

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH, SHALIMAR FL  
CHURCH FACILITIES USE POLICY

XXX JAN 2016

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice. These policies apply to members and non-members alike, in keeping with our congregation's beliefs and practices.

The facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict, contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with the church's faith or moral teachings. These are clearly summarized in, among other places, the church's Purpose, Mission, Values, and Vision Statements; Constitution (specifically Preamble and Articles 2.0 and 3.0); and Bylaws; GSLC Marriage Policy dated June 22, 2014. These materials are available upon request by anyone desiring use of the facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Such activities include ceremonies or events espousing anything other than the traditional belief of marriage as only between one man and one woman; those promoting the view that the Bible is not the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God; or activities that could discredit the image and reputation of the church within the community. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Cor 6:14; 1 Thess 5:22.).

Second, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our

facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Col 3:17.)

#### REVIEW AND APPROVAL POLICIES:

##### 1. GENERAL:

- a. Priority will be given to Church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the Church.
  - b. The facilities may be used by civic and service organizations and those groups whose primary purpose is to provide a service in our community and not solely for the production of a profit.
  - c. The schedule for use will be maintained in the Church office. Change in scheduling must be approved by that office.
2. FACILITIES: Application for use of Church facilities by non-Church groups or any individuals shall be submitted to the Church office, checked for schedule conflicts with previously scheduled activities for the date requested, and be reviewed by the Director of the Board of Church Properties with coordination with the Fellowship Board, when the kitchen will be used or food consumed.
- a. Groups/organizations or persons requesting facilities use must affirm that the beliefs, practices and charter of the group requesting the use of the facilities are not inconsistent with, or in the case of individuals making application, their belief and practices are not inconsistent with the Church's faith, practices, or moral teachings. (Those are already summarized in the Church's Purpose, Mission, and Values and Vision statements: Constitution, (specifically Preamble, and Articles 2.0 and 3.0); Bylaws; and GSLC Marriage Policy dated June, 2014. These materials are available upon request by anyone desiring to use the Church facilities and before they sign the Request.
  - b. The group/organization or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Request and Agreement For Facilities Use" form. By signing, they are affirming their understanding and acceptance of the requirements of Paragraph 2.a above.
  - c. If review of their request raises questions of compliance with Paragraphs 2.a above, the request will be referred to the Pastor for a decision that is final. If

no concerns are raised, the request will be approved by the Church Properties Board Director, the requester will be notified, and the requested use arrangements can proceed.

- d. The Church reserves the right to (1) make assessment for damage or misuse of facilities or equipment and (2) to cancel the privilege of use of its facilities.
- e. Since a cost of utilities is involved, the Church may ask for a nominal donation of at least \$5 per hour with a minimum of \$10 per room per meeting.
- f. The Group using the facilities is expected to comply with the rules set forth in this Agreement; is not permitted to make a duplicate of the key; and shall appoint one individual to sign the Agreement and be responsible for fulfillment of the requirements of this section; and if replaced by a successor, give notice of the succession and sign the Agreement.