**FIRST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BUCKEYE LAKE**

**CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY**

**Purpose Statement**

The First Community 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 to bring God glory. 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, among other places, the Church's Constitution and By-Laws. Nor may Church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with the Church's faith or moral teachings. The Pastor, or his official designee, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, is the final decision-maker concerning the use of 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. (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Second, it is very important that the Church present a consistent message to the community, and that the Church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing 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 cause confusion and scandal to Church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the Church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its 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 Church 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. (Colossians 3:17)

**Approved Users and Priority of Use**

The Pastor, or his official designee, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, must approve all uses of Church facilities. Priority shall be given to Church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the Church. Church facilities and equipment may 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 consistent with the Church's faith and practice.
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 Church staff.

**Facility Use Hours**

Facilities are available between the hours of 10:00AM and 8:00PM. Use outside of these hours may be approved by the Pastor, or his official designee, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.

**Scheduling Events**

Facility use requests shall be made to the designated member of the Board of Trustees by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form. The event will be reserved and placed on the Church calendar only when the Pastor, or his official designee, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, approves the use.

**Fees**

Use of Church facilities is subject to a use and maintenance fee of $250.00 to pay for the upkeep of Church facilities. Church members are not required to pay a fee for usage because maintenance of the facilities are derived from member tithes and offerings.

**Facility Use Guidelines**

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served or consumed in any Church facilities nor on any Church grounds.
2. Smoking Policy: No smoking is permitted in any Church facility nor on any Church grounds.
3. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved. The Church facilities are monitored by a security system that will be armed in the areas that are not reserved.
4. Food and beverages are not permitted in the Sanctuary.
5. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to their original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
6. All lights and ceiling fans must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
7. Individuals and groups are responsible for cleaning up any messes created during facility use. The cost to repair or replace any damaged property or equipment, including tables and chairs, will be assessed to the individual or group using the facility at the time the damage was incurred.
8. If Church facilities are used on Sunday afternoon or evening, the individuals or groups using the facilities are required to take out any trash to the outdoor trash cans and take those cans to the side of the road in front of the parsonage.
9. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on all Church property. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the property.
10. All persons or groups 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 sufficient to cover their liability.