

WHEN APPOINTMENTS CHANGE

**Suggestions for
Pastors and Staff/Pastor- Parish
Relations Committees**

**Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference
The United Methodist Church**

(Updated 2022)

WHEN APPOINTMENTS CHANGE

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CONSULTATION

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

- 1) The District Superintendent meets with the S/PPR Committee to get information and feelings about the kind of pastor needed for the church.
- 2) The Cabinet (the Bishop and the four district superintendents), using the church profile, the information from the S/PPR Committee and their own judgment, acts as a screening committee and decides on the best possible available appointment.
- 3) A District Superintendent consults with the pastor about a specific appointment.
- 4) After the pastor has been consulted about the pending appointment, the District Superintendent consults with the S/PPR Committee using the profile that the clergy has written and the Cabinet’s reasons for making this appointment.
- 5) After the District Superintendent has consulted with the S/PPR Committee on the appointment, a meeting is arranged with the S/PPR Committee and the new pastor. The District Superintendent will be present if possible. The purpose of this meeting is to allow the pastor and the committee to get acquainted and to begin to lay the groundwork for the transition from one pastor to another. Immediately following this meeting, both the S/PPR chair and the pastor will give the District Superintendent their responses to this initial meeting together.
- 6) Following the agreement by both the pastor and the S/PPR Committee, the District Superintendent will authorize an appropriate announcement to the congregation of the intention of the Bishop to make this appointment at Annual Conference. This, for practical purposes, is the appointment, though technically speaking it is not final until the Bishop reads it at the Annual Conference.

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SUGGESTIONS TO THE S/PPR COMMITTEE

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

- 1) The S/PPR Committee and the present pastor should consult together on what may need to be done to the parsonage to prepare it for the new pastor. If any redecorating is done, please invite the new parsonage family to participate in choosing colors, etc.
- 2) Be sure the pastor’s study is clean and ready for occupancy when the new pastor arrives.

- 3) Work with the current pastor to facilitate easy transition at the parsonage with the utility companies.
- 4) See that the local newspapers and other media are given information around July 1, about the new pastor.
- 5) On the day the new pastor arrives, have a committee present to welcome him/her and to assist in the process of moving in.
- 6) Alert the lay leader (or someone designated by her/him) to be available on the new pastor's first Sunday to introduce him/her to the congregation. There are some liturgies available which welcome and celebrate a new pastor's first Sunday in a new parish. Consult the District Superintendent or refer to some of the worship resource materials available. Unless other arrangements are made, the first Sunday of a new pastorate is the first Sunday in July.
- 7) Arrange for name tags for the congregation for the first few Sundays if they are not already being used.
- 8) Work with the outgoing pastor to see that a list is ready with names, addresses, and phone numbers of sick, homebound, or bereaved persons in the congregation. If necessary, have someone go with the pastor to help in locating residences, hospitals, and institutions.
- 9) Plan an all-church reception for the new pastor within the first month of his/her arrival. Invite clergy and public officials to attend. An alternate or additional way to welcome and get acquainted is to have several neighborhood gatherings in homes with the pastor and family as guests.
- 10) During the pastor's first month or so in the parish, see that invitations are extended, or arrangements made to take the pastor to civic organizations meeting in the community. It is also helpful to see that the pastor is introduced to various leaders of the community.

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SUGGESTIONS TO PASTORS

- 1) When you have been given a new appointment, check with your current District Superintendent regarding the procedure for notifying your current church. Assure the church that the District Superintendent will be working with them regarding the appointment of your successor. Affirm with them the strength of the itinerant system.
- 2) Be sensitive to the congregation's feelings about your leaving. There is normally a good bit of grief work necessary for a congregation when a pastor leaves. Use your final weeks in the parish to put a closure on your ministry there. Be generous with praise and thanksgiving for the years you have had together. When your successor is known, be positive about her/him.
- 3) The conference rule is that the first Sunday in the new appointment is the first Sunday in July. Be sure that provision is made for meeting emergency pastoral needs in each church in the transition period.
- 4) Be considerate of your sister/brother pastor by making sure that the parsonage is left in excellent condition.

