

Dorchester Presbyterian Church
Property Use Policy
Session Approved: March 20, 2018

General

This policy provides guidelines for responding to requests to use Church property. Property is defined as, but is not limited to, anything located on the Dorchester Presbyterian Church campus or is owned by Dorchester Presbyterian Church. This includes, but is not limited to, buildings, structures, equipment, supplies, etc. Requests to use church facilities or to borrow church equipment are coordinated through the church office by contacting the Church Administrator and completing the **Property Use Request/Rental Agreement**. Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 AM until 2 PM. All users must have an agreement on file. Requests are handled on a “first come first serve” basis taking into consideration the priorities listed below.

While the first priority for use of church property is for worship and church related activities and Good Shepard School (GSS) functions, the property may also be used by members for activities such as weddings, funerals, anniversary and graduation parties, and other special events. Religious, civic, and other community organizations such as Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity and Election Precinct may also use the church’s property provided their goals benefit the community and are not in conflict with those of the church.

All those requesting use of our property should be informed that the church campus and its buildings are tobacco/smoke free and alcoholic beverages may not be served nor consumed on the property.

Use of Facilities

Except for church-related activities, requests to use church space must be approved by the Session on a per-request basis. Please note that the Session meets monthly so ample time for Session approval should be allowed. Unplanned/unexpected requests for use may require a called Session meeting. Groups such as the Scouts that use the Fellowship Hall on a regular basis are not required to submit requests for each use. In all cases, those requesting to use church space should be told that while every attempt will be made to honor reservations, church related activities may result in having to reschedule or possibly cancel an event. Priority is given as follows:

1. Church worship activities and fellowship gatherings.
2. Church Session, Committees and other church functions which include, for example, Presbyterian Youth Connection (PYC), Presbyterian Women, and workdays. This includes Church sponsored events like Blood Drives.
3. GSS activities.
4. Member and staff activities such as weddings, wedding showers, baby showers, anniversaries, and birthdays.
5. Scouts and other charitable, non-profit, civic or religious groups.
6. Other community groups whose purposes are not in conflict with those of the church.

When a church-related event requires use of the kitchen and needs special supplies, food, and/or cooks, contact the Kitchen Coordinator.

The person renting/using the facility must be present during use.

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Children must be supervised while using the facilities.

Commercial Use

In general, requests from for-profit or commercial groups should be denied on the basis that they should use more appropriate commercial facilities. Exceptions may be made with Sessional approval. Where applicable, businesses and groups shall provide a Certificate of Liability insurance to the Financial Administrator.

Fees

There is a fee of \$250 when using the Sanctuary and \$150 when using the Fellowship Hall. Exceptions: These fees are not applicable for church members, staff, and for non-profit groups. These fees may be negotiated for businesses and/or groups. However, when an extra visit or additional cleaning is required by the custodian, a custodial fee of \$50 per building will be assessed.

All renters/users are required to pay by cash or check a \$50 refundable key and custodial deposit.

Weddings

For weddings please refer to the **Wedding Policy**.

Borrowing Church Equipment

In general, Church equipment is not allowed off premises for non-church related activities except that members may borrow, for example, tables, chairs and ladders. Borrowed equipment must be returned promptly and in good working condition. Loaning out equipment is limited to no more than four tables and twenty chairs or two ladders. Dishes, bowls, silver ware, tablecloths, etc. are not to be loaned. Requests to borrow a lot of tables and chairs should be denied since rental shops and catering companies are more suited to transporting and providing this service. While requests to borrow church property do not have to be approved by Session, they must be coordinated through the Church Administrator to avoid conflicts. A **Property Use Request/Rental Agreement** must be completed when borrowing equipment. If in doubt about loaning equipment, the request should be forwarded to the Property Committee.

Dorchester Presbyterian Church maintains some used medical equipment. Church members may borrow these at their own risk. For a list and availability of equipment, contact the church office.