

Church Building, Grounds and Equipment Use Policy

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INTRODUCTION

This policy guides use of the buildings, grounds and equipment (facilities) of St. Matthew's United Methodist Church (UMC) and reflects our mission statement:

St. Matthew's is a welcoming community, nurturing and serving God's children so that all may find meaning and purpose through Jesus Christ.

TERMS

Church Group:

Any group affiliated with the UMC including members of our congregation or staff, any other UMC entity (e.g. higher level UMC entities or organizations such as UMC District Conference level groups), groups sponsored by St. Matthews (e.g. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts).

Non-church Group:

Any event by non-church members and groups that are not affiliated with nor sponsored by St Matthew's.

POLICY GUIDANCE AND GENERAL RULES

Use of St. Matthew's buildings, grounds and equipment must be in keeping with the general purposes of Christian fellowship. Approved by the Church Council, this document serves as a guide in decision making and as a statement of purpose for St. Matthew's congregation and staff. We expect that thoughtful policy implementation will ensure proper care of church buildings, grounds and equipment including tools and materials and facilitate the safety of the people using them.

- Tools, equipment and materials belonging to St. Matthews shall not be borrowed for personal use. No member of church staff, boards, committees, or officials are authorized to loan church property for personal use.
- The Church Sanctuary and Narthex will be used only for church-sponsored and church-related activities. The Senior Pastor's prior written approval is required to use the spaces for other purposes with notification to the Board of Trustees (BoT).

- Church buildings, equipment and grounds shall not be used for commercial purposes or for personal use, except when profit is used for religious, charitable or community benefit.
 - Non-church groups and individuals may not conduct fund raising or profit making activities on St. Matthew’s premises.
- The intended purpose of all fees and suggested voluntary contributions is to help defray some of St. Matthew’s basic maintenance, utility and janitorial expenses.

Except as specifically noted, submit all inquiries, Building and Property Use Application forms, and suggested voluntary contributions to the Office Manager in the Church Office. All requests must be submitted 45 days prior to the date/dates requested.

- Non-church groups that use St. Matthew’s facilities on a regularly scheduled basis are required to make an annual application.
- Every group will have a designated representative (aged 21 years or older) who is responsible for the group’s compliance with these policies, signs the application and serves as their point of contact (POC).
- Church POC: The Church Office Manager.
- Supervision: Each group will have a sufficient number of adults in attendance at all times of the activity who are fully responsible for all the policies regarding damage, security, safety, cleanliness, use of utilities, contributions, and similar obligations of any user. We require these minimums for leaders/chaperones:

Age Group	# of Leaders/Chaperones
Infants (birth) – 11 mos	3:1
Toddlers (12-24 mos)	4:1
2 – 3 Yr. Olds	6:1
4-6 Yr. Olds	8:1
6 to 18 Yr. Olds	10:1

Two-Leader Rule for Children:

Leaders will be assigned in teams of two or more unrelated individuals, for all children or youth activities. The two-leader rule applies to all groups that

meet at the church or on church premises and involve children or youth. There will be no one-on-one situations with a Leader/Chaperone and youth or child except when the pastors are engaged in counseling with the youth or child.

If the group is divided and separated by room or facility, each subgroup will have two unrelated Leaders/Chaperones.

- The BoT is responsible to monitor compliance with this “Church Building, Grounds and Equipment Use Policy,” including administration of approved Building and Property Use Applications, and all follow up inspections after usage. Follow up inspections are to be documented and reported to the Chairman, BoT.
- Non-church groups activities (except weddings) will not be scheduled to run after 4 p.m. on Saturdays.
- As a general rule, non-church group activities will not be held on Sundays.
- Night activities must end in time to have your group out of the building and the doors locked by the group’s POC no later than 9:00p.m. To extend this ending hour requires special permission of the Trustees.

PRIORITIES FOR USE

We give highest priority for use of our facilities to core church-related activities. This ensures that we meet our congregation’s needs and our church’s responsibilities, goals, objectives, and program plans. St. Matthew's welcomes the use of its facilities by community service, fellowship and educational groups. Our goal is to help as many groups as possible in a fair and equitable manner while we ensure careful stewardship of our facilities, utilities, and personnel.

The Office Manager in the Church Office maintains a master calendar to manage use of church facilities. They will determine if a conflict exists among requests for use of church facilities, and will attempt to resolve the conflict suggesting alternative times or facilities. The Office Manager will provide request to the BoT which will approve/disapprove following these general priorities:

1. Church worship services, wedding ceremonies, funeral services, and church school.
2. Church organizational meetings.

3. Social and recreational activities of church groups.
4. UMC District or Conference level conferences or meetings.
5. Other UMC's special requests for meeting space (e.g., their facilities are undergoing renovation or repair or are not large enough for the activity)
6. Church members' social activities, e.g. wedding receptions.* (*Please ask Office Manager for the Wedding Policy booklet which provides wedding guidance.)
7. Church-sponsored groups, e.g. Scouts.
8. Non-church organizations that regularly use St. Matthew's.
9. Community service and educational organizations.

