

The United Church of Christ, First Congregational
11 West Main St., Norwich NY 13815
(607) 334-3434

POLICY FOR USE OF CHURCH BUILDING AND GROUNDS
(updated 10/15/2024)

Our church's mission includes making our building available to various social, civic and charitable groups. We affirm this as a ministry to the community and as a forum to address issues of concern. Permission for use of our building does not imply approval of all the activities or positions of any particular group. However, we reserve the right to refuse use of the building to groups which we believe promote values that are destructive of the spiritual, physical or mental health of the community and individuals in it.

Many people use this building every week and we need the cooperation of each group to make this space available to all. We ask that you observe the following guidelines:

SCHEDULING

- Schedule the room you need with the Parish Coordinator through the church office (334-3434) as soon as you know the time and date. A Building Request form can be obtained from the Parish Coordinator or downloaded from our website and can be submitted after you check the date availability.
- Allow enough time for set-up and clean-up when you set the time limits.
- The Parish Coordinator is responsible for routine scheduling of the building facilities. Within the Parish Coordinator's discretion, requests for use may be referred to the Executive Council for review and final approval before such use shall be allowed. Major events requiring use of several rooms or more than one day will be referred to the Executive Council for approval. The Moderator may be asked to resolve scheduling conflicts.
- Church groups are expected to schedule their meetings and, except in an emergency, cannot expect to use space at the last minute that has previously been reserved.
- Ordinarily scheduling is on a first-come, first-served basis, however church groups and meetings have priority and occasionally other events may have to be rescheduled. The church reserves the right to withdraw permission for previously scheduled use of facilities for unplanned worship needs of the church such as a funeral, or when weather or maintenance problems require closing the building.

SPECIAL REQUESTS NEEDING EXTRA APPROVAL

- Portable Sound System
- Church sound system and/or livestreaming run by church staff (Nave)
- Grand Piano (Nave)
- Organ (Nave)
- Large Screen TV (Nave)
- TV with DVD Player (portable)
- Projector for use with a laptop
- Extra tables and chairs or a special set-up can be arranged with at least two weeks notice.
- Parking Lot

PARKING

Due to limited space, permission to park in the church lot is **not** automatically granted with use of the building. Unless your group has specifically been granted parking privileges, please ask all persons not needing handicapped space or unloading supplies to park elsewhere.

INSURANCE

- As a condition of use, UCC, First Congregational must be held harmless from and against any claims, demands, liabilities or actions of any nature which may arise from or be claimed or connected in any manner from this use. If you, your group or organization is covered by a policy of liability insurance, the UCC, First Congregational must be added to that policy as an "additional insured", and proof of compliance provided by attaching a Certificate of Insurance to the Building Use Request form.
- Organizations wishing to bring property to the church for display or other purpose must arrange for their own adequate insurance protection.

FEES

- Use of Facility - No fees are charged for the use of church facilities except in unusual circumstances. A \$20 per hour custodial fee may be charged when the church is not left in satisfactory condition.

- Piano Tuning: *Policy for Use of the Pianos by Outside Organizations (Music Committee January 2011)* - Costs for tuning the piano for a concert by an outside organization will be shared between the church and the organization. In the event of financial need by the organization, the church may consider waiving the shared cost, at the discretion of the Director of Music Ministries. **Requests for tuning must be made through the church office at least 30 days in advance of the event.** If the request is made with less than 30 days notice, any additional charges assigned by the piano tuner will be the responsibility of the organization.

KITCHEN USE

Please provide your own coffee and beverage supplies unless prior permission has been granted to use church supplies. Directions for using the coffee machine are posted on the wall. Make sure the coffee machine is turned off before leaving.

NURSERY

The Nursery is not available unless specifically reserved. Adequate supervision must be provided for children playing there. It should be left clean after use. Please do not leave soiled diapers in the room.

LIVESTREAMING

- You are welcome to livestream any event with your own device.
- To use the church's livestream capabilities, arrangements can be made through the Parish Coordinator to request our staff to stream your event using our cameras, microphones and computer equipment. The AV staff will be paid by the church, but a donation to offset these costs is appreciated.

FOR EVENTS THAT PRESENT MUSIC

As the venue, we share responsibility with performers for having the proper copyright licenses. There are several requirements for use of copyrighted music:

Public Performance: The church maintains a license covering non-ticketed public performances of copyrighted music. Your event will be covered under that license.

Livestreaming: Livestreaming of copyrighted music requires a license.

- Music with copyrights held by ASCAP is covered under a license agreement between ASCAP and Youtube and Facebook, which allows *streaming* of copyrighted material without any additional license.
- For copyrighted material not covered by ASCAP, the church will be responsible for the required reporting under our licenses.*

Printed Lyrics: Printing of lyrics in the program and/or on the livestream requires a license and specific wording on the printed material or video stream. Wording will be provided by the church for your printed materials and given to our AV staff for the livestream. The church will be responsible for the required reporting under our licenses.*

Your Responsibilities if you are livestreaming or printing:

- If you are only providing a non-ticketed, public performance, no action is required on your part.
- If you are livestreaming or printing lyrics: at least two weeks prior to your event, you must provide all music selections including title, words by, music by, arranged by, publisher and copyright information to the church office. You must also tell the church office if you will be printing any lyrics. A form for this purpose is attached to the request form.

The Church's Responsibilities for livestreaming or printing:

The church office will verify if music is copyrighted and who holds the rights and do the required reporting.

***IMPORTANT:** Occasionally a piece of music is not covered by any of the church's copyright licenses. In that event, the church will seek to obtain permission and will cover the associated fees up to \$100. If the amount is over \$100, we will contact you to either arrange the fee or find a substitute piece.

PLEASE DO

- Designate a named individual to be the responsible contact with the Parish Coordinator and have them visit the church prior to the event to become familiar with the facility and to pick up a key during regular office hours. This individual is also responsible for seeing that the building is secured and all lights are out after the meeting and for returning the key promptly.
- Restrict activities to the requested rooms.
- Leave the rooms as found. Furniture should be returned to the original arrangement. The kitchen should be left clean and in good order. If any damage or malfunction happens, please report it to the office as soon as possible.

- If you are the last group in the building, be sure that both outside doors are locked and the lights are off.
- Refrain from playing the grand piano or organ unless permission has been granted to specifically named persons in advance.
- Provide adequate adult supervision for youth and children should. Adequate supervision is considered to be the presence of adults who are able to restrain running, horseplay, and occupancy of rooms not requested for use.
- Fill in and sign a Building Use Request form, stating you have read and agree to these guidelines.

PLEASE DO NOT

- Use Church facilities for private fund-raising purposes.
- Do not store anything in the basement without clearance from the Parish Coordinator.
- Do not prop open the outside doors to the church. This leads to problems with birds, insects and bats.
- We are a Tobacco Free Zone. Please respect our wishes that there be no smoking in the church building or on church property.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

Chris McSweeney – 607-373-5463

Pete Williams, Moderator – 607-244-9271