



## **Church Facility Use Policy**

*of the*

**First Baptist Church**

Magnolia, Arkansas

**Approved in Regular Members' Meeting**

**October 25, 2015**

## **Purpose Statement**

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members 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.

But 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, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The Senior Pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

Second, it is very 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 witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its 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 church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. 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. (Col 3:17.)

## **Approved Users and Priority of Use**

The Senior Pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church and church members. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to outside not-for-profit groups/organizations meeting the following qualifications:

1. A church member must be a part of the group.

2. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church's faith and practice.

3. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.

4. 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.

### **Facility Use Hours**

Requested hours of use must be approved by the Senior Pastor or official designee.

### **Scheduling Events**

Facility use requests shall be made to by submitting the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form to the church office. The event will be reserved and placed on the church calendar only when the pastor or official designee approves the use.

### **Fees**

Use of church facilities is subject to a use and maintenance fee. Church ministries are not required to pay a fee. All fees must be paid at least two weeks prior to the event.

### **Facility Use Guidelines**

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served in church facilities.

2. Smoking Policy: Smoking is not permitted in any church facility.

3. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.

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.

8. 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.

1 9. Any person or group must sign the “Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form prior  
2 to reservation of church facilities.

#### 4 **Facility Use for Weddings**

6 Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a  
7 woman, and Himself, First Baptist Church of Magnolia, Arkansas only recognizes marriages between a  
8 biological man and a biological woman. The Pastors and staff of First Baptist Church shall only  
9 participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Further, the  
10 Pastors and staff of First Baptist Church are not required to participate in any weddings and/or  
11 solemnize any vows. Finally, the facilities and property of First Baptist Church shall only host weddings  
12 between one man and one woman.

14 Guidelines of the church’s “Facility Use Policy” apply to the use of the building and property for a  
15 wedding. Additional facility requirements pertaining particularly to weddings can be found in the  
16 church’s “Wedding Policy”.

#### 17 **Facility Use for Funerals**

18 A Christian funeral affords an opportunity for the church and pastors to give comfort to the grieving  
19 from the Scriptures and to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The church facilities are available to  
20 members and non-members for such funerals. Officiating ministers from outside the church must affirm  
21 that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church’s faith  
22 and practice. The Senior Pastor or his designee must give final approval for a funeral of a non-church  
23 member and for any outside officiating minister.



# Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement

Name of person/organization requesting use of facilities: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state whether you are a:**

☐ Church Member ☐ Church-Sponsored Ministry ☐ Non-Member ☐ Non-Member 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: \_\_\_\_\_

1 **First Baptist Church of Magnolia, Arkansas Building Use Agreement**

2  
3 **I affirm that:**

4  
5 1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its faith  
6 or by persons or groups holding beliefs that contradict the church's faith.

7  
8 2. To the best of my knowledge the purpose for which I am requesting use of church facilities will not  
9 contradict the church's faith, and I commit to promptly disclose any potential conflict of which I am  
10 aware or become aware to church staff.

11  
12 3. I am not aware of any beliefs that are professed by me or the organization I represent and which is  
13 requesting use of the church's facilities that contradict the beliefs of the church. I agree to promptly  
14 disclose any potential conflicts in belief to church staff.

15  
16 4. I understand that upon approval of my facilities use request, I will need to provide a security deposit  
17 in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

18  
19 5. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be generally available to the public, and  
20 that my use of these facilities is subject to the Senior Pastor's approval, which is conditioned in part on  
21 my agreement to the requirements in the "Church Facility Use Policy," a copy of which I have read and  
22 understood.

23  
24 6. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this  
25 proposed use of facilities.

26  
27 7. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts.  
28 See, generally, Matthew Chapter 18 and 1 Corinthians Chapter 6. Accordingly, users of the facility agree  
29 to attempt resolution of any disputes through Christian mediation.

30  
31  
32 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

33  
34 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

35  
36 Date: \_\_\_\_\_