

## TUUC FACILITIES USE POLICY

Effective Date: February 10, 2016  
Last Revision Date: June 2, 2023

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### 1.0 PURPOSE

It is the policy of Towson Unitarian Universalist Church (TUUC) to create a welcoming and respectful church environment for use by all persons, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or political affiliation. Persons from the greater community as well as Members and friends of TUUC may use the TUUC Facility, subject to the policies and procedures set forth in this Policy, the TUUC Bylaws, and Policy and Procedures Manual. The procedures for facility reservation and use have been drafted by the Administrative Team and approved by the TUUC Board of Trustees.

### 2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to any and all activities, events or meetings taking place in the TUUC building and/or on the TUUC grounds (referred to herein collectively as the "Facility"), whether the event or meeting is related to church functions or activities of outside groups renting the Facility or any portion thereof.

### 3.0 REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Board of Trustees shall periodically review this policy and make revisions in consultation with the Administrative Team and/or House and Grounds Council.

### 4.0 DISTRIBUTION

A copy of this policy shall be posted on the public portion of the TUUC website and distributed to all committee chairs, council heads, staff, and interest groups. The Church Administrator shall distribute a copy of this policy to all those renting TUUC facilities and upon request.

### 5.0 PRIORITY OF USE

Church committees and groups shall be given first priority for use of the TUUC Facility for church programs such as Religious Exploration that directly carry out TUUC's mission and/or support TUUC's operations. Church members or Church-Sponsored Groups have second priority to use the TUUC building and grounds for purposes that are aligned with TUUC's mission. Outside groups, whether community service organizations, community interest groups, non-profit or for-profit organizations, and non-members may use the building and grounds subject to the above priorities, unless the office has already received a signed Facility Use Agreement and security deposit from an outside group or non-member prior to receiving a request from a church member, committee, group or Church-Sponsored Group for use of the church facility.

TUUC reserves the right to schedule other areas of the Facility for use during the time other events or activities are being held by other groups, so long as the events or activities will not

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disrupt each other or violate local laws, including Baltimore County zoning regulations and fire code.

### 6.0 MEMBERS

Members of TUUC, who have been active members, as defined in the TUUC Bylaws, for at least six months prior to the requested date, may use the church facilities free of charge for religious ceremonies such as weddings, memorial services, funerals, and child dedications. For non-religious activities of a personal nature, such as wedding receptions, private parties, anniversary celebrations, etc., members of TUUC may rent the facilities at a 50% discount of the single-use rental fees charged persons who are not members of TUUC and outside groups as set forth in Attachment A. Fundraisers for the benefit of TUUC, Church-Sponsored Groups, or TUUC programs held in or on the TUUC Facility and run by an individual member are not subject to any rental fees. Members using TUUC facilities for any purpose must abide by all TUUC rules and Policies and Procedures regarding building and grounds use and provide a security deposit, if required for that type of use.

### 7.0 CHURCH SPONSORED GROUPS

A Church-Sponsored Group is a group that substantially advances TUUC's mission, is open to all TUUC Members and Friends, and has at least five active TUUC Members. Church-Sponsored Groups do not pay a rental fee for building use, may advertise on the TUUC website and other TUUC media such as the weekly newsletter, may use TUUC's name and logos on any written materials, flyers or brochures (subject to approval by the Administrative Team), may send mail through Breeze database system, has support from office staff, is entitled to a mailbox (if available), may request funding or reimbursement for group activities and programs (subject to approval by the Administrative Team in accordance with TUUC Policy and Procedures), and are covered by TUUC's insurance policy.

Most Church-Sponsored Groups originate solely from TUUC. However, Church-Sponsored Groups may be affiliated with local, state, or national organizations.

### 8.0 COMMUNITY GROUPS AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

A community group is an organization that does not originate at TUUC and whose membership largely consists of individuals from the greater community. Community groups include local chapters of national organizations, such as Sierra Club. Non-profit organizations are organizations qualifying for an exemption from federal income taxes under 26 U.S.C. §501(c). Community groups and non-profit organizations may use TUUC facilities on the following conditions:

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1. The organization or group's purpose aligns with TUUC's mission and the organization does not hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, practices or policies that conflict with TUUC's Bylaws or the Unitarian Universalist Principles.
2. The organization or group does not have a policy of or advocate for discrimination of individuals based upon race, color, creed, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, or disability.
3. The organization or group agrees to abide by all TUUC Policies, Procedures, and rules regarding building and grounds use.
4. The organization or group provides a certificate of insurance naming TUUC as an additional insured and signs a Facility Use Agreement.

Rental fees may be waived or reduced for a community group or non-profit organization's use of TUUC Facility, if the organization or group includes at least one member who is also an active Member of TUUC. A community group or non-profit organization may also be given Church-Sponsored Group status if it meets the criteria in Section 7.0 of this Policy.

TUUC facilities may be rented to non-profit, politically-oriented organizations such as the League of Women Voters, American Civil Liberties Union, Common Cause, etc., but only to present programs addressing public policy issues. The TUUC facilities may not be used to promote or solicit funds for persons seeking public office, a political party, or party organization, such as a political action committee, or for any purpose that might jeopardize TUUC's tax status or violate federal, state or local law. TUUC facilities may be used for candidates' forums only if all candidates for the specific office in question have been invited.

