
PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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The Parsonage



Foxes have dens for rest and protection. Birds have nests for sleep and raising their young.

But the King of kings has no castle. The Shepherd of God's sheep has no tent. The Creator during His public ministry has not even a tiny house to call His own.

Jesus travels to Capernaum. He releases the centurion's servant from paralysis and suffering. He cools Peter's mother-in-law's fever. He drives evil spirits out from people and heals all the sick. A teacher of the law declares he'll follow Jesus wherever Jesus goes. Good plan. Jesus replies, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests – but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head." Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58.

Jesus teaches us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Martin Luther explains that "daily bread" includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, HOUSE, etc. Small Catechism.

And so even while Jesus during His three-year public ministry owned no house as he traveled from place to place – as God provides His congregations with pastors – His congregations care for these men and their families. YOU care for these men and their families by giving them a place to lay their heads. This may mean a salary allowing pastor to purchase a house. This may mean supplying a parsonage. Both are wonderful blessings from God stemming from the love of God's children.

Let's discuss the parsonage. God intends the parsonage to be a blessing to pastor and congregation. The devil intends for the parsonage to become a stumbling block and cause bitterness between pastor and congregation.

CONGREGATIONS, please consider: When you call a pastor, you pledge to care for him and his family. "Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, your pastor has been called to your congregation. I ask you now, in the presence of God: Will you receive him, show him that love, honor, and obedience in the Lord that you owe to the shepherd and teacher placed over you by your Lord Jesus Christ, and will you support him by your gifts (which certainly includes the parsonage) and by your fervent prayer? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God. God approves your pledges! My counsel:

- + Chairman and/or head trustee, schedule an annual parsonage walk-through with pastor and pastor's wife. Include a woman from the congregation.

- + Elect/appoint trustees who worship faithfully. If committed to Jesus, trustees will be committed to Jesus' servant, the called pastor.

- + During vacancies, hire a reputable residential inspector who is not a congregational member to inspect the parsonage.

PASTORS, please consider: When you accept a call, you pledge to “Keep a close watch on yourself... manage your own household well...be well thought of by outsiders. 1 Tim 3-4. The parsonage is a gift for you from God and from the congregation. A trust for you in which to live thankfully. A trust for you to treasure and maintain. Your commitment to care for the parsonage reflects your commitment to care for the congregation who gives you this house. God approves your pledge! My counsel:

- + Regularly clean the parsonage.
- + Before taking upon yourself any parsonage updates/changes (“Hey, let’s paint the kitchen bright pink!”), discuss with trustees.
- + Be reasonable with choices for pets.

The Son of Man had no place to lay His head during His earthly ministry. By God’s grace, you do. And Jesus reminds you that even as we care for our temporary daily-bread earthly houses, He’s preparing a permanent home for you in His Father’s house. John 14.

As Jesus lives,
Pastor Paul Egger
President, Iowa District West