

REPORTS J-19

Housing and Parsonage Standards for the Texas Annual Conference.

The church today demands the clergy to be not only a preacher, as was the early circuit rider, but a resident pastor and responsible citizen in the community. In order to meet these felt needs, and to call men and women to a dedicated ministry, the church must provide living conditions that will establish an adequate base from which to operate.

It is the privilege and responsibility of the members of each congregation to provide a physical setting which will give the parsonage family the comfort and convenience so that the energies of the pastor may be more concentrated on his or her task and willing service in the Church of God. It is the responsibility of the parsonage family to provide cleaning and care of the parsonage, which will protect the interior facilities and amenities such as paint and floor coverings. Because the parsonage, like the church building, reflects upon the congregation and pastor, it should be in such condition that all concerned can be justifiably proud of it. In view of this, we make the following recommendations regarding parsonage Standards for this Annual Conference.

1. Size of Building and Living Areas. The new or remodeled parsonage should be large enough to accommodate the pastor's family. It should provide adequate space for the entertainment of guests. It should be remembered in selecting a parsonage that the present parsonage family is not the only one who will live in that parsonage and that the house should be adaptable for a variety of family sizes and situations.
2. We **recommend** the following minimum standards:
 - a. 1800 square feet of living space
 - b. 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms
 - c. Adequate major appliances (stove, refrigerator, washer, dryer)
 - d. Hot and cold running water in bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry
 - e. Adequate heating and air conditioning
 - f. Adequate closet and storage space
 - g. Adequate garage or carport space with outdoor storage area
2. Health and Safety
 - a. Proper sewer disposal according to the standards of local and/or State Department of Health
 - b. Fire extinguisher in kitchen with yearly inspection
 - c. Provide smoke detectors for kitchen, living, and bedroom area
3. Furnishings:
 - a. Window covering, drapes, curtains, and blinds should be provided to insure adequate privacy.
 - b. If the parsonage family is expected to maintain the lawn, the church should provide a mower, lawn tools, and hoses.
4. Miscellaneous:
 - a. Discovering Needs: The Chairperson of the Pastor Parish Committee, the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Trustees or Parsonage Committee should inspect the parsonage at least once a year using the standards identified in Paragraph 262.2ff of the 1996 Discipline to discover needed repairs, improvements, and decorations. The Committee or Trustees should assume the initiative since it is their responsibility to maintain the parsonage in good condition, and since prompt attention lessens total cost of maintenance. An evaluation form will be provided by the

Conference Commission on Equitable Compensation to the District Superintendents and be included in the Charge Conference packets.

It needs to be remembered that the parsonage is the PASTOR'S HOME and inspection should be scheduled in plenty of time to meet the convenience of the parsonage family.

b. Insurance: The Trustees should be certain that the church owned house and contents are insured for at least 80% of replacement cost against fire, wind, and other hazards. Public liability insurance should be carried on parsonage property. Tenant homeowners insurance is available for all ministers who desire to cover personal possessions and liability.

IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PASTOR TO INSURE PERSONAL PROPERTY BELONGING TO THE PASTOR AND FAMILY.

Parsonage Record Book: It is recommended that each church establish a Parsonage Record Book containing an inventory of parsonage furnishings owned by the church, any warranties on items purchased for the parsonage, a service and repair record with dates of repair or service copies of the annual inspection and moving day checklist, and any other receipts, printed materials, or pertinent information.

A copy of these standards shall be distributed at Charge Conference by the District Superintendent to each church with a copy of the Evaluation forms. The PPR Committee, Trustees, or Parsonage Committee shall conduct a review of the parsonage and how it related to these standards (below average, average, meet standards, needs immediate attention) and submits their findings at each Charge Conference. Action should be taken as soon as possible to bring each parsonage within an acceptable range based on these minimal standards.