- 5) Work closely with your new church in making arrangements for moving as easily and inexpensively as possible.
- 6) A new pastor will find difficulty in being accepted in a church if the former pastor returns to the parish. For that reason, we do not accept invitations from laity to perform baptisms, weddings, funerals, do counseling, or perform other pastoral functions (e.g. hospital calling) in a former parish. Explaining this policy along with its rationale to your church before you leave will make things easier for everyone.

It is neither realistic nor desirable to assume that friendships cease with a change of appointment. Nevertheless, be sensitive to the fact that returning to a former parish, even for social visits, may be detrimental to your successor's ministry. Out of courtesy, let your successor know if you are visiting in his/her parish.

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REFERENCES TO 2016 *DISCIPLINE*

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

CONFERENCE RULES RELATED TO A MOVE

- 1.305 Every person under Episcopal appointment whose salary paying unit is a local church within this Conference, or the Annual Conference itself, is entitled to 30 days of vacation at regular pay during the Conference year. All other vacations are subject to written agreements or negotiation between the parties involved. A person in his or her first year under appointment in the Annual Conference may take up to 15 days of the yearly vacation during the first six months in the new appointment.
- 1.310 Explains current appointment termination date
- 1.311 Explains the parsonage possession.
- 12.061 Lists required parsonage furnishings.
- 12.070 Outgoing pastor is paid through June.
- 5.300 Details the moving fund procedure for payment of moving expenses.

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SALARIES

Ordinarily the salary paid to an incoming pastor is the same as that paid to the pastor who is leaving (See section on Financial Matters, page 9). Sometimes adjustments between line items that do not alter the total compensation package are appropriate. Any changes in total compensation must be made in consultation with the District Superintendent and with the affirmative vote of the Charge Conference.

– The Oregon-Idaho Conference Cabinet

SUGGESTIONS FOR PASTORS

In a survey of pastors experiencing moves, many ideas for preparing the church office for the new pastor emerged.

OFFICE FURNISHINGS

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

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

FILES

Files should be left in a neat and orderly fashion. A written “key” to the organization of the filing system may be helpful.

Be sure to go through all the files you leave to purge them of personal notes and confidential information that have been entrusted to you. You should plan to retain and move or destroy (don’t just throw away) files concerning your personal pastoral counseling. To allow a successor access to these files raises legal questions about their nature and opens the door for court access to your working files that are usually protected as confidential pastoral communications.

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

- 1) A current roster of church members and active constituents is vital. Take some time before your move to be sure the list is updated with current addresses, phone numbers and, if possible, places of employment. Generally, it is NOT helpful to leave detailed profiles of members.
- 2) A list of prospective members and families who have recently celebrated a baptism.
- 3) A file with all the information related to the congregation’s Safe Sanctuary Policy: The most recently reviewed and approved policy, information on how the congregation does background checks, contact information for whomever does the background checks, forms for those volunteers presently vetted according to the Safe Sanctuary Policy, and other related information. Also include here a list of any persons not approved and any information you may have concerning those members and constituents that have criminal backgrounds that pertain in the Safe Sanctuary Policy.
- 4) A list of committees and councils with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of officers.
- 5) A list of church organizations and social groups together with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of contact persons.
- 6) Files containing Charge Conference and Administrative Board (Council) Minutes. These should include statements of congregational goals.
- 7) A packet detailing the financial condition of the church. It should include at least the annual budget, a statement of cash flow, a list of memorial or endowment funds, and an up-to-date balance sheet.
- 8) A file of recent bulletins and newsletters.

