

# **[NAME] CHURCH OF CHRIST FACILITY USE POLICY**

## **Para. 1 Statement of Purpose**

This Facility Use Policy ensures the [Name] Church of Christ (“the Church”) presents a consistent message to its members and the community regarding its mission, beliefs, and teachings. Allowing Church facilities to be used by any person or group that advocates for or engages in activities that contradict the Church’s mission, beliefs or teachings would confuse the message of the Church. Allowing the use of our facilities by such persons would also cause irreparable harm to the reputation of the Church by leading the community to reasonably conclude that the Church condones or agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using the facilities. Allowing our facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the Church’s mission, beliefs or teachings would also constitute cooperating with or facilitating sinful activity, and is itself sinful (see 2 Cor. 6:3, 14; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:22).

## **Para. 2 Religious Activities**

All Church facilities were provided by God’s benevolence through the sacrificial generosity of church members, and will be used solely for religious or ministry purposes, regardless of the location of the facilities. Permissible use may include divinely authorized worship, church fellowship, religious teaching, weddings, funerals, outreach, benevolence, education, and other activities that have a bona fide religious or ministry purpose and are approved by our eldership.

## **Para. 3 Obtaining Permission**

Church facilities are not generally open to the public and no individual or group may use Church facilities without the approval of our eldership or its designee. The eldership or its designee has the authority to exclude any person or group that the eldership reasonably believes is or will commit or advocate an immoral or sinful act, or is otherwise disruptive. The eldership or its designee also has the authority to demand that a particular activity cease and/or to remove or have removed any person or group from the premises. Decisions regarding permission to use church facilities will be made at the sole discretion of the eldership or its designee, in accordance with its understanding of biblical precepts and principles. The eldership or its designee also has the discretion to refuse or revoke permission for practical reasons, unrelated to the violation of biblical precepts and principles. The eldership will have exclusive and final authority to resolve any disputes related to church facility use.

## **Para. 4 General Guidelines and Use Restrictions**

Each individual or group utilizing the Church’s facilities is required to abide by all rules and instructions given by the eldership or its designee related to church facility use, whether spoken or in writing, including without limitation the following general guidelines:

- a. No alcohol may be served or consumed in the Church’s facilities or on church property.
- b. Smoking or other use of tobacco is strictly prohibited in the Church’s facilities and on church property.
- c. Use of marijuana or other illicit substances, including drugs without a prescription, is strictly prohibited in the Church’s facilities and on church property.
- d. Materials with sexually explicit or graphic content including inappropriate images or videos, such as pornography, are strictly prohibited in the Church’s facilities and on church property.
- e. Dancing is not permitted on the Church’s facilities or on church property.

- f. Abusive or foul language and violent or disruptive behavior is strictly prohibited while using the Church's facilities or on church property.
- g. Church facilities will not be used to participate in, cooperate with, or facilitate any activity that violates the Church's mission, beliefs or teachings, or that discredits the Church or its ministry (2 Cor. 6:3, 14; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:22).
- h. Any person or group requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the Church's mission, beliefs and teachings, as well as the Church's Facility Use Policy.
- i. The Church reserves the right to accept or deny any individual or group who seeks to utilize or reserve Church facilities, at the sole discretion of the eldership.
- j. The following additional rules apply to any wedding-related event held in the Church's facilities or on church property:
  1. At least one party to the marriage (the bride or the groom) must be a member in good standing at a faithful congregation of the church of Christ.
  2. At least one party to the marriage (the bride or the groom) must:
    - a) Be a current or former member in good standing at the [Name] church of Christ congregation, or
    - b) Be related to a current or former member in good standing at the [Name] church of Christ congregation.
  3. All wedding ceremonies must be officiated by a regular minister, preacher or elder of a faithful congregation of the church of Christ.
  4. All wedding ceremonies must be between a scripturally qualified man and woman, and any second marriage ceremony must have scriptural grounds consistent with Matthew 19:9.
  5. Church facilities will not be used to host the wedding, rehearsal, reception, celebration, or similar gathering for a same-sex couple or for any person(s) ineligible to marry due to a prior unscriptural divorce or other biblical reason.

**Para. 5 Fees**

Because the facility is exclusively utilized for religious and ministry purposes, no rent or fees will be charged, except as necessary to cover the cost of clean-up and repairs.

**Para. 6 Insurance and Indemnity**

- a. Any damage occurring to the Church's facilities related to an event will be repaired and replaced by the person and/or group reserving the facility for the event, at a cost determined by the eldership or its designee.
- b. Any person or group who reserves the Church's facilities for use must sign a general release and indemnification, which is incorporated into the Facility Use Agreement.
- c. Facility users who are not members of the [Name] church of Christ congregation will have to provide their own general liability insurance coverage with a combined single limit of not less than \$500,000, naming the Church as an additional insured.

**Para. 7 Reservations**

Apart from visiting or attending scheduled worship services, Bible classes, church-wide fellowship meals, Gospel meetings, or other pre-approved church-wide events or activities for the entire youth group, any person or group who wishes to use the Church's facilities must complete the Facility Use Application and sign a Facility Use Agreement acknowledging they have read, understand and agree to abide by this Policy. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only after the eldership or its designee has approved the use in writing.