

THE PRESBYTERY OF LONG ISLAND COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Manse as it Relates to Ministry

Ministry is enhanced when a pastor and the Session hold mutual goals and views on the maintenance of the manse and any improvements that may be required. Presbytery policy calls for the Session to be responsible for necessary maintenance and/or improvements, including lawn and landscape maintenance and snow removal, whether the manse is vacant or occupied. This can only be accomplished with open and continuing communication about the manse between the Session and the pastor.

When a church is going into an interim period

The interim period is a critical time to consider and accomplish both maintenance and improvements in order to prepare for the arrival of the next pastor. A manse that is attractive and well-maintained is a valuable asset in the calling process. As soon as possible after the departing pastor leaves, the church property committee should arrange to make a thorough inspection of the manse and develop a list of work that must be done and improvements that would be desirable. The Session will need to identify and arrange for possible sources of funding for the work. The Committee on Ministry and the Board of Trustees stand ready to assist in this process.

Work on the manse should be completed as quickly as possible. If an interim pastor will be living there, care will have to be taken not to intrude any more than is necessary. However, all should realize the importance of having the work completed by the time the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee is nearing completion.

If the church is to be served by an interim pastor who will live in the manse, the session should meet with him/her as early as possible to consider the 8 questions at the end of the next section.

When a church is about to call a new pastor

The beginning of a new ministry is a critical and opportune time for conversation on the manse. The Committee on Ministry and the Board of Trustees stand ready to assist at any point in this process. It is suggested that the newly-called pastor should meet with the Session as soon as possible after the congregational meeting in which the pastor is called and have a discussion about the manse. They should consider the 8 following questions:

1. What committee is responsible for any matters regarding the manse? Who is the contact person for that committee? What is his/her 'phone number?
2. The Presbytery requires that churches pay for heat, electricity, and water. Are there any other utilities that the church pays for? What are the emergency 'phone numbers for the utilities' services?
3. Does the church insurance policy cover the contents of the manse belonging to the pastor? If so, what is the coverage? If not, can someone suggest the name of an insurance agent who can write a tenants' policy? Does the church insurance policy cover the pastors' books and other things that would be kept in an office at the church? If so, what is the coverage? If not, what can be done?

4. Does the pastor have any expectations with regard to maintenance or additional improvements that still need to be done before he/she arrives?
5. What is the Session's expectation as to what condition the manse will be left in at the end of the pastor's service?
6. Will the pastor's family have any pets housed in the manse? Does the Session have any reservations about that?
7. Does the Session have any expectation about any meetings or social events that should take place in the manse, perhaps because of tradition?
8. Other than the pastor and his/her family, who will have access to the manse? With what notice?

The pastor and the Session should agree to meet at least annually, usually in the Fall prior to the budget process, to discuss needed manse maintenance and ideas for improvements.

When a church has a pastor who is continuing to live in the manse

The Committee on Ministry suggests that the pastor and the Session meet annually, usually in the Fall prior to the budget process, to have a discussion about the manse. The discussion should consider, but not necessarily be limited to, the following questions:

1. Are there any maintenance issues that need immediate attention? Which church officer will see to it that the work is done?
2. Are the pastor and the Session generally satisfied with the way the manse and the yard are being maintained? If not, why not? And what can be done to improve the situation?
3. Are there any longer-term maintenance projects or improvements that either the Session or the pastor would like to see done in the next year? Is it possible financially? Where will the money come from or how could it be raised? Who will see to it that the work is done? Is there a need for a longer-term improvement plan, to be spread over several years? How would it be financed?
4. Are there any other matters having to do with the manse that need to be discussed? Are there any ways in which the pastor/Session relationship with regard to the manse could be improved?

The Committee on Ministry and the Board of Trustees stand ready to assist in matters regarding manses.

Committee On Ministry
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