- 9) A schedule of regular church activities. Include information about special events such as major fund-raising events, holiday special services or “traditions” unique to the church.
- 10) Job descriptions of employed staff. In many churches, dedicated lay persons volunteer for regular “informal” jobs (gardening, handyman work, office volunteers, etc.). A list of those persons should supplement staff job descriptions.
- 11) Written building use contracts and agreements, insurance information and policies about building use.
- 12) A list of businesses with whom the church has accounts or trades regularly.
- 13) A set (or sets) of keys clearly tagged to describe which doors they fit. A cross-referenced list of locks and keys would be useful.
- 14) A detailed description of building operation. In most congregations the pastor is expected to know about the operation of the building. Helpful information might include descriptions of furnace operation and maintenance, maps of circuit breakers, description of timer clocks, unusual lighting systems and switches.
- 15) Keys to the church signboard and letter sets should be readily available. Some report it is helpful if the sign is changed before the arrival of the new pastor. The S/PRC could help by arranging for this.

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COMPUTER SYSTEMS

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

PASTORAL CARE

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

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

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PASTORAL CARE RESOURCES

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

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PARSONAGE

The most mentioned concern about the parsonage is to leave it clean. Keep the parsonage committee involved so that they can efficiently prepare the home for the next pastoral family. The "Clergy Housing Standards and Policy" may be found on pages 17-21 in this booklet. Some specific suggestions about the parsonage include.

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

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THE COMMUNITY

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

- 1) A good map of the community, including rural roads and rural areas.
- 2) Information about ministerial fellowships or ecumenical organizations.
- 3) School information – especially helpful are names of contacts within the church who are associated with the school system.
- 4) A list of physicians, dentists, eye care specialists that you have found to be helpful.
- 5) A list of merchants, auto mechanics, etc. that you have trusted.
- 6) A list of child care resources.
- 7) Work with the S/PPRC to alert the Welcome Wagon or similar organization; also, to see that there is a press release sent to the local news media about the new pastor.
- 8) A list of service clubs and community organizations which your successor might wish to contact.
- 9) Suggest to your S/PPRC that a mail subscription to the local newspaper be provided for your successor. It could begin as soon as the Bishop's intention to appoint is public. Be sure to also add your successor to your newsletter mailing list.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR AN APPOINTMENT

For every person who will be appointed or assigned to pastor a church in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference there are certain requirements that must be met. These requirements differ depending upon the category or appointment and the Pastor's membership status in the Annual Conference.

FOR ALL PERSONS BEING CONSIDERED FOR APPOINTMENT OR ASSIGNMENT

1. Complete and return the form that allows for a background and credit check to be done by the Annual Conference (contact the district office).
2. Complete and return the Disclosure Form (<https://www.umo.org/ethics>)
3. Satisfactory completion of the on-line Sexual Ethics test that is based upon the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference Sexual Ethics Policy found in the most recent Journal (<https://www.umo.org/ethics>).
4. Complete and submit a Pastor's Profile form as part of your personnel file. Contact the district office for access. If you have a similar form or information in another format that may be acceptable, check with an Oregon-Idaho District Superintendent for review and approval.

ADDITIONALLY FOR UNITED METHODIST CLERGY

1. From another Annual Conference within the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area:
 - a. Documentation of satisfactory completion of the required Healthy Boundaries training for your annual conference.
 - b. A copy of your most recent Continuing Education Report.
2. From another United Methodist Annual Conference:
 - a. Complete and return the GNW Clergy Application.
 - b. Contact information for your current District Superintendent if not included in the Application.
 - c. Documentation of satisfactory completion of your Annual Conference's sexual ethics and healthy boundaries requirements.

ADDITIONALLY FOR THOSE FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION

1. Complete and return the GNW Clergy Application.
2. Contact information for your current judicatory supervisor or representative that has responsibility for clergy relationships with the denomination if not included in the Application.
3. Documentation of satisfactory completion of your denomination's sexual ethics and healthy boundaries requirements.
4. A copy of your ordination credentials – a photocopy, scan, etc. are fine for this stage but a hard copy may be required later in your evolving connection with the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.

