ 51. List of children/youth in church/neighborhood; (correspondence with children in parsonage family where applicable).
- _____ 52. List of dependable baby sitters, addresses, ages and phone numbers (if child care is probable).
- _____ 53. Helpful information on lawn care, etc.
- _____ 54. Any traditions in the church involving the parsonage such as annual open house, etc.

Note: Feel free to copy this check list. You can assign MANY of these tasks to OTHER persons.

It is helpful to have the information suggested in this check list provided in an orderly fashion in a note book on the pastor's desk at the time of his/her arrival.

It requires work to prepare adequately for our successor. AS PROFESSIONALS, we want to prepare well for he/she who follows us. There is therapeutic value in organizing materials for your successor -- it helps you to feel good about completing your work and good about giving the new pastor vitally important information.

AN ORDER OF FAREWELL TO A PASTOR

This order may be used within a service of worship on the last Sunday before a pastor moves to another congregation or retires, or it may take place at a special service.

As a Response to the Word, the lay leader or another designated leader comes forward and announces that the time has come to say farewell to the pastor.

One or more persons may recall with thanksgiving the pastor's ministry.

A gift or symbol may be given with appropriate words of thanks.

A stole may be left to put on the next pastor.

The pastor and congregation may release one another with these or similar words:

Pastor --

I thank you, the members and friends of Name United Methodist Church, for the love and support you have shown me while I have ministered among you.

I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted.
I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made.
As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

Congregation --

**We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness,
and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere.
We express our gratitude for your time among us.
We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes.
Your influence on our faith and faithfulness
will not leave us with your departure.**

Pastor --

I accept your gratitude and forgiveness, and I forgive you, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God. I release you from turning to me and depending on me. I encourage your continuing ministry here and will pray for you and for your new pastor, Name.

The pastor may pray extemporaneously, or the pastor and congregation may join in the following prayer:

Eternal God, whose steadfast love for us is from everlasting to everlasting, we give you thanks for cherished memories and commend one another into your care as we move in new directions. Keep us one in your love forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A hymn may be sung.

(Reference: United Methodist Book of Worship, 1992)

SECTION II

BEGINNINGS

ON SAYING WELCOME! THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH

The kind of welcome that is extended the incoming pastor/family often sets the tone for the relationship that will exist between pastor and congregation. It is difficult to adequately prepare a farewell for one pastor/family and at the same time prepare to welcome the new pastor/family. This is uniquely United Methodist! Yet, as challenging as it may be, it is essential that both the "letting go" and the "embracing" be equally fulfilled. Above all, feel free to be creative and to plan to make the welcome one of joy and real excitement.

Following are some guidelines to assist you in welcoming the new pastor/family. The primary responsibility for this rests with the chair/members of the PPR Committee.

1. PPR/Chair:

The chair of the PPR Committee is encouraged to stay in touch with your District Superintendent.

2. PPR Committee:

After the April Cabinet Meeting, the District Superintendent will be establishing a "Meet Your Pastor" gathering with the PPR Committee and incoming pastor. At this time the new pastor will be visiting the parsonage and church/churches of the new appointment. The goal in all of this is to give the new pastor/family a real sense of welcome! It is not recommended that people from your church go to visit the new pastor at his/her present church.

3. Extend an early welcome!

Encourage some of the church leaders to write notes/letters of welcome to the new pastor/family after the formal announcement is made to the congregation.

4. Remember the children:

If there are children/youth in the incoming pastor's family, consider ways to help them feel welcome. You are encouraged to think creatively. Prepare for entertainment during early days.

5. Formal announcement:

The PPR Committee chair needs to be responsible for an article announcing the appointment of the new pastor in the local newspaper(s) a few days prior to the coming of the pastor.

6. Welcome reception?

The PPR Committee Chair should discuss with the incoming pastor plans to welcome his/her family. This can include such things as a reception, fellowship gathering, neighborhood groups, etc.

7. Moving plans:

The PPR chair needs to discuss with the incoming pastor plans involving moving day schedule, etc. (see Guidelines for Moving, page 21).

8. First Sunday:

The PPR chair needs to be the primary contact person relative to the first Sunday. Discuss your role in terms of presenting the pastor/family to the congregation. Mutually agree how

this will be done in the context of worship/reception/order of worship, parish newsletter, etc. (See "An Order for The Celebration of an Appointment" Pg. 18.)

9. PPR meeting with new pastor:

Discuss with the incoming pastor a date for your first PPR Committee meeting. It is important for the PPR Committee to meet with the pastor within the first couple of weeks. One of the suggestions for this first meeting is to use the "Expectations of the Pastor's Role" (see next page). This allows for understandings to be clear. This instrument then becomes the basis for review of the pastor's ministry in the months ahead.

