



## **CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY**

### **Statement of Purpose**

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 always to God's glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-member persons and groups 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.

However, facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed by the pastor as inconsistent with, or contrary to the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker on whether a person or group is allowed to use church 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. 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. See 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

Second, it is very important to the church that it presents a consistent message to the community, which the church staff and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To allow 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 be a source of confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church is in agreement with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using church 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 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. See Colossians 3:17.

Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.

## **Approved Users and Priority of Use**

### **Members**

The pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Priority shall generally be given to active members or active regular attenders of the church, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church.

### **Non-members**

Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. An active member or active regular attender must be involved in the group or organization requesting use of the facility and act as a sponsor between the church and the organization.
2. The group or organization requesting use of the facility must be ministry focused and be not for profit.
3. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are in harmony with the church's faith and practice.
4. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
5. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the church's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by church staff.

### **Scheduling Events**

Requests for facility use may be made by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form to the church secretary. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the pastor or official designee approves the use.

### **Fees**

A suggested donation of at least \$50 per use, and a one-time \$50 refundable deposit.

Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.



**Facility Use Guidelines** (for all church-sponsored and non-church-sponsored events)

1. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be replaced according to photos posted on the wall unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
2. Clean-up: All trash and food items must be placed in trash cans.
3. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served in church facilities
4. Smoking Policy: smoking on church property is prohibited
5. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
6. Food and beverages are not allowed in worship space
7. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
8. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol use are strictly prohibited while using church facilities. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premise.
9. Any person or group must sign the “Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form prior to reservation of church facilities.

**Insurance**

For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities must obtain liability insurance coverage in the amount of at least \$ 1 million. The user must also sign a “Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement.”

Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.



Approved  
 Not approved  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement**

Name of person or organization requesting use of facilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state whether you are a:  Church Member  Church-Sponsored Ministry  Non-Member  
 Non-Member Group/Organization

Period of use requested: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If more than one year, this Request and Agreement form must be renewed annually.)*

What date(s) and time(s) are you requesting to use the facilities:  
\_\_\_\_\_

What type of function; i.e., birthday party, shower, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Which facility (please check):  church basement  annex  Crossroads Station

Contact Information:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If the requested use is by an organization not affiliated with the church, please briefly state the organization's purpose and mission:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list the organization's website, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the names and contact information of the church member/attenders involved in the group/organization:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Office Sign off: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.



Regardless of type of user, please describe which church facilities you are requesting use of and the purpose for which you intend to use the facilities. Church facilities available for weddings and funerals to active members, active regular attenders and immediate family only.

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What date(s) and time(s) are you requesting to use the facilities:

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If you are requesting use of the church's facilities for a wedding and/or wedding reception, please list the names and contact information of the bride and groom. A wedding coordinator will contact you with fees and guidelines.

Bride:

Groom:

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Please list the name, contact information, and religious affiliation of the person officiating the wedding:

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Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.



I affirm that:

1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its faith or by persons or groups holding beliefs that contradict the church's faith.
2. To the best of my knowledge the purpose for which I am requesting use of church facilities will not contradict the church's faith, and I commit to promptly disclose any potential conflict for which I am aware or become aware to church staff.
3. I am not aware of any beliefs that are professed by me or the organization I represent and which is requesting use of the church's facilities that contradict the beliefs of the church. I agree to promptly disclose any potential conflicts in belief to church staff.
4. I understand that upon approval of my facilities use request, I will need to provide a security deposit in the amount of \$50, a certificate of insurance for at least \$ 1 million of coverage, and any other fees required by the church paid one week prior to event. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be generally available to the public, and that my use of these facilities is subject to the pastor's approval, which is conditioned in part on my agreement to the requirements in the "Church Facility Use Policy," a copy of which I have read and understood.
5. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this proposed use of facilities.
6. Permission for use of facility can be revoked at the discretion of the church council.
7. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts. See, generally, Matthew Chapter 18 and 1 Corinthians Chapter 6. Accordingly, users of the facility agree to attempt resolution through Christian mediation, and failing that to submit to binding arbitration through the American Arbitration Association, or any other mutually acceptable arbitration service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I need a key: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (After your event, turn key in by placing in church mail slot).

Event Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for disapproval \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to the Church Office:  
Glenda Bistline's church mailbox or  
**First Church of God**  
**Att'n Glenda Bistline**  
**121 E. King Street**  
**Shippensburg, P A 17257**

Complete pages 5-7 and return to the office.