ADDITIONALLY FOR LAY ASSIGNED

1. Complete and return the GNW Clergy Application.
2. Contact information for the current pastor of the congregation where you are a member if not included in the Application.
3. Recent resume or a curriculum vitae.

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FINANCIAL MATTERS

THE PASTOR'S SALARY

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

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

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

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

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The conference rule pertaining to clergy salaries is printed here:

Rule 12.070 Clergy salaries. In the event of a change in appointment, all clergy remuneration paid by the local church shall be paid to the outgoing clergy through June 30, unless other arrangements are made in writing to the satisfaction of the superintendents, church and clergy involved.

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### MOVING EXPENSES

From Conference Rules

Adopted by the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference

#### 5.300 MOVING POLICY

- 1) **Moving Expenses:** Expenses for moving clergy and their families and lay professional staff of the Annual Conference shall be administered under the following policies. These policies apply to the amount of reimbursement that will be paid by the Conference and the maximum amount required of the local congregation.
  - a. The moving fund shall assist in paying the moving expenses for household goods, office furniture, and equipment of itinerant clergy appointed to a pastoral charge, a conference staff position or as district superintendent. Clergy included in this provision shall include full members, probationary members, associate members, local pastors, seminary students appointed to a local charge, a retiring clergy person to his/her retirement residence and those under disability leave. If a clergy person receives payment for a

retirement move and later is appointed to serve a local charge, additional retirement moves will not be paid.

- b. This policy shall also cover the following personnel:
  - 1.) Lay persons hired as professional staff of the Conference.
  - 2.) The moving expenses for the first move for divorced spouses from the parsonage shall be paid by the Conference within the provisions of this policy. The District Superintendent shall notify the Conference Treasurer when this provision becomes applicable.
  - 3.) Surviving spouses and/or dependents of clergy who die while under appointment to local charge, conference staff position, or a District Superintendent may have their moving expenses paid by the Conference within the provisions of this policy. The District Superintendent in consultation with the Conference Treasurer shall determine the total amount paid.
- c. Clergy leaving an appointment in Oregon-Idaho for leave of absence, honorable location, or transfer to another conference or denomination will not be eligible for moving expense payments.
- d. Clergy members of the Conference returning from special appointment, sabbatical leave, leave of absence, or school appointment beyond the M. Div. degree and retired clergy members of other conferences or denominations moving into or out of the Conference for any reason are not eligible to receive reimbursement from the Fund.
- e. Clergy moving to Oregon Idaho from outside the boundary of the Conference are eligible to participate in the reimbursement fund as indicated in section 2.

**2) Expense Payment Parameters:** The following parameters shall apply to the payment of moving expenses:

- a. The total allowance for packing materials shall be \$400. Clergy couples shall be allowed \$500. No conference reimbursement is authorized for actual packing or unpacking.
- b. One extra stop charge at the points of origin and destination will be allowed for each move. Clergy couples shall be given an additional stop allowance of up to \$500 provided the move is to a multiple point charge.
- c. The cost of appliance hook-ups shall be the responsibility of the person being moved.
- d. The Conference shall not pay for “extra carry” charges, storage or delays, unless approved before the move.
- e. Charges for vehicles, motorcycles, canoes, firewood, lumber, potters clay, kilns, and other oversize or overweight items shall be the responsibility of the person being moved.
- f. The cost of motel, meals, and mileage during the actual days of the move are not reimbursed by the Conference.

**3) Reimbursements:**

- a. The receiving church or charge is responsible for payment of the entire moving bill. The Conference Treasurer shall reimburse the church or charge 50% of the moving charges within the parameters described herein and upon receipt of the following: 1) an invoice; 2) a bill of lading signed by the person being moved or an authorized family member.
- b. The maximum amount the Fund will reimburse to any one church or charge for any one move will be equal to 10% of the current year’s Conference Minimum Cash Salary as established in the report of the Equitable Compensation Commission.