Also, be sure a clear understanding is established regarding office hours, time off, etc. Support your pastor in the discipline of keeping regular hours so as to be available to the congregation, as well as time for personal replenishment. It is helpful to interpret to the congregation that pastors are generally heavily committed on weekends and need to take time off during the week.

In that first meeting, discuss with your pastor any understanding you have about policies relating to weddings, funerals, etc. Share church goals with the pastor. In the first meeting, go over the pastor's compensation and pay periods. Be clear about such things as utility bills, purchase/payment of office supplies, etc.

Set dates for future meetings; you may want to meet more frequently the first year.

Remind members of the PPR Committee that they serve as the primary listening and support group for the pastor.

10. Vacation plans:

Discuss vacation time immediately. Remember that since the United Methodist Church has an itinerant ministry, if the pastor has not had a vacation prior to the move then it is appropriate and important to enjoy a vacation before the end of the year. (There are vacation and continuing education policies established by the Cabinet. Consult with your D.S. for details.)

11. Church leaders' meeting:

Consider arranging a meeting of the Lay Leader and persons from various groups in the church with the new pastor. This might be a dinner or an informal gathering.

Hopefully the new pastor will not be put in a position of needing to make major decisions during his/her first few weeks. This beginning time ought to provide opportunities for getting to know the congregation.

12. Congregation understanding:

Discuss ways of encouraging the congregation to welcome the new pastor and to be patient as he/she learns names/traditions of the church.

Please remember that these are not rules but suggestions to stimulate your thinking. You have a sacred trust. Pray for wisdom and insight.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PASTOR'S ROLE – FOR PPR COMMITTEE

To be used with the new pastor at first meeting of PPR Committee.

How important is each pastoral function to you? On the line in front of each statement, write the number 6 if you think the function is extremely important, 1 if you think it is extremely unimportant. Otherwise rank the responsibility as 2, 3, 4 or 5 as you estimate it somewhere in-between.

- _____ 1. Works with adults in adult religious education classes and/or special seminar series, etc.
- _____ 2. Participates in community projects and organizations, such as service clubs, United Way, etc.
- _____ 3. Ministers to the sick, dying and bereaved.
- _____ 4. Leads corporate worship.
- _____ 5. Works with congregational boards and committees.
- _____ 6. Maintains a disciplined program of prayer and personal devotion.
- _____ 7. Accepts speaking engagements before community and civic groups, for special community occasions or radio/TV
- _____ 8. Oversees church office activities, church bulletins, correspondence, records, etc.
- _____ 9. Tries to maintain harmony and resolve conflict among church members over church programs, finances and elections.
- _____ 10. Prepares and preaches sermons.
- _____ 11. Visits new residents and recruits new members.
- _____ 12. Counsels with persons about their personal problems.
- _____ 13. Follows a disciplined program of continuing education.
- _____ 14. Works with children, visits children's Sunday school classes, gives children's sermons.
- _____ 15. Assists victims of social neglect, injustice, and prejudice; cooperates with social services and charitable programs.

- _____16. Works with youth (junior and senior high) in classes and/or fellowship groups.
- _____17. Administers baptism and communion, conducts weddings and funerals.
- _____18. Cultivates a home and personal life with some friends and interests outside local church activities.
- _____19. Leads financial drives and building programs.
- _____20. Talks with individuals about their spiritual development, religious life and beliefs.
- _____21. Participates in denominational activities and conferences beyond the local church.
- _____22. Presents denominational programs to the congregation.
- _____23. Helps plan church budget and helps oversee church finances.
- _____24. Fosters fellowship at church gatherings.
- _____25. Serves as an example of high moral and ethical character.
- _____26. Maps out objectives and helps plan over-all church strategy and programs.
- _____27. Involves capable people in church activities, recruits and enables lay leadership.
- _____28. Visits regularly in the homes of the membership.
- _____29. Counsels people facing major decisions of life, such as marriage.
- _____30. Suggests new ideas for activities and church programs.
- _____31. Promotes enthusiasm for church ministry efforts.
- _____32. Gives oversight to the Sunday school program of the church.
- _____33. Leads confirmation classes for youth and adults.

Now that you have completed the questionnaire, please go back and draw a circle around the number of the five functions that you consider most important. Discuss the outcome with one another and your pastor.

ON BEGINNING AGAIN! THE ROLE OF THE NEW PASTOR

Most of you know what it means to "begin again". And hopefully you feel good about your new appointment. That will make it much easier. You also know how to make a smooth transition, so the suggestions here are minimal reminders.

