

DECEMBER 1, 2016

## CHURCH FACILITY/PROPERTY USE POLICY

### Scope

The following policy will govern the use of all the buildings and or property of Fairview Presbyterian Church. This policy is evergreen and will remain in force until such time as the Session amends, replaces, or cancels it in writing.

### Purpose Statement

The church's facilities were provided through the benevolence of God 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 glory to God. 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.

Facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teaching, which are summarized in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the church's constitution and bylaws. Church facilities are not to be used for political events or to make political statements. The pastor (moderator), of the Session, is the final decision maker concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, church facilities and properties are to be used in accordance with the church's faith and practice for the furtherance of the Gospel. (2 Cor 6:14; 1Thes 5:22)

Second, we desire to present a consistent message to the community as a witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, church facilities will only be used for purposes in keeping with the beliefs and practices as outlined in the Old and New Testaments and the church's bylaws and constitution.

This policy applies to all church facilities and or properties, 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)

## Priority of Use and Approved Users

The pastor (moderator) or the Session must approve all uses of church facilities. Under no circumstances will the scheduled dates or times of worship services be modified or canceled to accommodate any other event. When evaluating requests for special use of church facilities, priority will be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and properties will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility/property use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church's faith and practices.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
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 the church staff.

## Vehicles (added January 2017)

Individuals requesting the use of a church owned vehicle must have a valid drivers license and be at least 25 years of age. Applicants may be questioned regarding driving records and health issues. All safety regulations regarding capacity of the vehicle must be maintained. In addition to the date and time the vehicle is requested, a detailed description of the purpose and the travel plans must be indicated. Only those approved on the application are allowed to operate the vehicle on the outing.

## Scheduling Events

Facility use requests shall be made to the pastor (moderator) or the Clerk of Session by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form. Both members and non-members must submit a request and be granted permission to use any church facilities or property outside of regularly scheduled activities, ie; Sunday School, Sunday worship services, mid-week meetings, WIC, Men of the Covenant ,etc. There are no exceptions. Verbal requests will not be honored. Written requests must be submitted in sufficient time to allow the Diaconate and the Session time to consider the request during the course of their regular meetings. After review the Session will notify the applicant in writing of the outcome. If the request is approved the applicant will be required to sign the Church Facility Reservation and Request and Agreement form affirming the agreement. At that time the event will be placed on the church calendar by the Session.

## Fees

Use of church facilities is subject to a use and maintenance fee. Fees will vary based upon which facilities are requested and their duration of use. The applicant will be advised of the cost upon approval of their request and a deposit will be required at that time. Full payment of fees, in addition to the deposit must be made before the scheduled use of the facilities. The deposit may be forfeited if the applicant decides not to use the facilities on the dates reserved or if damage results from their use. Church members are not required to pay a fee for usage because maintenance of the facilities is derived from members tithes and offerings.

## Facility Use Guidelines

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol will be allowed on church property at any time.
2. Smoking Policy: Smoking is not permitted on church property.
3. Drug Policy: Illegal drugs are prohibited on church property. Prescription drugs are permitted as long as they are in the possession of the person listed on the prescription or the spouse, child, or parent of the prescription holder. (modified 6-7-17)
4. Banners, placards, flags, and other displays are prohibited unless requested and approved at the time of the application. All such displays will be allowed only inside of the facility and must be removed after the event.
5. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
6. Food and beverages are not allowed in the church building or the rooms immediately behind the sanctuary. Food and beverages are permitted in all other areas.
7. The sound system in the sanctuary can be used, however adjustments to the equipment are prohibited.
8. No one is allowed in the balcony except for the person operating the audio system. Photography from the balcony is prohibited unless arranged and approved as part of the Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement.

9. Kitchen facilities in the Family Life Center are for serving and warming only. The kitchen is not designed or approved for cooking.
10. Clean up of the facilities will be the responsibility of the persons or group who reserved the facilities and is to be accomplished before leaving the property. It is expected that all church equipment, such as tables and chairs, be returned to their original placement and that the facility be left as clean as found.
11. If the person requesting use of the facilities is a member in good standing at Fairview, he or she will be responsible to coordinate with the Diaconate to make sure the facilities are prepared for the event and are properly cleaned and returned to their original set up.
12. If the person requesting use of the facilities is not a member of Fairview, a member of Fairview will be assigned to oversee the event to insure that the agreed upon terms are satisfied.
13. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, or violation of the alcohol, smoking, or drug policies will result in the offender being required to leave the premises.

## Wedding Guidelines

In addition to the Facility Use Guidelines listed above in this policy, the following guidelines also apply to use of the facilities for weddings.

1. Floral displays may be placed in the sanctuary or Family Life Center at any time during the day of the wedding, unless the wedding is on Sunday. In that event, no placement of decorations may be made prior to 1:00 PM. Bridal and attendant's flowers are normally provided one hour before the ceremony. The bride will be provided a room for dressing immediately prior to the service.
2. Chase candles (or paradise candles) are required as they do not drip.
3. Flashbulbs should not be used during the marriage ceremony. Their use detracts from the sacredness of the vows and is considered inappropriate. Photographers are to behave in such a way as not to detract from the solemnity of the service.

4. If pews are to be marked, ribbon markers may be used. Small flowers or a small amount of greenery may be used as markers. They must be secured with a clip or hang-on hooks. Tape is not to be used to secure wiring or any other item to the carpet. NO TAPE OR TACKS are to be used in the sanctuary.
5. Rice or bird seed is not to be used anywhere on the property as part of the celebration.
6. Special church holiday decorations are not to be moved or altered when weddings take place during the holiday season.
7. Special Music should be noted in the application and will require approval by the pastor. Musical accompanists, such as pianists or organists may be provided by the church upon request if available. An honorarium is required for their participation.
8. In the interest of safety, an aisle cloth is not to be used.
9. The pulpit and pulpit cloth are not to be moved or removed.
10. Wall plaques may be draped upon request.

The Session

Fairview Presbyterian Church