- c. The maximum amount the local church will be required to pay will be equal to 13% of the current year's Conference Minimum Cash Salary as established in the report of the Equitable Compensation Commission.
  - d. Any amount over the sum of 3b & 3c will be the responsibility of the individual.
  - e. The Fund shall reimburse each retiring clergy member, lay member of the professional staff, disabled member, or surviving spouse up to 12.5% of the Conference Minimum Cash Salary to help with his or her moving expenses provided the move is made within 24 months following retirement or change of status.
  - f. The maximum amount the Fund will reimburse to a divorced spouse shall be 10% of the Conference Minimum Cash Salary.
  - g. At the end of the previous fiscal year, any unexpended funds will be retained in the Moving Fund Reserve.
- 4) **Self-Moves:** Self-moves may be made by the individual. In addition to items in section 2, reimbursement shall include the charges for truck & trailer, fuel for the trucks used in the move and insurance. The contents of all property in a self-move shall be insured for the full replacement value up to a maximum of \$50,000 with a \$500 deductible. If the goods being moved have a value higher than the maximum, the clergy may buy additional insurance at his/her own expense. In order for the local church to receive reimbursement under this policy, proof of insurance on household goods must be provided along with the rental agreement, fuel slips, and receipts for packing materials.
- 5) **Exceptions:** Exceptions to any of the above may be approved or denied by the Conference Treasurer after consultation with the District Superintendent, if appropriate. Appeals of any decision by the Conference Treasurer may be directed to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA). CFA shall have the final authority to interpret the moving policy and make decisions regarding its implementation.
- 6) **Procedures:** The Conference Treasurer shall establish and administer all procedures for implementing the moving policy contained herein.

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## PASTORAL ETHICS IN TIMES OF TRANSITION

Matters of professional ethics become very important during transition. When pastors move, the covenant of ordination and licensing instructs that they sever pastoral ties with the church or charge they are leaving. This is for the benefit of the church, the pastor who is leaving, as well as for the church the pastor is going to serve. When a former pastor returns to do pastoral acts, or maintains close ties with former parishioners, the current pastor is denied key opportunities to be in ministry and to develop pastoral relationships.

Therefore, any person appointed or assigned as a pastoral leader of a congregation and those retiring from actively serving or taking a leave from serving agree to abide by "A Covenant of Clergy Conduct," which was produced jointly by the Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference

Here is that covenant as a reminder of what we – clergy, pastors, lay-assigned, and those retiring – have agreed to:

As clergy of the Oregon/Idaho Annual conference, called by God to be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, gifted by the Holy Spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ, and having pledged ourselves to live in covenant with the clergy of this conference, we acknowledge our need for God's

grace as we seek to be faithful in ministry, and we accept that covenant relationships are a vital and necessary part of fulfilling our vows and calling.

In the Greater Northwest Area, we serve as colleagues in a covenant community. We all wrestle with the complexity of ministerial relationships and friendships with parishioners that require us to be sensitive and clear, especially after we have ended an appointment. These behavior guidelines help us honor our covenant community and United Methodist Connection.

This covenant, made by both exiting and entering clergy during appointment transitions, including retiring clergy, will be shared with the Staff Parish Relations Committee of both congregations. For the purpose of this document, the terms ‘clergy’ and ‘minister’ apply to any person appointed or assigned to a congregation in Oregon-Idaho, including elders, deacons, and licensed local and lay-assigned pastors.

With that in mind, we covenant as United Methodist leaders in Connection in Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference to:

### **Honor one another as Christian leaders by...**

1. Honoring the work or lifestyle of our predecessors, successors, and other ministers by speaking of one another and our ministries with dignity, honor, and respect.
2. Being sensitive, gracious, and appropriately inclusive of former ministers.
3. Practicing the same ministerial code of ethics with ministers and congregations of other denominations as we do in the United Methodist Church.