1. Become familiar with laity expectations:

Please take the time to read what is being asked of the laity in this booklet.

2. Have you been contacted?

Has your projected District Superintendent arranged for your involvement in a "Meet Your Pastor" event? If not, inquire with your present Superintendent about Cabinet plans.

3. Remember your family!

Remember, if you have family, schedule time to be with them. Often pastors have a ready group of people with whom relationships will develop and fresh challenges will be met. However, in this time of stress and transition, one's own spouse/child may suffer loneliness.

4. Expect grief:

Do not be surprised if you suddenly miss your former congregation more than you thought you would. The familiarity and comfort of your former church may control your thoughts during the early days of your move.

5. You are still a stranger:

Remember: This new congregation does not love you yet nor should it be expected to. More likely they love your predecessor. We are not called to be loved BUT to love and serve. Serving others with compassion, sensitivity, openness and competence will win their respect. The love will come later!

6. Meeting with PPR Committee:

Once you move, arrange a meeting as soon as possible with the PPR Committee and discuss the document on Pages 14-15.

7. Moving plans:

Be clear with PPR chair and your predecessor concerning your plans for arrival on moving day. Discuss with the chair of the PPR Committee your feelings about the best way and time to be introduced to the congregation. Arrive at a mutual agreement. You may wish to consider the "Order for the Celebration of An Appointment" during your first service. (See Pages 18-19.)

8. Basic commandment:

Remember the fundamental commandment: "Speak no ill of your predecessor."

9. Parsonage ready?

Every effort is being made for the parsonage to be ready for you when you arrive. If there are problems, deal with them thoughtfully and avoid unnecessary disputes. If there are major problems, please call the District Superintendent who will be prepared to deal with your concerns.

10. Things to remember:

Some things to bear in mind as you begin your new pastorate:

Do not lose heart.

You come to love more than to be loved.

You seek to understand more than to be understood.

You are willing to listen even if not heard.

Never lose your nerve!

Affirm everyone and everything you can.

Pray. And pray some more.

HAVE FUN!

AN ORDER FOR THE CELEBRATION OF AN APPOINTMENT

This order is intended primarily for use within a corporate service of worship. It may be led by the chairperson of the PPR Committee or by some other designated leader in the congregation.

Before the reading of the Scripture lessons, the minister comes before the Lord's Table with the chair of the PPR Committee or Lay Leader, saying to the congregation:

"Dear friends, today we welcome (Name), who has been appointed to serve as minister of (name of church).

We believe that (he/she) is well qualified and has been prayerfully and wisely appointed."

The person officiating then says to the minister:

"(Name), you have committed yourself to live among us as a bearer of the Word of God; minister of the sacraments; and sustainer of love, order, and discipleship of the people of God."

The minister responds:

"Today I reaffirm this commitment in the presence of this congregation."

The person officiating says to the congregation:

"Brothers and sisters in Christ, as a people committed to participate in the ministries of the church by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service, will you who celebrate this new beginning support and uphold (Name) in these ministries?"

The congregation responds:

"We have committed ourselves, and we reaffirm our commitment."

The person officiating continues:

"Let us pray.

Eternal God, strengthen and sustain us in our ministries together, with (Name) as our (pastor or other staff position). Give (him/her) and us patience, courage, and wisdom so to care for one another and challenge one another that together we may follow Jesus Christ, living together in love, and offering our gifts and talents in your service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

As the minister stands at the Lord's Table, several people come forward to make presentations. As these are received, the minister places them on the table. Other presentations may be made while some listed here may be omitted, as deemed appropriate depending on the staff position of the newly appointed person. (Other suggestions in the Book of Worship.)

Presenter: (Pastor's Name), accept this Bible, and be among us as one who proclaims the Word.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), take this water, and baptize new Christians in this place.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), take this bread and cup, and keep us in communion with Christ and his Church.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), receive this hymnal, and guide us in our prayer and praise.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), receive this stole, and shepherd us as a pastor.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), receive this *Book of Discipline*, and strengthen our connections as United Methodists.

Minister: Amen.

Presenter: (*Pastor's Name*), receive this globe, and lead us in our mission to the community and the world.

Minister: Amen.

Minister: Let us pray.

Minister and Congregation pray together:

Lord God, bless the ministries of your church. We thank you for the variety of gifts you have bestowed upon us. Draw us together in one Spirit, that each of us may use our differing gifts as members of one body. May your Word be proclaimed with faithfulness, and may we be doers of your Word and not hearers only. As we who have died and risen with Christ in baptism gather at his table and then scatter into the world, may we be one in service to others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

(Reference: United Methodist *Book of Worship*, 1992)

SECTION III

GUIDELINES/ RESOURCES

PARSONAGE/MOVING GUIDELINES - FOR THE CHURCH

The PPR 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. Policy at the Time of Change of Pastor: (See document at back of booklet)

This policy is in cooperation with your District Superintendent. Contact her / him.

