

# Hill Country Church

## Facility Use Policy



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 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 Cor 6:14; 1 Thess 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 pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. The person or group seeking the use of the church facility must complete and sign the "Building Usage Request Form."
2. 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.
3. All use of Church facilities and equipment must be consistent with the bylaws and constitution of Hill Country Church.

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**Rules For Facility Usage Of Non-Church Sponsored Events**

1. All lights furniture, and other items moved must be put back in original manner. Lights should be turned off and doors shut after usage. A member of the fellowship of HCC, or church staff, will be designated to be responsible for unlocking, locking all facility doors.
2. Appropriate cleaning and restoration of facilities to usual working order is mandatory. A minimum \$50 assessment fee will be billed if additional cleaning is required.
3. On the occasion of meetings with children and youth the sponsor must assign adults to chaperone the youth/children at all times. At no time are children to be left unattended.
4. Smoking and/or alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs are not allowed in the facility at any time.
5. If the kitchen is used, leave everything clean: sinks, stove, microwaves, refrigerators, counters, dishes washed and put away, floors mopped, towels cleaned and returned.
6. The sound system in the sanctuary may ONLY be used if an authorized sound system operator agrees to operate the system at the event and shut everything off after its conclusion. We request that a donation be made to the church for a staff member to be present or our sound operators are generally paid \$50 per hour.
7. For uses that exceed 2 hours in length or 100 persons in attendance, a minimum \$250 fee will be assessed per each 8 hour usage period.
8. At the discretion of Hill Country Church leadership a church representative may be required to be present throughout the event(s). An HCC representative may be named by the applicant for approval, or one may be selected by church leadership for an additional fee.