### **Honor our congregational relationships by...**

1. Performing no ministerial functions in any church or charge to which we are not appointed, except at the request and under the clear direction of the pastor in charge.
2. Upon leaving the appointment, including in retirement, severing all ministerial relationships with the parish, recognizing that all future weddings, baptisms, communions, counseling, visitations and funerals should be fulfilled by our succeeding minister, unless an unusual situation exists and that minister approves it. When we receive a request from a former parishioner, we will always refer them, without comment, to their current minister. We will only agree to any involvement after the appointed pastor invites participation personally.
3. As a former minister and family residing in the same community following serving there as minister, we will find another church to attend. We know our continued presence in the life of the church almost always hinders the congregation and the incoming minister in developing the necessary relationship for successful ministry. We agree only to reconsider this after a minimum of one year absence in consultation with our District Superintendent and the current minister.
4. Avoiding all conversation and communication with church members about a new minister, as well as problems and issues regarding the former church. If approached, we will tactfully explain that ethics do not permit such a discussion.

### **Commit to healthy communication during and after transitions by...**

1. Before exiting a local church appointment, clearly communicating from the pulpit, in writing, and on social media that we will no longer be able to function in any ministerial way with the congregation as an exiting minister.

2. Openly sharing and negotiating exceptions to any ongoing relationships and regular contact with former parishioners with the current minister and our District Superintendent. Continued relationships, whether in person or via social media connections, with parishioners do not assist in the health and welfare of our local churches.
3. Committing not to be present or participate in worship, events or church groups for a minimum of one year after leaving that appointment. Our immediate family members will also take a leave of absence for at least one year. In the case of any exceptions, both clergy and the District Superintendent will make a written plan and agreement. In longer appointments, we understand that the District Superintendent may require a longer period of absence.

(06/12/2018 Consequences, even in retirement, in regard to this policy are based on the 2016 UMC Discipline, Par. 2702.1 (f) where clergy may be charged and tried for “relationships and/or behavior that undermines the ministry of another pastor.”)

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## **LEAVING WELL: SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Send a “final” email out to folks (at least leaders and staff) so it is clear when you have begun this new phase. Email conversations can go on and on, so it is important to offer a mark of finality.
- Create an autoresponder for your church email list that directs folks to new church connections as well as a way for non-church contacts to remain connected.
- Remove yourself from internal communication lists, groups, docs, etc. on Google, Yahoo and other sharing platforms. With so many ways that people communicate, share docs, etc. it is important, for your own sanity, to not see conversations that you are no longer meant to be part of.
- Delete any groups or lists that you created that set aside congregation members in your news and updated streams. Have your administrative access removed from all congregational social media platforms. This might include having the church change passwords and other access points.
- Facebook Friend Lists:
  - This is a powerful tool, because it allows you to organize and categorize your Facebook friends, but it also allows you to unsubscribe from updates from specific lists, and it allows you to both post status updates to specific lists or hide updates from specific lists.
  - When you leave a church, you can put everyone associated with that church into one Friend List. Then when you go in to edit the settings for that list, you can simply uncheck all of the Update Types for that friend list, and then you will no longer see the status updates posted from that group of people.
  - Unfriending People: You may indeed need to unfriend a few people from your congregation, but that is always a case-by-case situation. The cleanest break is to unfriend all those associated with the church you are leaving and your ministry there. Experts are not in agreement about

doing this, so you have to do what you think is best.

- Other Social Media Platforms: There are similar steps that can be taken on all social media sites to these for Facebook. Follow them to help set boundaries for there as well.
- Remove all social media accounts from your computer, iPhone or other media devices: To prevent accidentally posting from a church account after you've left, and to remove any temptation to post, or check on things that are happening at the church, go through your computer, iPhone, iPad and any other media devices that might be connected to the Twitter or Facebook profiles, and delete those accounts. This will help give you a cleaner break from the church's social media life.
- Talk about your plan: Talk to the church leadership about boundaries and your plan. It shows that you're being pro-active and thinking through these issues. Be specific. Let them know what you're planning to do about Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and any other social media platforms that you've used to connect with folks at the church. Make a plan, and then communicate that with the appropriate parties involved.
- Church computer should be cleaned up: remove personal email addresses, correspondence, family photos, and "favorite" browser sites
- Email friends, family if email address is changing

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## CLERGY HOUSING STANDARDS AND POLICY

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

(preferably two) baths, with adequate closet space in each, linen storage, garage and/or carport for a minimum of two automobiles, and storage for lawn equipment.

