



FIDUCIARY BOUNDARIES

TRANSPARENT FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Every aspect of the financial relationship between clergy and congregation or anyone in the congregation must be deemed to be a matter of trust. Much anguish and disappointment can be avoided by openness, communication and agreement between clergy and ___ (governing board) in matters of finance.

INHERITANCE

1. When members of a congregation wish to leave money in thanksgiving for the role the church has played in their lives or to further the work of religion, such money is appropriately left to the church corporately and not to clergy as individuals. The behavior of clergy ought never be such as to induce or encourage people to leave money to them or to place it under their control.
2. The details of estate planning are appropriately left to legal and financial professionals. The role of clergy is best limited to general guidance about the important of religious bequests and the procedures to be followed for bequests to the church corporately.
3. The general principle is that the main temporal compensation for clergy for their ministerial work is their salary. To seek to profit otherwise from past or current pastoral relationships is harmful to the integrity of the pastoral ministry. It is commendable, therefore, that members of the clergy transfer to the church bequests made to the clergy person in gratitude for his or her ministry. It is appropriate for members of the clergy to consult with ___ (governing board) when a personal bequest is made, and when the clergy person's relationship with the testator was both personal and professional.
4. The relationship of trust which we prize so highly can be damaged by clergy's benefiting personally from any trusts established for the benefit of the church or by in any way inducing someone in the clergy person's pastoral care to leave money or other property to them.

DISCRETIONARY FUND

1. Discretionary funds are placed in the care of clergy so that they may respond in Christ's name to the poor, and so that they may carry out the work of ministry in an appropriate, responsive and flexible manner. It is appropriate for the ___ (governing board) and the clergy to agree on the needs other than charity to which discretionary funds can be applied.
2. The relationship of trust between clergy and congregations is ill served by the use of discretionary funds for personal expenses. Clergy integrity in the eyes of the larger community is impaired by any use of such funds for the purpose of concealing income (their own or someone else's) from those charged with administering the laws relating to taxation at any level of government.
3. Discretionary funds belong to the congregation, not to the clergy. A separate checking account in the church's name for such funds best preserves their integrity.