

Manse Discussion Guidelines for Ministers and Congregations or Presbytery

Introduction: When a congregation provides manse housing for a called minister, there are many issues that may arise that need to be discussed at the beginning of the call, rather than waiting for them to rise. It has been found that when the following issues are clarified, discussed, and annually reviewed, the trusting relationship between the minister and the congregation is greatly enhanced. These are only guidelines - each congregation and minister will have different needs and answers to each of these issues raised - and are provided by the committee on ministry for clarifying discussions between these two important parties.

- (1) Incoming minister redecoration desires/expectations by the church for condition of manse upon minister's leaving: In what condition should the manse be prepared by the church and left by the minister?
- (2) How the utilities will be managed: Who will pay? When? How to bill? In whose name and through what utilities company?
- (3) Redecoration of manse by minister/children: What are acceptable redecoration limits for minister and children?
- (4) Maintenance inside and out: What is expected of the minister and the church for routine inside and yard upkeep? Who should be contacted for upkeep issues?
- (5) Capital Improvements: How and with whom will capital improvements on the manse be discussed and decided? Shall the minister be a participant?
- (6) Animals/pets: Will animals or pets be allowed in the manse? With what restrictions? Is a deposit for possible destruction needed?
- (7) Entertainment expectations: Are there times and traditions expected for the manse to be used for entertainment by the congregation? Is the minister to host, plan, or negotiate these events?
- (8) Security: Who will have keys? What about locks, chains, peepholes, screen doors, etc.?
- (9) Privacy: Who will have access? With what notice?
- (10) Contact with session: Who is the contact person? What is the relationship between the manse contact and the session? How is the manse overseen as a budget item?
- (II) Annual manse discussions: When and with whom will there be a regular, if not annual, discussion of issues regarding the manse?
- (12) Use of manse between ministers: How should the manse be used between ministers? Rented? Leased? To whom? Restrictions?

(Provided by the Presbytery of Missouri Union; as adopted by the Committee on Ministry, January 1990.)