APPLICATION FOR USE

A Group's POC must submit a completed application to request use of our facilities. Forms may be downloaded at www.stmatthewsumc.org/forms or obtained from the Church Office:

- (1) "Building Use Application for a Church Activity" (UMC member, staff or affiliated or sponsored group). Found as Annex A to this document.
- (2) "Building Use Application for a Non-Church Activity" (non-UMC group or person and all private party groups). Found as Annex B to this document.

A Non-Church Group's POC must represent the applicant group and sign Annex B attesting they have:

- Read the "Church Building, Grounds and Equipment Use Policy" agreeing to abide by the document, assume full responsibility for their enforcement, and acknowledge they are the responsible person for this activity.
- Agreed to the Hold Harmless statement in Annex B.
- If issued a Church key, read Annex C, "Key Holder Agreement," agrees to the \$50 key charge (refundable upon returning the key to the Office Manager) and agrees to return the key on time.

Submit your application to the Church Office at least 45 days prior to the requested activity date. Specify:

- Type of Activity (e.g., wedding reception, Scout meeting, art class).
- Facilities/rooms requested (e.g., Social Hall, Kitchen and Classroom 106).

- If outdoor facilities will be used (i.e., the grounds, playground, and the parking lot (for other than parking cars)).
- Date(s) and hours (start/stop times) requested.

The Church Office (Office Manager) will:

- Maintain a master calendar of St. Matthew's activities.
- Forward the request to the BoT for approval which meets the first Tuesday of every month.
- Notify applicants of the BoT decision.
- Collect suggested voluntary contributions, kitchen fees and deposits, and refund deposits as appropriate.
- Coordinate custodial services.

The designated representative of the BoT will:

- Approve/disapprove applications.
- Coordinate with the "Group POC" about the activity; walk them through the building as needed; discuss St Matthew's requirements and rules; and, when assigned by the Office Manager issue and collect building keys.

CANCELLATION

St. Matthew's UMC reserves the right to pre-empt any group's scheduled activity for good and sufficient reasons. We will make every effort to notify you as soon as possible if we must pre-empt or cancel your group's use of our facilities.

If a group must cancel a scheduled activity, the Group POC must notify the Church's Office Manager (703-978-3500, ext. 223) as far in advance as possible, preferably in writing to churchoffice@stmatthewsumc.org or by FAX to 703-323-7084.

Bad weather conditions could require cancellation of all activities at St. Matthew's to ensure everyone's safety. Generally, if the Fairfax County Public Schools are closed because of weather conditions, St. Matthew's is closed too. If school is not in session and our area is experiencing extremely bad weather (e.g., snow or ice storms) it may be necessary to cancel activities. We announce closings on the Church Office Inclement Weather Line (703-978-3500, extension 50), as well as on St. Matthew's website, facebook page and twitter.

St. Matthew's contracts for snow removal for the parking lots and sanding of parking areas are automatically approved after three inches of snow have fallen.

Sidewalks are cleared of snow and ice and sanded by volunteers. During the winter season snow melt is made available near the major entrances to the facility for use by volunteers.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS & SCHEDULE

The BoT sets suggested voluntary contribution amounts with the concurrence of the Church Council.

Contributions will:

- Not be requested of any church group for the use of church buildings, equipment or grounds.
- Be requested of non-church groups per the “Contributions Schedule” listed below.
- Apply for private activities held by both church and non-church groups (e.g., a church member’s wedding reception and a community association’s annual meeting).
- Be requested to be made on a regular basis by community service and support groups that offer ministry (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Boy Scouts, etc.).

In addition to the monetary voluntary contributions, other “contributions” may be requested by any group that wishes to use the facility. These include but are not limited to:

- Support of scheduled church spring and/or fall clean up.

The suggested voluntary contributions listed below must be paid in advance:

	Church <u>Member</u>	Non-Church <u>Member</u>
Small Classroom	\$15/Hr	\$20/Hr
Medium Classroom	\$20/Hr	\$25/Hr
	Church <u>Member</u>	Non-Church <u>Member</u>
Social Hall	\$100/Hr	\$125/Hr

Audio Visual Equipment/
IT/Media \$100 refundable deposit (Training required for use)

Sanctuary*+ \$100/Hr \$250/Hr
Audio Visual Equipment/
IT/Media \$100 refundable deposit (Training required for use)

(*requires Senior Pastor's approval)

(+No contributions for funerals. Please see Office Manager regarding use of church for weddings.)

Kitchen (limited use**) \$100/Hr \$200/Hr
Kitchen (full use**) **refer to page 10 on Kitchen use. (Training is required for use)

Deposits will be returned only after acceptable inspection by Church staff, BoT representative, or entity specified by the above.

GENERAL CONDUCT

All persons, groups and organizations are expected to behave in a Christian-like manner at all times while on church property.

No ball playing or roughhousing of any kind is allowed or considered acceptable in the Church buildings. Activities of this nature should be conducted outside the buildings.

Skateboarding is not allowed on church property as posted by signage.

Smoking is not allowed within the church buildings.

Alcoholic beverages, drugs, gambling or the use of non-Christian like videotapes or movies are prohibited on Church property.