2. Moving day:

Moving day is Wednesday following the last Sunday in June. Check with your District Superintendent on specific details. Several suggestions may help in dealing with this:

- a) Visit the parsonage weeks before the move and schedule with present pastor when certain repairs can be done.
- b) 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 its being a good move and on schedule, etc.
- c) Chair of PPR 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.
- d) 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, arrange for playmates at someone's house while the parents unpack.
- e) 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 often church emergencies that must receive attention.
- f) 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!

3. Parsonage Standards: (See document at back of booklet)

There is a brochure of parsonage standards as required by the Annual Conference. This document is contained at the back of this booklet.

Reviewed and updated by Cabinet, July 2007

Virginia Annual Conference Guidelines for Moving Expenses

A charge, district, or conference agency receiving a new clergy shall be responsible for all his/her moving expenses under the following provisions:

1. A maximum weight limit as weighed in the van of 16,000 lbs. Charges for moving goods over 16,000 lbs shall be the responsibility of the clergy.
2. A maximum allowance for cartons and packing of \$500.
3. A limit of \$125 for piano handling.
4. Where there is a pastor's study at the church and extra stops must be made by the mover for loading and unloading books or office equipment, a maximum allowance of not more than \$165.
5. Seminarian entering the Virginia Conference from outside the conference shall be entitled to the moving expenses listed above with the limitation that the maximum total reimbursement shall be \$4000.
6. Clergy other than seminarians entering the Virginia Conference from outside the Conference shall be entitled to the moving expenses listed above with the limitation that mileage-based moving expenses shall be based on the distance from the appropriate boundary of the Conference to the place of appointment.
7. Insurance (replacement value equivalency) shall be provided by the receiving church/charge for personal injury or damage to clergy family property during the move. The matter of additional insurance on furnishings above that provided by the hauler shall be the responsibility of the persons moving.
8. If more economical, moves of less than 30 miles shall be arranged at the hourly rate.
9. The Cabinet will review annually the costs of moving and update the moving allowances as necessary.
10. All churches/charges should build a moving expense fund by annual appropriations for moving expenses regardless of which year the move may be expected to occur. The Cabinet strongly urges churches/charges to budget an amount equal to 1/6 of the most recent move.
11. All moving of clergy will be done professionally and in a responsible manner.
12. Clergy are expected to secure at least two estimates for comparison. Moving estimates must be submitted to the S/PPRC of the receiving church in a prompt manner. Clergy are expected to exercise reasonable standards of stewardship when determining what items to keep/move or dispose. Unless there are physical limitations all clergy are responsible for packing of books, linens and general household effects. The new relationship between clergy and receiving congregations has a much better chance of success if the clergy family avoids the appearance of entitlement.
13. Additional information on "moving tips" is posted on the conference web site.

PARSONAGE GUIDELINES - FOR THE INCOMING PASTOR

The parsonage can be a wonderful place where you are received graciously. It can also be a place where you feel out of control and discounted. You can easily feel out of control and discounted. You can easily feel patronized by the parsonage system. And yet many times, as you know, it affords a comfortable, convenient place that is made ready with food and flowers for you without any investment of energy in finding a place to rent or buy. Notwithstanding, implications of parsonage life can be very stressful.

Please read over the guidelines and expectations for the church and be clear about your own responsibilities as defined by the Annual Conference.

1. **Find Out From Your District Superintendent the Exact Day 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 PPR Committee on what to expect and what will be satisfactory.
3. **Moving arrangements:**
You are encouraged to make your own moving arrangements in consultation with the PPR chair. This allows you more control in the selection of movers and scheduling. Obviously, you will want to be good financial stewards in this matter. Please refer to the "*Virginia Annual Conference Guidelines for Moving Expenses*" in this booklet. (Page 21)
4. **Inform Chair of PPR Committee:**
Inform the chair of your new PPR Committee of your moving arrangements, expected costs, form of payment and scheduled arrival time.
5. **Furnishings for which**
 - **you are responsible**
 - **church is responsible**(See document at back of booklet)

CHILDREN AND YOUTH GUIDELINES

WELCOME THE CHILDREN

If you are receiving a new pastor you may also be receiving new children into your faith community. It is very important that you welcome the children by making a special place in your church and your hearts.

