

**ST. JACOB'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
3444 STICKS ROAD
GLEN ROCK, PA 17327**

717-235-7313

PROPERTY USE POLICY

This policy statement has been written so that use of church property does not result in a dimming of its witness to the world. A church building is not only a place to house the work and life of a congregation, but it is also a visible witness to the grace of God at work in the world for its salvation. The church, any church, is an outpost in this fallen world of God's holy City, the new Jerusalem.

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
They will be his peoples,
And God himself will be with them;
He will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
Mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
For the first things have passed away."* *Revelation 21:3-4*

To those sorrowing or in trouble, it is a light shining in the darkness (Job 29:3) illuminating the path through tribulation and tumult.

Purpose of the Church

The church holds and maintains its property to further its proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; administer the Sacraments and other rites relating to the nurture of the faith of the disciples of Jesus Christ; instruct all disciples in the manner in which God wishes us to live; and serve the community when such service is in line with the church's worship and the life of the saints.

In addition to its witness, a church is a busy place with multiple demands for space and resources placed upon it. This policy has been approved by St. Jacob's Lutheran Church Congregation Council to minimize potential conflicts over the use of the church property.

Who May Use the Church

Members of the congregation of St. Jacob's Lutheran Church, family members and friends of members of the church, and members of the wider community are encouraged to use church property when their use is consistent with the purpose of the church. Organizations dedicated to the nurture of the young, care of the elderly, and support of those in need are especially encouraged to use church property for their work, as long as such work is in line with the purpose of the church.

All requests for use of the church property must be approved by the Property Ministry Committee and/or the Council. The Pastor may approve requests for funerals and weddings and other emergency requests. An application form must be submitted to the church office at least eight weeks before the scheduled event date. If the application is being submitted by a group such as Boy/Girl Scouts, school, church, etc., they are required to also submit a certificate of insurance with the application. The person or group requesting the use of any areas of the church and/or has signed as the responsible party, agrees to hold harmless St. Jacob's Lutheran Church for any injuries or damage to property, of participants during this event. These injuries or damages are the responsibility of the participant.

For weddings, the application form must be submitted to the church office at least six months before the scheduled wedding date.

The Pastor must be contacted if the eight weeks or six months requirement cannot be met.

The request will be reviewed and either approved or denied within 10 work days. You will be notified by phone, with a follow-up letter outlining the requirements for use of the property.

Priority for Use

The church property is maintained primarily for the use of the congregation. Use of the property will be scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. The approved uses will be in the following list of priorities.

1. All worship services of St. Jacob's Lutheran Church congregation, including weddings and funerals.
2. All other activities scheduled by St. Jacob's Lutheran Church congregation or staff.
3. All meetings scheduled by St. Jacob's Lutheran Church congregation or staff.
4. All approved activities by an outside non-profit community group or organization that are held on a regular basis.
5. Any family oriented events of members, such as bridal or baby showers, graduation parties, etc.
6. Any event or activity approved by the Property Ministry Committee and/or the Congregation Council intended to meet some need of the congregation or the community.

Any use of the property, other than for worship, is provisional. It may be superseded by the needs of the congregation. Most often, this will occur when a funeral or memorial service needs to be added to the church's schedule. Every effort will be made to accommodate the previously scheduled user, but such accommodation is not always possible.

In the event of a wedding, the time of the wedding will be held because a wedding is also a worship service. If a funeral must be scheduled on the day of a wedding, it will be held either before or after the time scheduled for the wedding. The wedding party is asked to be flexible with regards to the use of the rest of the property for pre-wedding preparations.

Fees

Members of the congregation will be charged a rental fee of \$100 for the use of the property for parties, meetings, or activities other than weddings or funerals.

Non-members and other organizations will be charged a rental fee, based on the schedule below. Fees may be waived for non-profit community based organizations.*

1. Use of Sanctuary and narthex (includes access to restrooms) -\$500
2. Use of Sanctuary, narthex, nursery (includes access to restrooms) - \$500
3. Use of classroom (includes access to restrooms) - \$50
4. Use of Fellowship Hall and Kitchen (includes access to restrooms) - \$300
5. Use of the entire facility with the kitchen (includes access to restrooms) - \$1,000

The full rental fee must be received four weeks before the scheduled event. Personal checks will be accepted for payment; however, if any personal checks are returned by the bank, the event will be cancelled unless the fee plus the bank service charge is paid before the event.

The full rental fee will be returned to the approved user in the event that an activity must be cancelled by St. Jacob's Lutheran Church because of damage to the property caused by fire, flood, or some other catastrophe. If the activity is cancelled by the approved user, the rental fee will be returned less a \$20 processing fee.

Liability

Non-members or community groups that use the church property are responsible for any damages to the property or injuries to individuals during their approved activity time. The member on duty during the event will do an inspection of the areas used, along with the approved user representative. A separate invoice will be sent for any damages that occur.

Rules for Use

1. The property is only available for use between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Saturday and Sunday times will be considered on an individual basis.
2. A congregation member is required to be present during all activities and will inspect the area(s) used before the group leaves the building.
3. No approved user may give their scheduled time to another group or individual.
4. All approved users are responsible for their own setup for use. This would include tables/chair, etc. This requirement may be waived for weddings and funerals. The congregation member present will supervise setup.
5. If using the Sanctuary, you may not use the area behind the chancel railing and you may not move any of the furniture without prior written approval.
6. If using the nursery, classrooms, or the fellowship hall, you may not move any of the furniture without prior written approval. If it is moved, it must be put back in place prior to leaving.
7. All children and youth activities must be properly supervised by at least two responsible adults. This includes inside the building, and on the parking lots and grounds.
8. **Nothing** may be attached to the ceilings or walls of the building without prior written approval of the Property Ministry Committee.
9. There will be no smoking or use of drugs on any part of the church property.
10. Alcohol will be allowed for the Eucharist (Holy Communion), and, if approved, at meals in the fellowship hall. Unsanctioned use of alcohol will result in the loss of future use of the property.
11. All users of the church property are to gather and dispose of trash in containers provided. Spills on tables/chairs, counters, or the floor should be wiped up immediately.

Access to Facilities

A member of the congregation will be available to provide access to the property and answer any questions. They will stay until the end of the activity, will check the areas that were used, lock the doors, and set alarm.

Violations

Violations of any part of this policy will result in the suspension of further use of the church property. In the event of any significant damages, the church may seek restitution for them.

*Requests for waivers or fee reductions will be at the discretion of the Property Committee, Congregation Council and in certain situations the Pastor.

Adopted: August 14, 2012

Amended: August 9, 2016