

LCP-4 Facilities Use Policy

Change history:

Date:	Change:	Made by:
3/20/13	Modified for new governance, as provided to the Leadership Council for review.	LM
4/10/2014	Changed Policy Number to match Leadership Council Operating Policy	LC (TS)
11/1/2016	Modified to change fee structure and reflect other changes in responsibilities for approving facilities use	NB

Facilities Use Policy

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
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The Leadership Council of Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ (“Plymouth”) has approved the policy as described on these pages for the use of Plymouth buildings and other property.

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SECTION 1: BUILDING USE POLICY

To ensure that Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ buildings are used as effectively as possible, the Leadership Council has established the following policies regarding their use by all individuals and organizations:

1. Building use must be scheduled in advance with the Office Manager during regular office hours. If a building use is cancelled, please give notice of cancellation to the Office Manager as soon as possible. Additional scheduling requirements and processes for non-church use are contained in the section "Scheduling Non-Church Use of Facilities."
2. The Plymouth sanctuary may be used for weddings of church members or their immediate families. Other weddings (referred to as "non-member weddings") may be conducted in the sanctuary at the discretion of the Senior Minister. Required fees are shown in the current fee schedule, which is part of the Building Use Application Form.
3. All users of the building are responsible for setting up and cleaning up after their activities and for returning the building at least to the state it was in prior to setup:
 - A. Tables and counters that were used must be cleaned or wet-wiped as needed.
 - B. Folding chairs or tables that were used must be returned to their original locations.
 - C. The fellowship hall must be vacuumed after each use.
 - D. The kitchen must be cleaned and swept after each use (a broom and dustpan are kept in the kitchen for this purpose).
 - E. All dishes must be washed and put away after each use.
4. During regular office hours, opening and closing of the building is the responsibility of church staff members possessing Level Two (or higher) keys.
5. After regular office hours, all meeting/activity leaders share responsibility for closing the building.
6. Persons responsible for closing the building must perform the following functions prior to leaving:
 - A. Windows must be closed and locked.
 - B. All lights must be turned off.
 - C. ALL exterior doors must be checked, closed, and locked as needed by the last church activity leader leaving the building. Leaders of non-church activities who possess a Level One church key must check and lock the general access door that it opens.
7. No smoking is allowed in the building at any time, and cigarette butts should be discarded only in designated receptacles.

8. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally not allowed in the building except for wine with communion. Requests for exceptions to this policy must be presented to the Leadership Council. Exceptions will not be made for outside groups.
9. The following guidelines must be followed for attachment [hanging, sticking, mounting] of materials to ceilings, floors and walls of church rooms:
 - A. Use of cellophane (Scotch-type) tape on painted walls, woodwork and glass is prohibited.
 - B. Push-pins and thumb tacks may be used only on designated bulletin boards.
 - C. Making holes in walls, doors, installed cabinets, etc. (i.e., nails, tacks, screws, use of drills) is not allowed unless prior approval has been obtained from a member of the Board of Trustees.
 - D. All adhesives must be removed and cleaned off when a project is complete.
10. Any liquid spillage should be cleaned with wet toweling immediately. If there are any lasting effects, the Sexton should be notified (after office hours, a note should be left on the church office door).

SECTION 2: EQUIPMENT USE POLICY

To minimize the repair and replacement of church property, the Leadership Council has established the following policies regarding the use of various types of equipment and furniture. Permission to remove any equipment from Plymouth buildings is strictly limited to the members and staff of the church.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

The borrowing of kitchen equipment must be approved by the Office Manager and recorded on the sign-out sheet outside the kitchen door.

MOVABLE FURNITURE

Folding chairs and tables may be borrowed by members of Plymouth, but arrangements for their use must be cleared by the Office Manager.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

1. Electronic equipment (e.g. audiovisual equipment, VCR and TV) may only be removed from the church for use at a church-sponsored event. Electronic equipment can be checked out by church members or staff through the Office Manager and must be returned on time and to the proper place. The person checking out equipment is responsible for ensuring that it is used properly.
2. All P.A. system equipment must be set up by a trained staff person or member of Plymouth.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

1. Church staff members have priority for use of office equipment.

2. Copy and folding machines may be used only for church-related material. The Office Manager will assist in making copies. Violation of copyright law is a punishable offense.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

1. Use of the sanctuary organ and grand piano is limited to church music staff and others who have received prior approval from the Director of Music.
2. Other pianos should be used appropriately and must not be moved without approval of the Director of Music or one of the ministers.