Except for the Altar in the Sanctuary, no candles or other open flames are allowed inside the buildings, except with special permission of the Board of Trustees.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Keeping people safe and buildings secure is the responsibility of all groups and they must follow these procedures:

- Keep outside access to the facilities to a minimum. Unlock the fewest exterior doors that will allow people access to the activity and provide a good sense of who is coming and going. Church buildings will be kept locked when not in use. If in doubt, lock a door to prevent unauthorized access.
- Restrict people to only those areas of St. Matthew's where authorized use has been given.
- When multiple groups are using the church facilities, each group should coordinate with all others and the last group to leave must take initiative and responsibility to secure the building. (eg. Turn off the lights, lock exterior doors).
- If building use involves sleeping overnight, this will only be done in areas with water sprinklers.
- Before leaving the building, ensure all attendees have left. Look in the restrooms and kitchen. Check for possible fire hazards. You are responsible for closing the windows, turning off the lights (including those in restrooms) and locking all exterior doors before you leave the building. Pull on a door to make sure it is secure.

KITCHEN USE – ALL ACTIVITIES

St. Matthews has a commercial kitchen. Every individual or group who is authorized and uses the kitchen must designate one accountable person who must take personal responsibility to keep it clean and sanitary. Any group that enters the kitchen to use it in any fashion for their activity must agree to clean it according to the instructions posted in the kitchen and listed on our "Kitchen Checklist." Applicants who use the kitchen will be provided a checklist. Checklists and pencils are also in a rack in the kitchen.

Limited Use: This includes use of the refrigerators, ice machine, and tables to organize and issue food. Preparation or heating of food is not permitted. The kitchen must be cleaned in accordance with the "Kitchen Checklist."

Full Use: This includes heating up or preparing a full meal. Someone in the group must be assigned and instructed in proper operation and cleaning of the kitchen's equipment. This training is provided by a qualified St. Matthew's member and will be arranged through the Church Office. The kitchen must be cleaned in accordance with the "Kitchen Checklist." For non-church user activities, a \$100 use fee is required plus a \$100 refundable deposit.

Kitchen Cleaning Checklist Requirements: Groups handling any food in the

kitchen, even just cookies on trays, must sweep and wet-mop the floor before leaving. Refrigerators, if used, must be cleaned. Clean all surfaces, utensils and equipment. Use the appropriate cleaning agents, rags and towels provided. Leave the kitchen clean and in good order. Follow all instructions on the “Kitchen Checklist.” Towels, brooms, cleaning agents, and mops are provided by the Church.

Trash Removal: Remove all leftovers from the premises. If trash cans are used, they must be emptied in the dumpster. Full trash cans should be rolled to the outside dumpster and returned empty. Ensure all trash and recyclables are placed in the appropriate dumpsters located at the end of the Staff Parking Lot at the corner of Virginia Avenue and Wakefield Drive (the Southeast Corner of Lot).

Check the List: Before leaving the kitchen, “check off” those items on a “Kitchen Checklist” that apply.

CLEANING AND GOOD ORDER

All groups using St. Matthew’s facilities, equipment, and furnishings are expected to leave them clean and in an orderly fashion.

Do not place anything on walls or doors (e.g., scotch or masking tape) that when removed will leave any marks or blemishes.

Church equipment and furnishings must not be moved off the premises. At the conclusion of an activity, furniture or equipment that has been moved must be returned where originally found.

JANITORIAL SERVICES

St. Matthew’s janitorial staff can be hired to assist with cleanup for the following fees:

- No fee: during normal weekday hours before 4:00 p.m.
- \$150: Social Hall, Sanctuary, Commons (evenings and weekends)
- \$80: All other rooms

Church Activities

St. Matthew’s maintains large trashcans, plastic bags, paper towels, brooms, mops, toilet paper, kitchen cloth wash rags and towels, and kitchen cleaning agents. Church staff members and some church members have keys to the Janitor’s closets, the vacuum cleaner and extra supplies (e.g., toilet paper and

plastic trash bags). Large group activities may require more supplies than provided. If so please contact the Church Office.

Non-Church Activities

Non-church groups must provide their own napkins, table coverings, paper plates, etc. and not use those belonging to the church.

DAMAGE AND LIABILITIES

Non-church users will assume full responsibility for any damage to St. Matthew's property during its use. Abuse of St. Matthew's property or violations of the general rules of conduct are grounds for denial of further use.

Non-church users agree to assume responsibility for any legal liability for injury or damage to the persons or property of the user group or others, as well as, any uninsured injury or damage to St. Matthew's personnel or property in connection with use of the building or grounds. Further, non-church users agree to save St. Matthew's harmless in the event of any injury or damage.

Non-church users must provide a Certificate of Insurance listing coverage of \$1 million per occurrence of \$2M aggregate in effect as of the event date. St. Matthews United Methodist Church must be listed as an additional insured and certificate holder under said policy and issued a certificate of insurance before the activity occurs*. Organizations will be notified of this requirement at the time of event scheduling.

(*and on an annual basis for reoccurring activities.)