Get to Know the Child

Before your new parsonage family arrives get to know the children of the family. A simple biographical sheet can be mailed to the incoming family asking for name, age, date of birth, year in school of each child in the family and it should include a "tell-me-about-you" paragraph accompanied by a snapshot of the child. This can be shared with staff parish, church school classes, youth groups and the whole congregation. Having this in hand will make those first introductions very personal and meaningful.

Understand the Trauma of Moving

The first Sunday at a new church can be terrifying for a child/youth and it is our responsibility to ease the transition. It should be expected that children and youth might express some of their anxiety and frustration at moving time. This is not the time to expect "model children" it is rather a time to be model of Christ unconditional love as we try to aid in the transition, allowing the children and youth to find their own place in their own time in their new home.

Greet the Child

Church School teachers and youth groups leaders should make a visit to the parsonage soon after moving day before the first Sunday to meet the children/youth and to welcome them, telling them about the activities their new church has for them. Give a tour of the church so the children can see their classrooms, playgrounds, and youth rooms. Have someone designated to escort them to class on the first Sunday. A youth group get-together before the first Sunday can be a great welcoming event for a new youth. Include the children/youth in the service of reception of your new pastor by personal introductions letting them know how special it is to have them be a part of their new church. Be personal, attentive and welcoming. Don't let the children get lost in all the attention lavished on the new pastor.

Prepare A Child/Youth Guide to the Community

Introduce the new family to the school system, pre-schools, childcare, summer enrichment and athletic programs, doctors and library. Prepare phone numbers, make personal introductions and invite the children to attend special events.

Prepare Your Parsonage

Make sure the parsonage is child friendly and ready for the family to begin daily living with children. A clean, welcoming home where children can begin to get settled the first day in their new home says to the child “you are cared for and cherished here.” Never underestimate how important this is in easing the transition for families.

Keep The Welcome Welcoming

Remember it may be just as hard the second or third Sunday for the children to feel welcome and at home in their new church as it was the first. Be sensitive to each child’s need to be reminded that their new church family welcomes them. Soon they will find their place but give them lots of extra attention until they do. A phone call just for the children/youth in family from church leaders, a card, a remembered birthday can all contribute the “at home feeling”.

The best gift you can give your new pastor, if he/she has children, is to love the children by welcoming them into your fellowship and finding a special place for them in the life of the church giving them a sense of belonging.

Pastoral Transitions for Large Church Lead Pastors

(Suggested by the Virginia Conference Large Church Lead Pastor Committee)

1. SPRC should plan public experiences of closure for the departing large church lead pastor and entry for the arriving large church lead pastor (see pages 11 and 18 for suggestions).
2. Newly appointed lead pastors should:
 - a. Give attention to self-care and spiritual renewal.
 - b. Develop peer support with lead pastors serving in similar-sized appointments. Accountable Reimbursement funds and MEF funds would be appropriate to use to cover expenses of a qualified coach or therapist. He or she could assist in dealing with issues of closure, grief, or other related matters.
 - c. Attend to multi-staff issues including their oversight.
 - d. Take advantage of large church training opportunities (for example, the fall UM First-Time Senior Pastor training offered by the General Board of Discipleship).
 - e. Conduct pre-arrival research and information gathering. Appropriate sources are District Superintendent, Conference Journals, and Congregational and Community Profiles accessible through the Conference Colts website, and other community profiles/resources available through the Conference Congregational Development Office
 - f. Develop a preaching plan for initial sermons based on needs of the church and his/her vision for ministry.
 - g. Invest a significant amount of time listening, building relationships and trust. Careful listening enables the pastor to seek evidence to confirm or refute first impressions and discoveries related to pre-arrival research.
3. The role of the District Superintendent is critical in creating a smooth transition. The transition process includes:
 - a. The district superintendent articulates in writing the expectations of the Bishop/Cabinet and the local church for this appointment with the incoming pastor.
 - b. The “Meet your Pastor” meeting occurs between incoming Pastor and the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee.
 - c. The district superintendent facilitates a meeting between the incoming and outgoing pastors.
 - d. The district superintendent makes sure that there is a meeting with incoming pastor and staff.
 - e. The district superintendent makes sure that relevant documents such as church policies and procedure manuals are shared with the incoming pastor.
 - f. The district superintendent stays in touch with incoming pastor to deal with issues related to housing, family, spouse needs, etc.
 - g. In churches with worship attendance over 350, it is recommended that the Bishop meets with the incoming pastor to go over expectations, the context, and culture of the upcoming appointment.

