

**[INSERT NAME OF LOCAL CHURCH OF GOD CONGREGATION]
FACILITIES USE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Adopted by the Church and Pastor's Council on _____

1. Preface.

- Purposes and Beliefs. [INSERT NAME OF LOCAL CHURCH OF GOD CONGREGATION] (hereinafter the "Church") is established for religious, educational, and charitable purposes, specifically to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and to own such properties and conduct such services and activities as will be effective in accomplishing the purposes stated above.

The Church adheres to the Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments set forth in the Church of God Book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance (the *Minutes of the General Assembly*, as amended from time to time).

- Purpose of this Policy. Under the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution, the Church has the legal right to free exercise of religion and freedom of association. These rights permit the Church to limit the use of its property and facilities and all other property under its control, (collectively, the "Facility") to activities, events, meetings, and other uses that advance, directly or indirectly, its religious purposes, mission, and beliefs. If the use of the Facility conveys a message that is inconsistent with the Church's purposes and beliefs, it would be a violation of the Church's religious practices and faith. The Church must convey a consistent message as part of its witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and must avoid the confusion that would be created by use that is contrary to the beliefs or practices of the Church.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all use of the Church's property and facilities is for activities that further its religious purposes, mission, and statement of faith, as discerned and directed by the Church and Pastor's Council. The Church sees its property as holy and set apart to worship God.

2. Authority and Approval.

- Content of Policy. This Facility Use Policy and Procedures (the "Policy") contains details regarding the individuals and groups permitted to use the Facility, the priority of use, the permissible uses of the Facility, a schedule of fees, the procedure for applying to use the Facility, and requirements and guidelines for using different parts of the Facility.

- Authorization of Officer. The Pastor is authorized by the Church and Pastor's Council to ensure that all uses of the Facility advance the purposes of the Church and are consistent with the requirements of this Policy.
- Amendment. Amendments to this Policy must be approved by the Church and Pastor's Council and must be consistent with the Church of God Book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance (the *Minutes of the General Assembly*, as amended from time to time).

3. Use of Facility in Furtherance of the Church's Religious Purposes.

3.1 Permitted Uses. The Church's facilities are **not** open to the general public. In furtherance of its religious purposes and mission, the Church makes its facilities available to its ministries and members, and to churches and other religious organizations (1) with beliefs and practices that are consistent with orthodox, Biblical Christianity and not inconsistent with the Practical Commitments, and (2) that utilize the Church's facilities to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, non-religious, tax-exempt charitable, educational, and civic groups engaged in nonprofit activities that promote the flourishing and common good of society in a manner that is consistent with Biblical principles and not inconsistent with the Practical Commitments may be eligible to use the Church's facilities where such use allows the Church to demonstrate the Gospel and Biblical principles through its hospitality and service, subject to the other sections of this policy.

3.2 Impermissible Uses. The Church's facilities may not be used by groups holding or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the Church's religious purposes or the Practical Commitments. Nor may its facilities be used to engage in or promote activities that are inconsistent with the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible. Without limitation, the following beliefs, practices and activities are inconsistent with the religious purposes of the Church, and thus groups that hold, advocate or engage in such beliefs or practices are ineligible to use the Church's facilities:

- Any religious or philosophical belief, teaching or practice, or promotion of a worldview, that is inconsistent with orthodox, Biblical Christianity.
- Practice or advocacy of sexual conduct outside the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.
- Practice or advocacy of activities that violate treatment of all human life (born or unborn) as sacred, created in the image of God.
- Advocacy of gambling, or the use of alcohol or controlled substances.

3.3 Determination of Eligibility. The Pastor is responsible to determine whether a group is eligible to use the Church's facilities in accordance with this Policy, and

shall confer with the Church and Pastor's Council in instances where he deems further input is warranted.

3.4 **Priority of Use.** Use of the Church's facilities is to be granted in the following order or priority:

- Members of the Church, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry of the Church
- Non-members in the following priority:
 - Churches and religious tax-exempt organizations that adhere to the Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments
 - Churches and religious tax-exempt organizations with beliefs and practices that are consistent with orthodox, Biblical Christianity and not inconsistent with the Practical Commitments
 - Individuals and non-religious tax-exempt charitable, educational, and civic groups engaged in nonprofit activities that promote the flourishing and common good of society in a manner that is consistent with Biblical principles and not inconsistent with the Practical Commitments

4. **Application and Scheduling Procedures.** Application to use the Facility may be made to _____ by submitting the individual or organization name, contact person, contact information, requested use for the facility, dates of use, and any background information on the organization requesting use (mission, vision, website, etc.). The Church will begin its screening process upon application and respond within _____ days as to whether the Facility is available and whether the use is consistent with the requirements of this Policy

5. **Fee Schedule.** Upon approval of application for use of Facility, a \$_____ security deposit is due. A certificate of insurance for at least \$_____ of coverage must be provided. Other fees for use are as follows: [Insert Fee Schedule]

6. **Facility Use Regulations.** All individuals and organizations that use the Facility shall follow the following regulations, a copy of which shall be provided to each user:

- The Facility may not be used to engage in or promote activities that are inconsistent with the Declaration of Faith and Practical Commitments set forth in the Church of God Book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance (the *Minutes of the General Assembly*, as amended from time to time), or the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible.
- Alcohol, gambling, smoking, and drug use are not permitted anywhere in the Facility or on Church property.
- Organizations and individuals using the Facility are restricted to the areas reserved and approved for use.

- Church equipment may only be used with express permission. Equipment must be returned to the place it was found when arriving at the Facility on the date of use.
- All individuals and/or organizations that use the Facility shall sign the acknowledgement and affirmation attached as Exhibit A to this Policy.

EXHIBIT A
[INSERT NAME OF LOCAL CHURCH OF GOD CONGREGATION]
AFFIRMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FACILITY USE
REGULATIONS

User of the Facility acknowledges that it has read and understood the Church's Facility Regulations. User of the Facility affirms that it will abide by the Church's Facility Use Regulations during its use of the Facility on _____.

User of the Facility understands that it will be responsible for any damages to the Facility resulting from the use. Any disputes between the Church and User of the Facility shall be submitted to Christian mediation for resolution.

Name of Organization, Group, or Individual User: _____

Signature: _____
Print Name: _____
Date: _____