SECTION 3: KEY USE POLICY

1. Plymouth has three levels of locking to permit making the facility available to outside groups while protecting church property and the privacy of staff.
 - A. Level One: Opens one general access door. This is the only key issued to non-members, as described in Section 4, "Scheduling Non-Church Use of Facilities."
 - B. Level Two: Opens all doors at Plymouth except the offices of pastoral and program staff members. This key is issued to church members as needed to perform their roles in the church organization. Exceptions to this rule require the approval of either a minister or program staff member and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
 - C. Level Three: Opens all doors at Plymouth. This key is issued only to staff members, deacons, and trustees. Exceptions to this rule require approval by both a pastoral staff member and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
2. All keys will be numbered, stamped DO NOT DUPLICATE, and issued by the Office Manager according to the guidelines above. The Office Manager will keep a record of each key recipient including the key number, the level of access granted, and any exception that was approved.
3. Church members with keys are required to return their key to the Office Manager when they leave the church position that required it. Key return requirements and processes for non-church use are contained in Section 4, "Scheduling Non-Church Use of Facilities."
4. The appropriate staff member may approve temporary key assignments during special events such as the Visiting Scholar Lectures. It is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that each key is returned immediately after the completion of the event and subsequent cleanup.

SECTION 4: NON-CHURCH USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES

APPROVAL FOR NON-CHURCH USE OF FACILITIES

1. The building and facilities of Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ exist primarily for use by its membership and staff for the pursuit of its mission under the governance of Leadership Council. When not being used for that purpose, they are made available for other (non-church) purposes as described below:

- A. Plymouth facilities may be used for recitals conducted by church members or by others who have been recommended by a member. Fees will be charged for recitals per the current fee schedule.
 - B. Plymouth facilities may be used by other organizations engaged in constructive activities that provide spiritual, educational, or social benefits to their participants or to the community. Typical uses by other organizations include religious programs or events, such as worship, education, service, mission or fellowship activities of other religious organizations. They also include meetings of service, civic, educational or social organizations.
 - C. The Plymouth fellowship hall, classrooms, and north room may be used by church members for personal events such as receptions and rehearsal dinners. Required fees are shown in the current fee schedule. Fellowship hall use by church members also includes minimal use of the kitchen.
2. Persons or organizations wishing to use Plymouth facilities for one of these purposes must first submit a Building Use Approval Form with all required signature(s) and approval(s).
- A. All recitals must be individually approved by the Director of Music, in consultation with the Music Committee Ministry Team (see Musical Instruments section in Equipment Use Policy).
 - B. All outside facility use by organizations must be approved yearly by the Office Manager and a member of the ministerial staff. Approval means that he or she has accepted the group's request for building use, has agreed to act as coordinator with the group, and has accepted responsibility for verifying that the group members who signed the Building Use Approval Form are fulfilling their obligations. Approval by a ministerial staff member includes verification of the class into which the organization has been placed (see section 4.5 of this policy).
 - C. Plymouth members who seek to use church facilities for personal events do not need prior approval but must still submit a Building Use Approval Form.
3. All unusual or exceptional requests (including financial hardship), as determined by the sponsor and/or indicated on the application, must first be referred to the Leadership Council. After their review, the Office Manager shall communicate the decision to the requester.
4. All activities conducted in Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ facilities, and the charter of any organization or program using them, must be compatible with the Mission Statement of the church. Examples of incompatibilities include discrimination against anyone desiring to participate or provoking ill will against another group of people.
5. Outside community organizations meeting the requirements above must indicate on the application, with agreement of their sponsoring person or group, which of the following classes accurately describe them. As indicated on the application, the group's classification will determine the building use fee structure that will be applied (see current fee schedule):
- A. "CLASS 1A" organizations are not-for-profit, do not charge participation fees, and actively and directly accomplish one or more of the missions stated in the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ Mission Statement. It is the intent that

organizations in this class make a required minimum donation consistent with their financial means and usage of the facilities.