4. SPRC and transitioning pastors should consult with the district superintendent regarding creative spacing between departing and arriving large church lead pastors during the transition.
5. Transitioning large church lead pastors should consider seeking out peer support, therapy if needed, or contracting with a coach. The Conference web site and word of mouth are two suggested sources of referrals.
6. The large church lead pastor should make every attempt to be sensitive to the needs and emotions of her/his family. Suggested areas to be attentive to include establishing healthy boundaries, immediately establishing a healthy balance of professional and personal responsibilities, and immediately establishing a healthy lifestyle.
7. All newly appointed large church lead pastors (worship attendance of 350 or more) are expected to attend a “Just-in-Time Training”. This training is a two day retreat held annually in May. Detailed information may be obtained from the district superintendent, Assistant to the Bishop, or Office of Ministerial Services.

ATTACHED

DOCUMENTS

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE PARSONAGE INVENTORY

DATE: _____

A. GENERAL

Charge: _____

Directions for finding the Parsonage: _____

Mailing Address of Parsonage: _____

Parsonage Telephone Number: _____ Church Telephone Number(s) _____

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

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 | | |
| Carpport | 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 labeled? ___; Location: _____
4. Water Shutoff Valve(s): Please provide location(s): _____

D. PARSONAGE FACILITIES AND APPLIANCES

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

E. STORAGE AREAS (Check and Describe As Applicable)

1. Attic. Attic Reached by Fixed Stairs ___; Attic Reach 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? _____.

H. INVENTORY OF FURNISHINGS AND EQUIPMENT (Add Additional Sheets As Necessary)

[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 | | |
| | | |
| | | |
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| | | |
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| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

SIGNATURES:

Chairperson, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Chairperson, Trustees

Pastor

Date _____

CHECKLIST FOR LEAVING PARSONAGE

Give a copy of this completed form to Chair of Trustees, Chair of Pastor Parish Relations Committee, Chair of Parsonage Committee, and the District Superintendent. Please refer to the "Policy at the Time of Change of Pastors" for details on who is responsible for the items below.

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 its 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 its 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) _____

Bedrooms

Mattress and Box Springs (Vacuum and clean) _____

Mattress Covers - wash (replace if needed) _____

(If worn or uncomfortable, report to Trustees)

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 Shrubby _____

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.

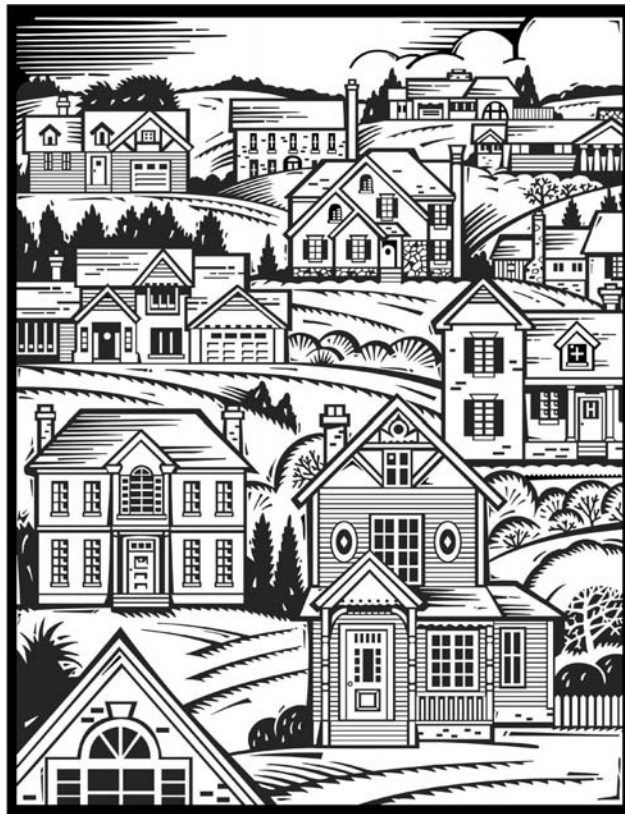
Date _____

Pastor _____

Parsonage Committee Chair _____

P/SPR Committee Chair _____

Minimum Standards for the Parsonage and Policy at the Time of Change of Pastors



**Virginia Annual Conference
The United Methodist Church**

Virginia United Methodist Center
10330 Staples Mill Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060
804-521-1100 or 1-800-768-6040



MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE PARSONAGE

The *2008 Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church states that the Church Council shall “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.” (§252.4e)

The Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee also has consultative power and responsibilities for the parsonage (§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.