3. Additional desirable features: Family room, extra bedroom or study space, bookshelves, fireplace with glass door and tools (alternative: 0modern wood-burning stove and accessories).
4. Energy Efficiency: Adequate heating plant with annual maintenance and modifications for current technology. Insulated windows and adequate insulation in walls and ceiling are essential. Air conditioning should be provided in any locality where the climate requires it. An energy audit should be made, and recommendations referred to the Board of Trustees.
5. Additional Essential Features
  - a. All Church-owned furnishings and equipment should be in good condition with regard to appearance and usability.
  - b. Adequate electrical outlets should be provided, including those for refrigerator freezer facilities, air conditioning, television, and other devices.
  - c. All windows should have blinds and/or draperies in good condition.
  - d. Windows should provide adequate ventilation, and those which open should have accompanying screens.
  - e. Floor covering in all areas should be in good condition and up-to-date. Consideration should be given to ease of maintenance.
  - f. Fencing should be installed and maintained where necessary to provide protection, containment, and ample area for activities for small children.
  - g. Dead-bolt locks, television antenna or cable installation, smoke alarm(s), and working doorbells should be provided.

B. Furnishings and Equipment to be provided

1. Kitchen: Electric or gas range, refrigerator with minimum of 17 to 21 cubic feet of space, with a freezing compartment or separate freezer; adequate cupboard space; adequate counter space with good finish. A dishwasher and disposal are highly recommended. Outlet and space for a microwave oven should be provided.
2. Laundry Area: Current models of automatic washer and dryer, in good operating condition.
3. Yard Care: Power lawn mower, garden hoses, sprinklers, garden tools and equipment.
4. Telephone: Two telephones should be provided. The telephone deposit and connection should be maintained by the church to prevent interruption between pastorates.
5. Consideration should be given to providing floor lamps in parsonages that have no overhead lights.

6. Condition: When furnishings and equipment are no longer in good condition with regard to appearance and usability, they should be removed and replaced as soon as practical. Out-of- date items or the discards of others should not be placed in the parsonage. Decisions in this regard should reside with the Parsonage Committee and clergy.
7. Inventory: An up-to-date list of all parsonage furnishings, including dates of purchase, serial numbers and related data should be kept, with copies to be filed with the Parsonage Committee, church office and the District Superintendent.

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### C. Care of Property

1. Insurance: Coverage is normally provided by the church for all fire and casualty losses, including public liability, including the replacement cost of the parsonage and church owned furnishings and equipment. Clergy are responsible for insuring personal property, including furniture. Repairs: An amount shall be provided in the local church budget for repairs and maintenance of the parsonage. (An amount equivalent to two percent [2%] of the value of the parsonage is recommended. This can be achieved by paying one-twelfth [1/12th] of the yearly amount each month into a special reserve, which should be cumulative.)
2. Interior and exterior painting should be provided as required to keep the house in good condition and appearance.
3. Operating Procedures
  - a. A formal agreement between the pastor and the church may be instituted. The agreement should clarify the expectations of both the church and the pastor with regard to the matters listed in this policy statement. A review upon the arrival and just before the departure of the pastor is in order to conform to the agreement. (See the sample form at the end of this document.)
  - b. The S/PPR Committee/Parsonage Committee in cooperation with the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for seeing that all necessary work is done to keep the parsonage up to these recommendations.
  - c. An annual review should be made of the agreement, involving the S/PPRC/Parsonage Committee and Board of Trustees, with the clergy family.
  - d. The parsonage family should be consulted in the selection of appliances and furnishings, and their taste considered in determining color and plans for interior decorating. Neutral colors for drapes and carpets are recommended to fit with whatever color décor of furnishings the parsonage family may bring into the parsonage.
  - e. A parsonage history should be kept in the church files, providing age of the building, its assessed evaluation, dates and types of improvement, including purchases of appliances and a list of church-owned furnishings. Photos are desirable.
  - f. The following information should be supplied to the parsonage family by the Parsonage Committee. Where to find:
    - Water shut-off valves for outside faucets and for the entire house, fuse or breaker

