



Mission Resourcing

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Joint Stewardship of Property (Summary)

Once a cultural fellowship is established as a parish in its own right belonging to Vahefonua Tonga, Sinoti Samoa or Wasewase ko Viti kei Rotuma, the new parish becomes a joint steward of the property with the English-speaking parish. The Pasifika parish is not an outside lodger unit, expected to pay rent to the English-language parish for use of premises, but joint stewards of the property on behalf of the Board of Administration in whose name all Methodist property is registered. All properties are held in the name of the Board of Administration and the local parishes have joint stewardship. Stewardship of property entails privileges to use them, responsibilities to care and pay for them and accountability to Conference for proper maintenance of them. They exist to foster the mission of the whole Methodist family established by Conference in that location. This means that there will now be two parishes (or more) operating from the same plant, each with their own parish councils and each belonging to a different synod. **A joint property committee should be established to oversee all property matters**, including usage, repairs, development and costs. No major work or change of use can take place without the agreement of the two parishes concerned. Synod Property Advisory Committees should keep each other informed of proposals being forwarded to MCPC. All parties must agree submissions to MCPC.

How should costs of the property now be shared? Clearly, this needs to be negotiated between the parties concerned at the local level. The principle should be that both parties have joint responsibility, but one parish may be much larger than the other or one parish may negotiate to use the property far more than the other partner. It is therefore impossible to set out a hard and fast rule such as a 50-50 share. The principle simply has to be that it is for **both parishes to negotiate annually** between them as to how the property usage and costs will be shared. The point is that neither parish has the right to dictate to the other parish what usage it may have and how much it should pay. As joint stewards they are jointly responsible for the maintenance and usage of the property and as partners within the one Methodist Church, Te Haahi Weteriana o Aotearoa, they are obliged to come to some mutually acceptable agreement. The two parties (or more) must come to an agreement that between them 100% of the costs of the property are paid – their respective shares are negotiated annually. Variable costs such as power or water could be shared based on usage of the property, whereas fixed costs such as insurance and repairs might be shared based on the size of the congregations and ability to pay.

How are payments for property made?

It may be that money is channelled through one parish account, but the costs are reimbursed by the partner parish on the agreed percentage basis.

When disputes arise

When disputes arise between the two parishes, their first point of call should be to their two synod superintendents who will jointly act to achieve a resolution.

If a dispute arises between the synods that cannot readily be resolved, the synods should call upon the Directors of Mission Resourcing and General Secretary for mediation.

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14 March 2016