I. The House

A. Ownership

The parsonage is acquired and maintained by the charge, subject to the direction of the Charge Conference. The location, purchase, and/or building of a parsonage must be approved by

the District Board of Church Location and Building. (§2543)

B. Title to Property

The parsonage property must be held by the charge Board of Trustees in trust for the use and occupancy of pastors in the United Methodist Church. (§2503.2)

C. Location

The parsonage of a station church should be located within the geographical parish of the church. The parsonage of a charge should be near the center of the charge and accessible to members. It should be convenient to a school, a shopping area, and church of the charge. Preferably parsonages should not be located immediately adjacent to the church, so that the pastor's family will be ensured reasonable privacy. Such location also facilitates resale.

D. Planning and Financing

The purchase or building plan must be approved by the Charge Conference after ten days' notice of the meeting. The pastor, district superintendent, and the district Board of Church Location and Building must consent to the purchase. Provisions of the *Discipline* must be observed. The sale or relocation must conform to guidelines in the *Discipline*.

E. Administration

The *Discipline* requires the Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee to see that the Trustees provide adequate and comfortable residence for the pastor and maintain its proper upkeep and furnishings. "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" (§2532.4 and §258.2g(16)). The pastor's family should be consulted in the selection of equipment, fixtures, and color schemes. (See Annual Review Inventory Form). The Annual Review Inventory Report shall be submitted to the District Superintendent and will be reviewed by the Parsonages' Support Committee.

The Trustees' annual budget should be adequate to provide maintenance of the parsonage and necessary replacement of furnishings for which the Trustees have responsibility.

Since insurance carried by the church will not cover personal effects of the parsonage family, the family is urged to secure a tenant's policy.

F. Inventory

A complete inventory of all furnishings, and equipment shall be maintained, one copy with the Pastor-Staff Parish Relations Committee and/or the Trustees, a second copy with the parsonage family, and a third copy for the district superintendent attached to the Annual Review Inventory. This inventory should include the purchase date of items listed, purchase price, and any major repair work done on each. Condition of furnishings at the time of the annual review should be noted. (See Parsonage Inventory Form.)

II. House Arrangement and Equipment

A. Minimum Size

The living room shall measure at least 280 square feet; or living and dining room

combination shall be 330 square feet. Bedrooms shall measure no less than 144 square feet each, with one not less than 168 square feet.

B. Rooms

The parsonage should have a minimum of seven rooms: at least three bedrooms with ample closet space in each, living room, dining room, kitchen, study (if not furnished outside the parsonage), at least 1 ½ baths, and ample dry storage space large enough for major pieces of furniture and large packing boxes. An additional bedroom, a family room, a utility room, and a garage are also desirable.

If a pastor's office is included, it should be on the first floor with an outside entrance or entry from front hall or both or on the terrace level with outside entry. Usual office furnishings, telephone, bookshelves, and a storage closet for supplies should be provided.

Newly constructed or newly purchased parsonages shall include on the ground floor level one room which could be used as a bedroom by a person with a handicapping condition, a fully accessible bathroom, and laundry facilities. (§2543.3b)

C. Housing Necessities

- Central heating plant
- Complete insulation, including weather stripping, storm windows, ceiling, sidewall and floor insulation. Carpeting is desirable as a further means of insulation.
- Central air conditioning is desirable everywhere, and a necessity in some areas of the conference.
- Annual servicing of all heating and air conditioning equipment.
- At least one telephone jack on each floor.
- Dead bolt locks on all exterior doors.
- Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- Housing must be maintained free of health hazards.
- Exterminator/pest control service and an annual termite inspection.
- All major appliances, including washer, dryer, stove, refrigerator, automatic hot water heater.
- Kitchen: sink, built-in cabinets, a storage or supply closet, counter work surfaces, adequate electrical outlets properly grounded. Where possible, a garbage disposal and dishwasher should be provided.
- At least one telephone permanently in the house.

D. Furnishings and Maintenance

1. Provided by the Church/Charge

- Furniture for the parsonage living room, foyer, dining room, and kitchen shall be provided. If a parsonage has more than three bedrooms, the church/charge shall provide furnishings for all bedrooms over three. All parsonage wall-to-wall floor coverings or rugs shall be furnished by the church/charge. Regular professional cleaning shall be the responsibility of the church/charge for all living spaces furnished by church/charge.

- Window shades or blinds shall be provided in all rooms. Window treatments, and the responsibility for their maintenance/cleaning, shall be provided for the living room, dining room, and foyer.
- Adequate light fixtures/lamps shall be provided for all living spaces furnished.

2. Provided by the Pastor

- Furniture as desired for all rooms except living room, foyer, dining room, kitchen, and bedrooms more than three.
- Window treatments as desired for rooms other than living room, foyer, and dining room, as well as their maintenance/cleaning.
- Bed, bath, and kitchen linens.
- Cookware, utensils, and small appliances.
- China, crystal/glassware, flatware.
- Additional accessories such as pictures, lamps, family pieces, etc. which personalize a home.