panel, with specific breakers labeled, including the main breaker, various seasonal permanent plants.

- Whom to call in case of fire, accident, etc.
- How to fix or repair equipment.
- Instruction booklets for appliances and where they can be serviced.
- Any problem situation – e.g., watering too close to the house may cause seepage in basement, etc.

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#### D. General Suggestions

1. Clergy are encouraged to live in the parsonage provided by the local church where the parsonage is adequate according to these guidelines. Consultation between the church, the District Superintendent, and the clergy should occur if the parsonage is not appropriate. The parsonage is the home of the clergy and family, and their rights and privacy should always be respected by members of the congregation. With rights come responsibilities for the appearance and condition of the parsonage. The clergy family and the Parsonage Committee should work together to exercise good care of all parsonage property. (see II.A and II.C.4. above)
2. When the clergy moves, the S/PPR Committee/ Parsonage Committee should see that the lights, telephone and water are left connected. The deposit for public utilities should be provided by the church.
3. If a gift of furniture or furnishings is made, the donor should designate specifically if it is to remain in the parsonage or is a personal gift to the clergy.

#### III. Housing Allowance Standards

- A. The Equitable Compensation Commission has established a two-tier formula for housing allowance - **\$13,173 for most churches and \$15,368 for churches in areas with unusually high housing costs.** The allowance will be at least commensurate to the percentage of employment (e.g. one quarter-time receives one quarter the housing allowances, one half-time receives one half the housing allowance.)
- B. Churches are encouraged to be attentive and responsive to the individual needs of clergy regarding housing.
- C. If a church and its clergy are considering a change from a parsonage to a housing allowance, this is to be done in consultation with the District Superintendent and the District Committee on Church Location and Building. Thorough attention should be given to the advantages and disadvantages of such a change. A church should be prepared, through careful preservation of adequate assets, giving attention to market values and trends, to provide future housing which meets Conference standards. (2016 Discipline ¶2541 and ¶2542)
- D. Where the housing allowance is provided and to allow the clergy maximum benefits allowed by the Internal Revenue Service, the following guidelines are suggested:
  1. For churches reporting to the Charge Conference and the District Superintendent, the amount designated for Housing Allowance should be the amount required to rent a house in the community that would meet the standards for a church-owned parsonage. Other amounts designated for housing allowance may be mutually agreed upon between the pastor and the

church and included on the Clergy Compensation Worksheet which is approved by the charge conference and the District Superintendent. Consideration should be given to costs of maintenance and repair that would otherwise be paid by the church to maintain a parsonage. The housing allowance is in addition to any amount designated for utilities.

2. For Federal Income Tax Purposes, it is recommended that the S/PPR Committee make a separate allocation of total compensation including housing allowance as established by the Charge Conference to reflect the actual cost of providing a home. This designation should be made in a letter to the clergy in advance of the effective date.

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## CLERGY/CHURCH PARSONAGE AGREEMENT

In accordance with the revision of the Clergy Housing Standards and Policy approved by the 1996 Session of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference, churches and clergy will enter a formal agreement for the care and upkeep of the church parsonage before, during, and after a pastoral appointment to a charge. Clergy and the church officials responsible for the parsonage will sign this formal agreement each year, and file a copy with the District Superintendent annually.

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parsonage Committee/SPRC

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date