

# Rome First UMC

## Facilities Use Policy

### I. Statement of Purpose and Practice

Rome First United Methodist Church (RFUMC) believes the church is a vital part of the larger Rome/Floyd community. As such, we value a spirit of cooperation between the church and community/civic groups, not-profit organizations, and individuals regarding the use of our buildings and grounds.

First and foremost, RFUMC is a place of worship entrusted to the current congregation by those preceding us. We have been entrusted with the care and safekeeping of the church's facilities and the spiritual ministry and mission of the church will always be its primary use.

While the church has a strong desire to share its facilities with the community, impact to the ministry and mission of the church is a primary consideration in all facility use decisions. This policy exists to establish reasonable expectations and limits for using RFUMC facilities.

### II. General Policy

a. Anyone may request use of RFUMC facilities. However, requests will be prioritized. Priority of use:

- i. RFUMC worship services, connect groups, and ministry groups that are an integral part of the church's mission and ministry
- ii. Wedding and funeral services
- iii. Outside group or agency sponsored by a church member
- iv. Outside group or agency without a church member sponsor
- v. Note: Any group may be asked to relocate or reschedule dates and times subject to the needs of the church (e.g. To accommodate a funeral.)

#### b. Application and Approval

In general, all events will be scheduled on a first-come, first served basis. However, ministry requires a certain degree of flexibility and the church expressly reserves the right to revise the church calendar as needed.

Applicants should first complete a Facility Request Form and turn it in to the church office. Those requesting the Wilder Dining Room, the Wilder Center, or the Sanctuary should schedule a meeting with the Facilities Manager. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure

RFUMC has a clear understanding of the setup requested and what church support will be needed for the event.

Requests should be made at least six(6) weeks in advance of the event whenever possible. Requests made more than six(6) months in advance may be deferred for permanent scheduling.

Once the Facility Request Form has been properly completed and all church questions have been answered, the Senior Pastor (or his/her designee) will determine whether the request is approved or denied. Every attempt will be made to reach this decision within seven (7) days after questions have been answered.

Once the request has been approved, appropriate fees will be determined. Once the fees have been set, the Rental Agreement Form should be completed. Note that as the responsible party, the sponsor who signs the form is expected to be present for the entire event.

Note: The Sr. Pastor (or his/her designee) in conjunction with the chair of Trustees have the authority to make exceptions to these guidelines for events, including reduction of fees, if they feel the event aligns closely with the mission and ministry of the church. These exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

**c. Support staff (Audio/Visual)**

Only RFUMC approved operators may use the Audio/Visual systems on our campus. Any event requiring Audio/Visual support in the Wilder Center or Sanctuary must use one of the church's approved operators. The sound and video equipment is quite expensive and configured for use by the church.

Approval of these events is subject to the availability of church approved operators. For events not directly related to the ministries of the church, the operator will be compensated at an hourly rate set by RFUMC and this will be included in the fee calculation.

**d. Music Considerations**

Any request involving use of the pipe organ or pianos located around the church must also be approved by the Director of Traditional Music. These instruments are very expensive and the church expends considerable funds maintaining them. Thus, any event in which they will be used requires this extra approval.

**e. Nursery**

RFUMC adheres to the Safe Sanctuaries policy. In general, the church nursery is only available for church-related events. Outside organizations may request a for-fee nursery

and exceptions may be granted. In these cases, the church Director of Children's Ministries will coordinate and staff the nursery.

### **III. Restrictions / Usage**

- a. All groups desiring to reserve any part of church facilities must complete a "Facility Request Form" to initiate the scheduling process. No request will be considered until the proper documentation has been completed and staff follow-up questions have been answered. Applicable fees must be paid in full at least 72 hours in advance of the event.
- b. Non-church-related groups may be asked to submit documentation of liability insurance as part of the application process. This documentation must include an insurance agent's name, company name, policy number, and contact telephone number.
- c. Groups desiring to use the church Kitchen appliances must have their cooks briefed and approved by the Rome First UMC Facility Manager (or his/her) designee. For everyone's safety, it is important that this equipment be operated correctly. Non-church groups using kitchen equipment must provide documentation of adequate liability insurance. Non-church groups are also responsible for providing their own supplies (cups, plates, utensils, napkins, etc.)
- d. Outside groups using church facilities after hours are expected to reasonably clean up after themselves. In particular, food trash should be bagged and placed in the dumpster behind the church. Any obvious spills or messes should be cleaned (tables wiped down, floors swept, etc.) For larger events, groups may be provided with a cleaning checklist.
- e. Use of event signage or notices should be requested through the church office. The church strives to maintain consistency in the look and feel of its communication and also has certain locations designated for such communications. The church must determine how the signage request fits into the overall church calendar of events. All signage must be removed within 24 hours of the event.
- f. Prohibited Activities:
  - i. Use of tobacco products of any kind. The Rome First UMC campus is a tobacco-free environment. This prohibition includes the entire campus, not just inside our buildings.
  - ii. Use of alcohol or any controlled substance.
  - iii. Use of profane, vulgar, or indecent language, music, or symbols.
  - iv. No pets or live animals of any kind are allowed inside RFUMC buildings, with the exception of service animals.
  - v. No food or beverages are allowed in the Sanctuary

- vi. Use of the church facilities by "for-profit" enterprises, unless contracted by Rome First UMC for a church sponsored activity (e.g. after school soccer.) An exception exists for Rome First UMC music staff providing private lessons. While a general prohibition exists, the Sr. Pastor and Trustee chairperson may grant exceptions in cases deemed beneficial to the community (e.g. other music lessons.)
- vii. Use of the church facility for local, city, state, or national political activities. Exceptions are allowed if the church is asked to be a polling location and for community "forum" type events.
- viii. No furnishings in the Sanctuary or Wilder Center stage are to be moved. Exceptions may be granted by the Sr. Pastor or his/her designee. Note: A separate policy governs weddings.
- ix. Attaching tape, tacks, nails or any other materials to church property.
- x. Use of glue, paint, glitter, confetti, etc. unless they are being used for a church-related function. A waiver may be requested in advance and should be noted on the Facility Request Form.
- xi. Selling tickets by any group for events held on church property without express and advance permission of the Sr. Pastor (or his/her designee).