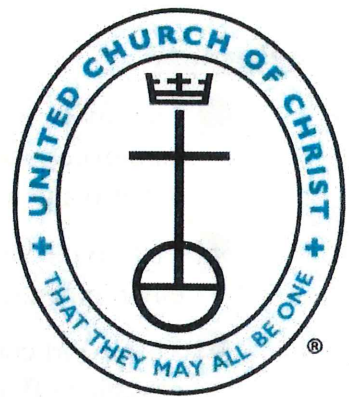




*United Church of Christ
First Congregational of Norwich, NY
Tobacco and Nicotine-Free Policy*



Background

Numerous studies have found that tobacco smoke is a major contributor to indoor air pollution, and that breathing secondhand smoke is a cause of disease in healthy nonsmokers, including heart disease, stroke, lung and other cancers, asthma and ear infections in children, and SIDS. Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States, taking roughly 41,000 lives prematurely each year. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

The U.S. Surgeon General has determined that the simple separation of smokers and nonsmokers within the same air space does not eliminate nonsmokers' exposure to secondhand smoke.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that secondhand smoke cannot be reduced to safe levels by high rates of ventilation. Air cleaners, which are capable of filtering the particulate matter and odors in smoke, do not eliminate all the known toxins in secondhand smoke.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that the risk of heart attack and coronary heart disease associated with exposure to tobacco smoke is non-linear at low doses, increasing rapidly with relatively small doses such as those received from secondhand smoke or actively smoking one or two cigarettes a day, and has warned that all patients at increased risk of coronary heart disease or with known coronary artery disease should avoid all indoor environments that permit smoking.

Unregulated high-tech smoking devices, commonly referred to as electronic smoking devices, or "e-cigarettes," closely resemble and purposefully mimic the act of smoking by having users inhale vaporized liquid nicotine created by heat through an electronic ignition system. After testing a number of e-cigarettes from two leading manufacturers, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) determined that various samples tested contained not only nicotine but also detectable levels of known carcinogens and toxic chemicals, including tobacco-specific nitrosamines and diethylene glycol, a toxic chemical used in antifreeze. Electronic smoking devices produce an aerosol or vapor of undetermined and potentially harmful substances, which may appear similar to the smoke emitted by traditional tobacco products. Their use in places where smoking of traditional tobacco products is prohibited creates concern and confusion and leads to difficulties in enforcing the smoking prohibitions.

United Church of Christ First Congregational of Norwich is committed to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for its members and their families, employees, and visitors of this congregation.

Purpose

- To provide a safe and healthy environment for congregation members and their families, employees, and visitors, and to promote a positive, proactive approach to eliminating tobacco and nicotine products.
- To provide leadership in promoting a holistic view of health by supporting smoke-free environments.
- To support congregation members and their families, employees, and visitors with their cessation efforts in becoming free from tobacco use and nicotine dependency.

Congregation Policy


As of January 24, 2023, United Church of Christ First Congregational of Norwich is a tobacco and nicotine-free facility. Tobacco and nicotine products, including any product made or derived from tobacco or that contains nicotine, whether synthetic or natural, that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, or any component, part, or accessory of a tobacco product, including but not limited to: cigarettes; electronic smoking devices; cigars; little cigars; snuff; snus; bidis; dip; chewing tobacco; and other kinds and forms of tobacco (FDA-approved cessation materials are exempt) shall not be permitted in any congregation facilities, indoors or outdoors. The tobacco and nicotine-free policy applies to all facilities, owned or leased, regardless of location, by the United Church of Christ First Congregational of Norwich. Tobacco and nicotine products shall not be permitted in any congregation owned buildings, facilities, or vehicles, or on congregation grounds, including lawn areas and parking lots.

United Church of Christ First Congregational of Norwich will not accept any money from either the tobacco industry or the electronic smoking device industry for events and programs, including but not limited to sponsorships, scholarship funds, or building renovations. Such funding is counterintuitive to our faith community's holistic view on health.

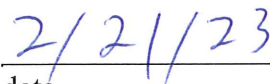
Implementation of Policy

The emphasis on enforcing this smoke-free policy is through voluntary compliance:

- The property will be signed.
- Information will be posted on the United Church of Christ First Congregational of Norwich website and within various program and/or event written materials.
- Staff will make periodic observations of these outdoor areas to monitor compliance and help to promote awareness of the smoke-free policy.



John Kolb, Moderator



date