- B. "CLASS 1B" organizations are not-for-profit groups that meet the criteria of Class 1A above but request special consideration due to financial hardship.
 - C. "CLASS 2" organizations and programs are those that either are for-profit or charge participation fees. It is the intent that organizations in this class be charged fees that reflect the value of the facilities being utilized.
6. The Office Manager may request evidence of IRS certification of tax exemption for not-for-profit groups.
 7. Due to Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ's tax-exempt status, for-profit groups or individuals will not be allowed to use the building for profit-making purposes, unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Leadership Council.

SCHEDULING NON-CHURCH USE OF FACILITIES

1. Prior to application for building use, a Building Use Approval Form must be submitted to the Office Manager. This form must contain the required approvals and must be signed by one or more persons accepting responsibility for the activities and conduct of all participants and for ensuring that all use is consistent with this policy.
2. If keys are needed for building access, each person who signed the Building Use Approval Form may request a Level One building key. These keys must not be loaned or passed to anyone else. If responsibility for an organization changes, the key must be brought back to the Office Manager who will reissue it after the appropriate signature is obtained on the Building Use Approval Form.
3. For recitals and Class 2 organizations, a key/damage deposit must accompany the submittal of the Building Use Approval Form. The Office Manager will refund this deposit at the request of the responsible person after it has been ascertained that all cleanup requirements have been met, any damage has been paid for, and all issued keys have been returned (see "Additional Rules for Non-Church Use of Facilities" below).
4. Prior to all non-church use of Plymouth facilities, a Building Use Application Form specifying the desired room(s) and date(s) must be submitted to the Office Manager. These forms may be submitted at any time after the completed Building Use Approval Form has been placed on file at the church. All fees for the church use specified on an application (as shown on the current fee schedule, which is part of the form) must be paid at the time it is submitted.
5. If a scheduled building use is no longer required, the Office Manager must be notified as soon as possible but no later than the Friday of the week preceding the date. Failure to give such notice may result in charges being assessed as if the meeting had occurred.
6. Top priority for church facilities is always given to Plymouth programs and events. With the exception of wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners, all scheduled non-church use of facilities must be considered as tentative. Should a conflict arise with a church program, another date or location will have to be selected for the conflicting non-church use. (In the case of conflicts between previously-scheduled uses by outside groups and a subsequent request for a desired use

by a Plymouth group or member, it is recommended that the Office Manager consult with the ministerial staff for a determination of whether the outside use should be preempted and rescheduled. While the policy correctly gives priority for church facility use to church members and staff, preemption of scheduled uses by outside groups should not be done lightly, indiscriminately or often.)

7. Once appropriate staff member(s) have been consulted, the Office Manager shall schedule building use requests on the church calendar. The Office Manager is responsible for informing the appropriate staff members, including custodians, about the impacts of the request and informing the requester about the restrictions and rules included in this policy.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR NON-CHURCH USE OF FACILITIES

1. All organizations and individuals using church facilities for non-church purposes shall be responsible for paying the full cost of repairing any damage incurred by their use of the facilities.
2. Failure to appropriately clean up or close the building after an activity (see Section 1, “Building Use Policy”) may lead to forfeiture of the key/damage deposit and loss of building use approval.
3. Permission from a staff member is required for placing event notices anywhere in the building.
4. Use of the kitchen is available only to recitals, Class 1 organizations, and personal events of church members.
 - A. Food must be catered (substantially prepared prior to being brought into the kitchen).
 - B. Church ovens and stove may only be used by church members.
 - C. Church dishes and dishwasher may only be used by church members who have paid the additional fee to use them.
5. Users must provide their own consumable supplies (coffee, napkins, paper, pens, etc.). Disposable products must be recyclable or compostable.
6. Users must haul away all trash generated as a result of their use, in bags that they provide.
7. Propping open church doors that cannot be unlocked with a Level One key is expressly prohibited. Other doors may be opened as needed from the inside to permit handicapped access during non-church building use, but they should otherwise remain fully closed (latched shut).