

## FAQs-Proposed Parsonage Sale and Purchase of a New One

### Why are the Trustees recommending we sell the parsonage?

The Trustees recommend selling the parsonage at 149 W. Davis Blvd for several reasons:

- **Location in a high-risk flood zone:** The home, built in 1962, sits at only about 7 feet of elevation in Flood Zone A. This means our senior pastor must evacuate whenever there is a threat of a tropical storm or hurricane. This repeated disruption is stressful, unsafe, and not sustainable.
- **Future risk outlook:** Given the frequency and severity of storms in our area, this risk is not expected to improve in the future.
- **Maintenance and renovation needs:** The existing house requires significant renovation work. The Trustees do not believe it is wise to invest further funds into a property at such high risk for flooding.
- **Financial position:** The parsonage is fully paid for (no mortgage), making this an opportunity to sell without financial encumbrance.
- **Approval already received:** Both the District Superintendent and the District Building and Location Committee have reviewed and approved this proposed sale.

For these reasons, the Trustees believe selling the parsonage is the most prudent and responsible course of action for the church's future.

### What do the Trustees recommend for future senior pastor housing?

The Trustees recommend that, if the current parsonage is sold, the church should purchase another parsonage located in a higher elevation flood zone (zone C or higher) within about 5–7 miles of the church.

Their reasoning is:

- **Affordability for future pastors:** Housing in South Tampa is very expensive, and it could be burdensome for a new senior pastor to try to find housing close to the church without church assistance.
- **Financial stewardship:** Proceeds from selling the existing parsonage would cover most of the cost of a new one, based on realtor research.
- **Compliance with the Book of Discipline:** Funds from the sale of church property cannot be used for ongoing operating expenses; they must be reinvested into another property or used for capital projects.
- **Shared leadership support:** Both the Trustees and the full Ministry Leadership Council support the purchase of another parsonage rather than shifting to a housing allowance model.

### **Why wouldn't the Trustees just knock down the existing parsonage and build a house that is up to current code on the lot?**

The Trustees do not recommend this option for two main reasons.

**1. Evacuation concerns.** Even if the existing parsonage were torn down and a new house built to current code, the location would still present the same risks. Davis Islands is in Evacuation Zone A, which means that during every tropical storm or hurricane threat, our senior pastor would still need to evacuate. A new house built higher would not solve the problem of flooded roads, loss of power, or being unable to safely get on and off the island.

**2. Cost concerns.** Demolishing the existing home, raising the lot with fill dirt to meet current elevation standards, and constructing a brand-new house would likely cost significantly more than purchasing an already suitable house in another area. In contrast, selling the current parsonage and purchasing another home should be close to cost neutral, while building new on the existing lot would create a significant financial burden for the church.

### **What if we sell the parsonage for less than we are anticipating? Is there funding available for a difference in price between the sales price of the existing parsonage and the purchase price of another?**

Yes. Finance has already considered this question and communicated to the Trustees that funds are available to cover any difference in price. The Trustees' intent is to sell the current parsonage first to have a clear picture of the total funds available for the purchase of a new home. While not a strict requirement, this sequencing provides clarity. Any difference between the sales proceeds and the purchase price would require advance approval from the Finance Committee.

### **Who will get to pick the new house?**

The Trustees will make the decision by voting on the purchase of a new property. Any house considered must meet the required standards for a parsonage as outlined in the Conference guidelines. The Trustees will also consider factors such as location, safety, and long-term suitability for pastoral housing before making a final decision. While the Trustees hold the final vote, input from the senior pastor will be considered to ensure the home is livable and practical for daily use.

### **What realtor will we use?**

The Trustees will consider the selection of a realtor after receiving approval from the Church Conference to proceed with the sale and purchase. The Board did not feel it was appropriate to officially engage a realtor until after the Church Conference vote.