

Stephentown Federated Church and Pierce Hall Policies

The following policies passed by General Committee

May 22, 2017

General

1. Members, and members' family and active non-members may use the church and hall facilities free of charge. Disposable products such as cups and plates and/or plastic ware are not provided.
2. Non-profit groups may use the facilities for meeting with a donation appreciated.
3. Fee will be set on an individual basis for those organizations wishing to use the kitchen or meeting hall.
4. No cats, dogs or other domestic animals, with the exception of registered service animals, on church property due to liability issues. Pets for the manse will be decided on a case by case decision.
5. A member of the council, session or facility chair should be present to make sure, church property is taken care of properly. AA and Food Pantry is not included in this mandate because of the confidentiality mandate.

Weddings

1. Weddings for non-members requesting the use of the church will be charged \$150.00. If you wish to use Pierce Hall an additional \$100 will be charged.
2. Wedding parties should make arrangements to have leftover articles removed promptly after the wedding. They are expected to leave Pierce Hall and the sanctuary as they found it.
3. Birdseed and confetti are prohibited on the church grounds.
4. The charge is for the use of the physical facility only and does not include the pastor's time or any other personnel. Organist and pastor set their own fees. Until a call for volunteers is made and a decision about the use of the hall is made, the hall will be considered unavailable.
5. Any church, pastor or organist fees are expected to be paid before rehearsal begins.
6. The church buildings, which include Pierce Hall, the Church and the Manse have been deemed to be smoke free and alcohol free.
7. A member of the council, session or facility chair should be present to make sure church property is taken care of properly.

Funerals

1. Funerals for non-members wishing to use the sanctuary will be charged \$100. If they wish to have a gathering following the service in Pierce Hall an additional fee of \$100 is expected. A member of the council, session or facility chair should be present to make sure church property is taken care of properly.
2. If a family wishes to have the church provide food there will be an additional charge.

Baptism

Baptism will take place during the worship service at no charge. (See attached)

Garbage

1. Garbage needs to be put in the proper container and tied. We get charged extra for any open bags.
2. No garbage or food may be left out to attract undesirable vermin.

Sound System

1. The sound system is available for church activities. However, the sound system must be run ONLY by people who have been trained to do so. If any group wishes to use this sound system please contact Bev Westfall 518-658-2529 or morg104@aol.com.
2. If Bev is not available please contact Barb Terpening, Helen Wallbank, or Arlene Longo. These are some of the trained people we have available.

Use of Tables and Chairs for Personal Use

1. No equipment of any kind can be removed from the church for personal use without permission.
2. If you wish to borrow tables or chairs please see our facility chair person.
3. Tables and chairs being returned need to be returned when no other groups are using the facility such as AA and Food Pantry. (see Times that Pierce Hall is not available below under current restrictions.)
4. Equipment needs to be returned in the condition it was when you borrowed it or damages will be assessed.
5. This does not include any use by church organizations outside the facility.

Current Building Restrictions

1. AA meets on Wednesday evening from 6 p.m. -7 p.m. Therefore, the hall will not be available from 5:30-7:30 p.m. AA has permission to use cups, coffee, & tea.
2. Food Pantry meets Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 11a.m. Therefore, the hall is not available for from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
3. Please remember the above groups meet during this time with a confidentiality clause from General Committee, which means no one from the church comes in at this time except having specific business with either group. Please plan your visit carefully.

Media Policy

1. During activities, programs or events at the Stephentown Federated Church, your image, name and voice as well as any speech or written document submitted by you, may be used, reproduced, and/or modified for use as publicity in a variety of media including, but not limited to print, video, photography, website, television and radio broadcasts, and sound recordings. All may be available on the internet
2. Any photography of children will be with the permission of their parents.
3. Permission for future use for any pictures taken during the worship service.
4. Our worship services on the website as well as our website are copyrighted.
5. If you have questions or concerns please contact any one on the general committee or worship committee.

***The letter on the next page is a letter sent to all groups using our Church, Pierce Hall or the Manse.

Dear Federated Church Members and Friends,

The General Committee of the Stephentown Federated Church recently began a review of our total insurance package for our church facilities. We have been asked, "What policies do we have in effect that limit our liability exposure?"

One item the insurance companies were most concerned about was our lack of a policy regarding allowing pets, of any type, on the premises. They have strongly suggested that we have a "no pets" rule to help limit the potential for liability exposure and perhaps adhere to some suggested "food and sanitary" safety concerns.

We also understand the ultimate need for "registered service animals" like a seeing eye dog.

Therefore, to placate the insurance companies and keep our policy rates reasonably acceptable, we are asking that you understand our need to begin a "no pets or animals" allowed on the church properties or premises. The exception would be for "registered service animals".

Baptism Policy July 23,2018

The Sacrament of Baptism is God's act of binding the promises of faith upon those seeking to live the Christian life and those seeking to nurture a child in the Christian life. The Sacrament of Baptism is the sign and seal of God's Grace and our response to that Grace. It is the foundational recognition of Christian commitment and is an important signpost along a lifelong journey of faith.

Baptism is a Holy Sacrament and a serious commitment involving public vows before God and the Christian family of faith. The Stephentown Federated Church strongly feels that such a commitment is not to be undertaken casually, and necessitates a thorough understanding of the meaning and responsibilities involved in Baptism. To rightly administer this Sacrament is to enter into a learning process with the individual seeking baptism, or the parents of the child to be baptized. Those seeking Baptism for themselves or their children must demonstrate an intention to participate responsibly in the life of the Church and to provide for the Christian nurture of children in the case of infant or child baptism.

in keeping with the importance of Baptism in the faith of all believers, and in accordance with the Stephentown Federated Church guidelines, the General Committee approves this policy on Baptism. The General Committee will re-authorize this policy on an annual basis.

GUIDELINES FOR BAPTISM:

Requirements of Baptism:

1. A serious commitment on the part of those seeking baptism for themselves, or for their children, to practice their faith in a living Christian community.
2. Completion of pre-baptismal counseling with the Pastor—this is a requirement of the Stephentown Federated Church and cannot be waived. The Pastor shall determine the number of counseling sessions.
3. No date for baptism shall be set until after completion of pre-baptismal counseling and the approval by the Pastor and the Worship Committee.

4. An age appropriate understanding of the vows and commitments involved in Baptism.
5. A commitment to respond to the vows made in Baptism with regular and responsible participation in the life of the church.
6. Examination of the candidate or parents of the child, and approval of the worship committee prior to the baptism. Please note that the Session/Council meets approximately three times a year. They do not meet in the summer except for special called meetings or emergencies.
7. Scheduling of the baptism is approved by the Pastor and the Session/Council and is to be conducted during a regular service of worship, unless otherwise approved by the Pastor and the Session/Council.

REQUESTS FROM EXTENDED FAMILY:

1. Requests from extended family of the congregation are welcome, but shall be subject to the same policy and procedure as outlined above.
2. Grandparents or other relatives may not seek baptism of a child without the involvement of the parents or those exercising parental rights for the child.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOTAPING

1. As Baptism is a sacrament conducted during a service of worship, no flash photography shall be allowed.
2. Those seeking to unobtrusively record the event on film may do so only from the balcony.