E. Exterior

- Trees and shrubbery should be provided where needed.
- Landscaping and normal fertilization shall be the responsibility of the church/charge.
- Cutting of the lawn and trimming of the shrubs is the responsibility of the residents.
- A lawn mover, adequate for the size of the lawn, shall be provided by the church/charge.
- A TV antenna or cable hook-up should be provided.

III. General Guidelines

A. Privacy and Care

Since the parsonage is the home of the pastor and his/her family, their rights and privacy should be respected by the congregation. The occupants must ensure that the parsonage receives proper care.

B. Gifts

A written statement should accompany any gift of furniture or furnishings, designating whether the gift is to permanently remain at the parsonage or is a personal gift to the pastor's family. Gifts shall be received without conditions and with right of refusal.

C. Placement of Furniture

Use and placement of church-owned furnishings within the parsonage shall be at the discretion of the parsonage occupants.

D. When a move occurs, refer to the "Policy at the Time of Change of Pastors".



POLICY AT THE TIME OF CHANGE OF PASTORS

I. The Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee will supply to the district superintendent the list of people serving on the “Local Church Parsonage Committee” with the chairperson’s address and telephone number.

II. The district superintendent will contact the chairperson of the “Local Church Parsonage Committee” asking that the committee meet at the parsonage with the pastor, pastor’s spouse (if applicable), and if requested by the district superintendent, a representative from the Parsonages Support Committee to inspect the parsonage, using the following guidelines:

- A. Check complete inventory (see Inventory for Leaving the Parsonage).
- B. Inspect each room for needed repairs, refurbishing, paint, etc. with attention to who is accountable beyond normal wear and tear.
- C. Inspect electrical, heating, cooling, and plumbing systems.
- D. Evaluate conditions of structure, inside and outside, including church-owned furnishings, appliances, and systems.
- E. Pastor shall provide information about condition of appliances and systems known only to occupant.

III. After parsonage inspection by the “Local Church Parsonage Committee” and the pastor:

A. The Committee will:

- Work with the Church Council to arrange for needed repairs, refurbishing, painting, etc.
- Floors cleaned and waxed, rugs shampooed.
- Keep the district superintendent informed concerning condition of the parsonage.
- Inspect parsonage again nearer moving time.
- Check the Parsonage Inventory with the parsonage family before their departure, and with the new parsonage family upon their arrival.
- Have a representative of the Committee at the parsonage as the parsonage family moves.
- Make necessary last minute corrections to the parsonage before the new family arrives.

- Make sure that all utilities remain connected, the deposit for public utilities having been made by the church/charge.

B. The pastor will:

- Leave the parsonage clean. The outgoing parsonage family is responsible for leaving the house and furnishings clean and in move-in condition. This means at least:
 - No items should be left in storage areas (attic, garage, basement, shed, closets, etc.)
 - Windows washed.
 - Refrigerator emptied and cleaned.
 - Bathrooms scrubbed.
 - Stoves and vent hoods thoroughly cleaned.
 - Fireplace cleaned.
 - Yard trimmed and mowed.
 - All garbage removed from the property.

(See “Inventory for Leaving Parsonage” form.)

- Have repaired or cleaned at his/her expense, any damage due to negligence and/or pets.
- Assure uninterrupted utility service for the incoming pastor. Utilities should be in the church’s name, with the parsonage address, to avoid termination of services.
- The parsonage family shall leave for the successor: a list of whom to call in case of.....; how to fix.....; where to find.....; and a file of guarantees, operating instructions, manuals, etc.

IV. In those instances when a clergy moves out of a parsonage and leaves the house inadequately cleaned and/or damaged, and the parsonage requires work, the expense of which is clearly the responsibility of the outgoing clergy, then the expense for such cleaning/repair shall be billed to the outgoing minister.

- A. The “Local Church Parsonage Committee” and two members of the Parsonages Support Committee shall inspect the parsonage on moving day or as soon thereafter as possible and decide how much of the required cleaning/repair work, if any, is the responsibility of the outgoing pastor.
- B. The outgoing pastor shall be notified immediately by telephone and registered mail. The decision should be communicated to the pastor immediately, and if the pastor be deemed wholly or partially responsible, then the cleaning/repair bill should be sent to the outgoing pastor.
- C. If, after 30 days, this bill is not paid, or arrangements made to pay it, a second notice shall be sent. If, by the end of 45 days, the bill remains unpaid, a copy of the bill and the reasons for it shall be sent to the minister’s current district superintendent for assistance in securing payment.

1. Updated by the Cabinet of the Virginia Annual Conference, July 2002.
Discipline references updated December 2009.