

Cobblestone Community Church

Facility Use Policy and Facility Use Request and Agreement

Adopted August 11, 2016

Purpose Statement

The facilities of Cobblestone Community Church were provided through the benevolence of the God of the Bible, evidenced primarily in the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used to bring God glory (see 1Corinthians 10:31) and for the fellowship of the Body of Christ (see Hebrews 10:24).

The buildings and grounds of the church are not to be considered public spaces; rather, they are given by God to help the church obey the instruction of Scripture to assemble, “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:25). Additionally, in recognition of God’s grace and generosity, all people are heartily invited to come and worship with the people of Cobblestone and hear the gospel of Jesus Christ during any and all of the worship services (see Romans 1:4-5).

In addition to the invitation above, the church wishes that its grounds be used by neighbors and other members of the community, without written permission, for the purposes of recreation by individuals and small groups. Recreational activities may include, for example: walking the prayer trails, using the playground, riding bicycles, walking dogs, etc. In keeping with our charge to be good stewards of the property, however, the church must insist that no motor vehicles be operated off the parking lot and driveway, except by special permission.

As representatives of Christ in the world (see Matthew 5:14-16), the church also desires that its facilities be used by approved persons and groups who are not members of the church, for the benefit of families and the community. Cobblestone will make every possible effort to accommodate events and activities that are beneficial. The primary purpose of this *Facility Use Policy* is to determine whether any proposed use is acceptable, according to God’s intent for the facilities and His instructions given in Scripture. Article 1 of our *Statement of Faith* declares: “We believe that the Bible... is the final authority for faith and life.” The church reserves the right, therefore, to consult and be guided by the Bible in determining the suitability of any and all proposed uses of its facilities.

Cobblestone’s core beliefs and moral teachings are summarized in the church’s Constitution, Bylaws, *Statement of Faith*, and *Statement on Sexual Purity*, among other places. Church facilities must not be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church’s beliefs and moral teachings. To be clear in at least one circumstance: church facilities must not be used for any wedding ceremony that involves any combination of persons to be married other than one man and one woman (see Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4). Persons or groups requesting use of the church’s facilities must consult the documents listed

above and gain any clarification necessary from the Cobblestone Board of Elders, which is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities. The Board of Elders may act through an official designee, such as the Senior Pastor or other staff member.

Approved Users and Priority of Use

All use of the church facilities must be approved by the Board of Elders or their official designee. Cobblestone will make every reasonable effort to provide all the information necessary for potential users to determine their ability to abide by this *Facility Use Policy*.

Approved Users: Church facilities and equipment may be made available to persons or groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their 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 Use Request and Agreement" form (pages 5 and 6 of this document).
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.

Priority of Use: Generally, priority of use 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. More specifically, priority of use will be established as follows:

1. Church-wide Cobblestone events and activities will take top priority, followed by events and activities for:
 2. Cobblestone groups;
 3. Individuals and families within Cobblestone;
 4. Churches and Christian organizations not affiliated with Cobblestone;
 5. Community organizations (charitable, civic, social, educational, etc.);
 6. Individuals and families not affiliated with Cobblestone;
 7. All other.

Facility Use Hours

Facilities are available for use between the hours of 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. Use outside these hours may be approved by the Board of Elders or their official designee.

Scheduling Events

Facility use requests are to be made to the Communications Director by submitting the “Church Facility Use Request and Agreement” form. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the Board of Elders or their official designee approves the use. The approval process will generally take fifteen business days to complete. No reservations may be made more than twelve months in advance of the date of the event. All facility use requests are subject to availability.

Fees

Cobblestone will make every reasonable effort to provide use of its facilities free of charge to approved users. Approved users will be given every reasonable opportunity to provide for the setup and clean-up of their event. If, however, it is determined by the church that a fee for custodial and/or technical services is the most prudent method in a particular user’s case, a modest fee, well below market value, will be charged. The Cobblestone staff will keep a schedule of those fees on file. (Note: Because of the complexity of the audio/visual equipment on-site, Cobblestone will, in most cases, require a church-trained technician to operate the equipment, and a fee will generally be charged.)

Facility Use Guidelines

1. The conduct of all persons attending events is expected to be respectful of the property itself and of others in adjoining spaces or succeeding times.
2. No alcohol may be served or consumed in church facilities or on the grounds.
3. Users may not bring the following items into church facilities or onto the grounds: Firearms; explosives; illegal drugs/substances; pornographic or provocative materials; political materials favoring any particular party, issue, or candidate (except in the eventuality that the facilities are being used as a polling place).
4. Groups are restricted to the areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
5. All reasonable precautions must be taken to protect surfaces (floors, walls, etc.) from spills of food and beverages.
6. Furnishings (tables and chairs, etc.) must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
7. Users must leave the facility in the same (or better) condition it was in prior to the event. Users must remove all items associated with their event immediately, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
8. All decorations in the facility and on the grounds must be in keeping with the church’s mission and values, and must not result in damage to the property or furnishings.

9. When children are in attendance they must be under the control of their parents or other adults at all times and are not permitted to roam freely on church property. All children's or youth activities shall be supervised at all times by the appropriate number of Cobblestone staff members or a minimum of two adults over the age of 21.
10. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
11. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol use are strictly prohibited on church premises. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premises.
12. Cobblestone reserves the right to restrict the facility use privileges of any person or group who violates these guidelines.

Insurance

For all non-church-sponsored events, the person or group using the facilities assumes liability for injuries to persons attending the event and for damages to or loss of the user's property. Cobblestone does not assume liability for any individuals or groups granted permission to use the facility outside of the official church schedule.

Church Facility Use Request and Agreement

Name of person requesting use of facilities: _____

If requesting on behalf of an organization, name of organization: _____

Please state whether you are a: Church Member Church-Sponsored Ministry

Non-Member Non-Member Group/Organization

Contact Information:

Address: _____

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: _____

Please list the organization's website, if any: _____

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

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: _____

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

If you are requesting use of the church's facilities for a wedding and/or wedding reception, please list the names and contact information of the bride and groom:

Bride:

Groom:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please list the name, contact information, and religious affiliation of the person officiating the wedding: _____

Please describe the marriage preparation counseling, if any, undertaken by the bride and groom:

I affirm that:

1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its 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 of which I am aware or become aware to church staff.
3. I understand that on the date of my event, I will need to pay any fees required by the church.
4. 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 approval of the Board of Elders or their official designee, which is conditioned in part on my agreement to the requirements in the *Facility Use Policy*, a copy of which I have read and understood.
5. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this proposed use of facilities.
6. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts (see Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-7). Accordingly, users of the facility agree to attempt resolution of any disputes through Christian mediation.

Requestor (sign and print): _____

Date: _____

Cobblestone representative (sign and print): _____

Date: _____