



## **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 or Elders as inconsistent with, or contrary to the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor or Board of Elders, or their 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.

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

The pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Priority shall generally be given to members of the church, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. 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.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit (a) a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form, (b) "Facility Use and Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement", and (c) for non-member groups/organizations a Certificate of Insurance
3. 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.

## **Facility Use Hours**

Facilities are available between the hours of 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. Use outside these hours may be approved by the pastor or official designee.

## **Request Process for Scheduling Events**

1. Submit the following to the church office without payment (that will be requested following approval)
  - a. a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form,
  - b. a signed "Facility Use and Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement", and
  - c. for non-member groups/organizations a Certificate of Insurance
2. The pastoral staff and, if needed, the board of elders, will review and approve or decline the request.
3. Upon approval:
  - a. the event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the pastor or official designee approves the use.
  - b. the requestor will be notified of approval and will be requested to send in donation at that time
4. If not approved
  - a. the requestor will be notified that the request was not approved and alternatives, if available, will be covered at that time

## **Fees for Use**

Use of church facilities requires heat/AC and light, as well as additional sexton activity. Church members help defray these costs through their tithes and offerings. Non-members may consider the following guidelines for use of the facility. Please keep in mind this is for the use of the space only, additional fees may be required if set-up assistance, such as clearing a room or reconfiguring a room, or if special items such as AV or technology support are requested:

Auditorium \$150.  
Cafeteria \$100.  
Gymnasium \$100.  
Other rooms TBD  
Set-up Assistance TBD based on need

## **Facility Use Guidelines**

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served in church facilities.
2. Smoking Policy: smoking in any indoor church facilities is prohibited.
3. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
4. Set-up, take-down and return to original configuration of spaces is the responsibility of the group unless prearranged and agreed to in advance.
5. Food and beverages in classrooms or worship spaces are only permitted with prior approval.
6. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
7. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
8. Clean-up or arrangement with the church sexton must be pre-arranged.
9. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited while using church facilities. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premise.
10. 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 and provide proof of insurance.

**(Intentionally Blank)**

## Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement

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

Dates/Times \_\_\_\_\_

Please check whether you are a:

- Berean Member;  Berean-Sponsored Ministry;  
 Non-Member;  Non-Member Group/Organization

**Which facilities will you be using (check all that apply):**

<input type="checkbox"/> Auditorium	<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/> Gymnasium/Game Room
<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Classrooms (how many) _____	

**Weddings: Please list the names of the Bride and Groom** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe the building use / provide an event description:**

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

**Contact Information:**

Address:

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

Phone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Non-member Groups/Organizations, please provide a proof of liability insurance coverage (attach your Certificate of Insurance).

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

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

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

For Office Use Only:

Security Deposit? \_\_\_\_\_ Balance Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

## Facility Use, Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement

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 Berean's 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 \$\_\_\_\_\_, a certificate of insurance (non-member groups and organizations only), and a final balance of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.
5. 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 elder board'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 and agree to follow.
6. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this proposed use of facilities.
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 a mutually acceptable arbitration service.

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Signature

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Printed Name and title (organizations)

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Date