

Christ Lutheran Church

Policies on Use of Facilities

1. General Policy

- a. Christ Lutheran Church of Forest Hills, Pennsylvania, (CLC) believes that its property and facilities are to be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring glory to God.
- b. The primary purpose and use of the facilities and properties of CLC is for regular divine worship services and the ministries, fellowship activities, and business of the organizations of the church, such as the Voters' Assembly, Church Council, Christian Education, Stewardship, Outreach, and the Womens' Service Guild.
- c. In the interest of Christian fellowship, the use of certain facilities may be made available to members of CLC and their families under conditions described below.
- d. Although CLC is not a public accommodation and its facilities are not generally open to the public, certain facilities may be made available to approved community organizations as a witness to our faith, and in a spirit of Christian service that is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- e. 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 teachings. This policy is based upon our belief that allowing our property and facilities to be used for purposes that we determine are contrary to this church's beliefs would be an endorsement of those purposes and a contradiction and grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22). Further, it is 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 Christian life and as a witness to others that is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The teachings of CLC are those of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)¹, Significant among the moral teachings are those on marriage, gender, and sexuality. We believe that God, in creating the world, created humanity in His image, as male and female, and gave marriage to be the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24), a gift to be held in honor and kept pure (Heb. 13:4; 1 Thess. 4:2-5). Marriage between one man and one woman for life uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His Church. (Eph. 5:21-33.) The LCMS believes that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32) and believes that, on the basis of Scripture, marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman" (Gen. 2:2-24; Matt. 19:4-6).

- f. Any use of the church's facilities is subject to conditions for specific facilities as described below, may require approval by the Pastor or the Board of Elders, must be scheduled through church office, and is subject to preemption due to funerals or other unanticipated events.

2. Use of the Sanctuary

- a. The use of the sanctuary (the church) is restricted to the following:
 - Sunday, weekday, and special worship services including those defined by the church's "Policy on Church Rites"²
 - Voters meetings and gatherings of church-sponsored educational or fellowship activities
 - Gatherings of LCMS Circuit, Area, or District organizations
 - Special services or other gatherings of sister LCMS congregations
- b. Any use of the sanctuary other for than worship services must be approved by the Pastor or the Board of Elders and must be scheduled through the church office.

¹ <https://www.lcms.org/about/beliefs>

² <http://www.christlutheranfh.org/formslinks.aspx>

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3. Use of the Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Library Area, Church Grounds and Parking Lot

- a. The use of these areas is normally limited to the following:
 - Church sponsored fellowship and educational activities
 - Meetings of church organizations
 - Social events arranged and sponsored by church members or families of church members, subject to Conditions of Use below
 - National, state, or municipal elections
- b. Requests for use of these areas by community groups whose purposes and beliefs are in accordance with the General Policy above and who agree to comply with the Conditions of Use below may be approved subject to approval by the Board of Trustees, the Board of Elders, and the Pastor.

4. Use of Educational Wing (Classrooms)

- a. The normal and priority use of the classrooms is for:
 - Educational programs and ministries of CLC including Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Adult Bible Classes
 - Christian Day School and Early Learning Center (not currently active)
 - Meetings and fellowship activities of the Womens' Service Guild and other fellowship groups of the congregation
 - Business meetings of the Church Council and boards, and committees of the congregation
- b. Occasional or casual use of the classrooms may be scheduled by members or families of members subject to Conditions of Use below.
- c. In the interest of Christian fellowship and of good stewardship of this space, rooms not required for CLC purposes may be rented to outside organizations with the approval of the Voters' Assembly. Any such organization must have an educational, fellowship, or human care mission and the organization must sign a contract agreeing to the limitations of the General Policy above and any specific conditions that may apply.

5. Conditions of Use (applicable to both church and outside entities)

- a. Advance registration or notice to the Church Office is required. A signed agreement may be required subject to the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
- b. A security deposit or a fee to cover the cost of clean-up and maintenance may be requested at the discretion of the Board of Trustees depending on the scope of the event.
- c. Groups are restricted to those areas of the facility that the group has reserved and to the scheduled times for the event.
- d. Adult supervision is required at all times.
- e. Food and beverages are restricted to the kitchen, the fellowship hall, the library if pre-arranged, and the outside grounds. They are specifically prohibited in the sanctuary, except that water bottles may be used by musicians.
- f. Responsible serving of low-alcohol products such as beer or punch is permitted if arranged in advance. The sponsors are reminded that serving alcohol to minors is prohibited.
- g. Smoking and the use of any smokeless tobacco product are prohibited in all indoor church facilities.
- h. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on all church premises.
- i. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
- j. All trash must be removed or placed in containers depending on arrangements with the Trustees.
- k. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
- l. CLC is not responsible for theft or damage to personal property brought into the building.

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