

## **MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL FACILITY USE POLICY**

### **Statement of Purpose**

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and maintained through the stewardship of the members of Mission Lutheran Church – To God alone be the glory. Mission Lutheran 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 Mission Lutheran Church Constitution and Bylaws. Nor may facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed by the pastor, the Board of Elders and the church council as inconsistent with, or contrary to the Word of God as taught by the Missouri Synod – Lutheran Church. The pastor and the Board of Elders are the final decision-makers on whether a person or group is allowed to use church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons:

1. Mission Lutheran Church and School may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to the Word of God. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict scripture would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of Mission Lutheran Church's faith and religious practice. See 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.
2. It is very important to Mission Lutheran Church that it presents a consistent message to the community, which the church and school 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 Mission Lutheran 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 MLC 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 Word of God use any church facility. Nor may facilities be used in any way that contradicts biblical teaching. 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 and the Board of Elders must approve all uses of church and school facilities. Priority shall generally be given to members of Mission Lutheran 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 Mission Lutheran 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 Mission Lutheran Church's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by church and school staff.

### **Facility Use Hours**

Facilities are available between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Use outside these hours may be approved by the Board of Trustees.

### **Scheduling Events**

Requests for facility use may be made to the secretary or pastor by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the MLC council approves the use.

### **Fees**

The assessment of fees may be adjusted or waived at the discretion of the pastor, the Board of Elders and the church council.

These fees are normally for non-church related groups, but may be changed for any group or individual. This charge is for one calendar day of use for the time period specified in the application.

Sanctuary: (Capacity of about 100 people) \$300.00

Luther Hall: (Capacity of about 30 people) \$150.00

Classrooms and Meeting Rooms: \$75.00

There is a fee of \$50 per night for overnight groups to cover janitorial and utility costs.

All fees, payable to Mission Lutheran Church, are due at least one week before the event.

Church members shall not be required to pay a fee for usage because maintenance of the facilities will be derived from member tithes and offerings.

### **Facility Use Guidelines**

1. Alcohol Policy: Any alcohol use must be consistent with New Mexico law and approved in advance by the pastor and the Board of Elders.

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. No food or beverages are allowed in the sanctuary with the exception of water bottles.
5. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
6. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
7. Clean-up is the responsibility of the group using the facility. There will be a \$50 clean-up fee for use of the facility or \$100 for the use of the kitchen unless clean-up is done to the satisfaction of the Board of Trustees representative.
8. 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.
9. Any person or group must sign the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form prior to reservation of church facilities.
10. Use of facilities overnight also shall be subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.
11. Use of piano, organ and sound equipment also shall be subject to approval by the Director of Music.
12. Use of classrooms also shall be subject to approval by the MLC School Administrator.

### **Insurance**

For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities must obtain liability insurance coverage in the amount of at least \$500,000. The user must also sign a "Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement."

## **Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement**

Name of person or organization requesting use of facilities (please print):

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Please state whether you are a: ☐ Church Member ☐ Church-Sponsored Ministry ☐ Non-Member  
☐ Non-Member Group/Organization

### **Contact Information:**

Address:

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Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Please list the names of the organization's office-holders and leaders:

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Regardless of type of user, please describe which church facilities you are requesting use of and the purpose for which you intend to use the facilities:

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What date(s) and time(s) are you requesting to use the facilities:

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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 church 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 certificate of insurance for at least \$500,000 of coverage, and any other fees required by the church.
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 pastor'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.
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 the American Arbitration Association, or any other mutually acceptable arbitration service.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_