

Presbytery of Hudson River
Committee on Ministry
Manse Sale Policy
Approved 4 October 2021

This policy outlines the procedure for the sale of a church manse.

The congregation of the church wishing to sell its manse is charged with the responsibility of making a thorough analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the sale of the property and how the church will provide for housing for a pastor for a future unspecified period of time following the sale of its manse. Such analysis shall include an appraisal or market evaluation of the value of the property to establish an appropriate selling price that shall be included as part of a plan developed by the church for the sale.

The Presbytery has an interest and responsibility in assuring that a pastor is provided with housing as part of his or her call. In addition, with any church property being held in trust for the Presbytery, the Presbytery's Property Committee and Committee on Ministry must review and approve any such proposed plan for the sale of a church's manse. Similarly, COM must review and approve the housing allowance established by the church for its call for any minister, if it disposes of its manse.

The Presbytery has the additional responsibility of being certain that the funds from any such manse sale are properly secured and are used in an appropriate manner.

The sequence of events and actions shall be as follows:

1. The Session/Council **shall** call a congregational meeting to discuss the concept of selling the manse. If the decision is made to sell the manse, the congregation may delegate authority to the Session/Council to continue the sale process or it may request that any action on the sale be brought before the entire congregation.
2. If the decision is made to sell the manse, the church **must** consult with and present its plan for the proposed sale to the Property Committee and the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery prior to beginning the action for any such sale. If approval to sell the manse is given by these two committees, the church may seek purchasers on such terms and conditions as it deems appropriate and to include any such terms as may be imposed by the two commissions of the Presbytery.
3. At the same time, the church shall secure approval from COM for the amount of and other related provisions of any suggested housing allowance to be used instead of providing a manse in connection with the call for its pastor. Any such allowance **must** be approved by COM.
4. Once a sale of the property has been negotiated and a proposed contract prepared, the church **must** present such proposed contract to the Presbytery

for its evaluation and approval. Such approval, if given, **must** be by vote of the Presbytery at one of its stated meetings and such action **must** be communicated to the church in writing. If approval is given by the Presbytery to continue with the sale, the Session/Council **shall** notify the congregation, if prior authority has been given to the Session/Council, as to the terms and conditions of the sale or, in the alternative, **shall** call a congregational meeting to determine whether or not to proceed with the sale under the terms and conditions as negotiated with the prospective purchaser.

5. Once a sale of the property has been negotiated and a proposed contract prepared, the church **must** present such proposed contract to the Presbytery for its evaluation and approval. Such approval, if given, **must** be by vote of the Presbytery at one of its stated meetings and such action **must** be communicated to the church in writing. If approval is given by the Presbytery to continue with the sale, the Session/Council **shall** notify the congregation, if prior authority has been given to the Session/Council, as to the terms and conditions of the sale or, in the alternative, **shall** call a congregational meeting to determine whether or not to proceed with the sale under the terms and conditions as negotiated with the prospective purchaser.

6. Ordinarily, on completion of the sale, the net proceeds shall be placed in an investment account dedicated to either a replacement of the manse or the provision of a housing allowance for any future pastor. It is strongly recommended that a minimum of fifteen (15%) of any increase in value within this account shall be added to the principal amount of the account annually. The balance of the increased value of the account may be used, depending on the other financial considerations of the church, to assist the church in providing a housing allowance for the pastor, or for other church expenses as indicated below. If after a sale of a manse a congregation still has adequate manses to supply all pastors with housing, the funds may be used at Session discretion.

7. If a Session/Council desires to use some of the money from the sale of the manse for other aspects of the church ministry besides providing for the housing of a pastor, a proposal must be submitted to the Committee on Ministry, **after** Session/Council consultation with a COM Transitions representative or liaison.

8. If and when the church elects to replace the manse by purchase or other acquisition or determines to substantially alter the original housing allowance as agreed to with the Presbytery, the church **must** discuss the new plan and provisions with and get approval from the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery.

In the alternative, if no plan or action for manse purchase has been proposed by the church, the church **shall**, at five year intervals from sale of the manse date, prepare a report showing how the restricted manse fund has been

managed. This report shall be presented to the Committee on Ministry and the Property Committee along with any suggestions for any other use that the church may be considering.