The Administrative Team is the final decision-maker on whether a community group or non-profit organization is allowed to use TUUC facilities, except when the group's mission may arguably conflict with TUUC Bylaws, Policies or Procedures or Unitarian Universalist Principles. In such cases the Administrative Team will bring the question to the Board with or without a recommendation and the Board will make the final decision. In all other cases, the Administrative Team is the final decision-maker on whether a community group should be considered a Church-Sponsored Group, whether rental fees or security deposits will be waived, or whether reduced rental fees will be charged. The Administrative Team may delegate the authority to screen potential renters to the Church Administrator, subject to the criteria set forth in this policy.

### 9.0 FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

For-profit organizations or individuals may rent the TUUC Facility for business use so long as the organization's or individual's purpose or intended use does not conflict with TUUC's Bylaws or the Unitarian Universalist Principles, and the rental does not jeopardize the church's tax status

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or violate local, state, or federal law, including without limitation zoning regulations and fire code. No for-profit organization or individual shall use the TUUC Facility under any circumstances for the sale of products advocating or promoting the discrimination, suppression, subjugation of or violence against any group or individuals.

The individual or for-profit organization conducting business activities on TUUC premises must abide by all TUUC rules, Policies and Procedures regarding building and grounds use, sign a Facility Use Agreement, or the equivalent thereof in the case of a vendor for a church event, make a security deposit, if required, and provide a certificate of insurance naming TUUC as an additional insured, or a liability waiver in the case of a vendor for a church event.

The Administrative Team shall approve all rentals of the TUUC Facility by for-profit organizations or individuals intending to use the TUUC Facility for business purposes. However, rentals requiring any exceptions to TUUC Bylaws or policies must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

### 10.0 CANCELLATION

#### 10.1 GENERAL

An event may be cancelled by the requestor without penalty if done at least two weeks prior to the event date, in which case, TUUC will return the rental fee and/or deposit paid. If a one-time event is cancelled by the person, group or organization reserving the TUUC space less than two weeks before the event date, the deposit and pre-paid rental fees will be forfeited.

#### 10.2 INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, fire, or natural disaster, TUUC may cancel activities and close the church, in which case, TUUC will offer an alternate date or return in full any deposits and pre-paid rent for one-time events.

### 11.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is TUUC's policy to provide a healthy and safe environment for all occupants of the Facility at all times.

#### 11.1 SMOKING

All TUUC buildings are smoke-free. Smoking or vaping of tobacco or nicotine products is permitted only in designated outdoor areas on the property.

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### 11.2 ANIMALS

Except for service animals and special events, such as a Blessing of the Animals service, no animals are permitted in the TUUC building without the prior written consent of the Chair of House and Grounds Council or the Administrative Team.

### 11.3 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

#### 11.3.1 Congregational Meetings and TUUC-Sponsored Events

In recognition of the damage addiction and alcoholism have upon human health and human relationships and in support of those who are recovering from addiction and alcoholism, no alcoholic beverages will be permitted at any congregational meeting, town hall, or other meeting wherein the business of the church is being conducted.

Wine and beer will be permitted at TUUC-sponsored events in the Facility, such as the annual auction, only if served in strict accordance with the laws of Maryland and Baltimore County and alternative non-alcoholic refreshments are also provided. Liquor, distilled alcoholic beverages, or alcoholic beverages with alcohol content greater than 15 percent are prohibited at any TUUC-sponsored function. Exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing in advance of the event by the TUUC Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Administrative Team.

#### 11.3.2 Non-TUUC Sponsored or Related Events

Renters or Members using the TUUC facilities for personal events may serve alcoholic beverages, whether fermented or distilled, provided that the laws and regulations of Maryland and Baltimore County are strictly followed. Renters or Members shall be responsible for obtaining any required liquor licenses and shall submit a copy of the liquor license to the Church Administrator prior to the event.

### 11.4 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

TUUC is a drug-free facility. Use of any drugs or other controlled substances, except as prescribed for that individual, anywhere on the TUUC Facility is strictly prohibited.

### 11.5 FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

With exception of law enforcement officers acting in an official capacity, no person may possess, carry, or use firearms, including without limitation hand guns, rifles, and shot guns, or any other weapons, including knives greater than 3 inches in length (other than culinary blades), anywhere on the TUUC grounds or in the TUUC facility.

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### 11.6 HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL USE

In recognition of multiple chemical sensitivities of individuals and the impact chemicals, such as pesticides, have on our environment, use of chemicals or substances that are poisonous, toxic, flammable, corrosive, carcinogenic, caustic, or otherwise potentially harmful or hazardous (“hazardous chemicals”) for cleaning or other purposes shall be minimized to the extent practicable.

If feasible, low volatile organic compound (VOC) cleaning chemicals, paints, adhesives, and other compounds should be used. If a low-VOC alternative is not available, a high VOC may be used, but only with proper ventilation and the prior written approval of the Chair of the House and Grounds Council. Pesticides and herbicides shall be used only in strict accordance with directions on the label after the user has received prior written approval by the Chair of House and Grounds.

### 11.6 OPEN FLAMES AND FIREPLACE USE

Open flames, such as candles, and incense may be used in the building during worship services, religious ceremonies, small group ministry, and church-related activities. However, use of open flames and incense in the building for any other activities is permitted only with the prior written approval of the Chair of House and Grounds Council.

Use of the fireplace is restricted to church-related activities by TUUC members or friends only, provided that users of the fireplace adhere to Baltimore County fire code and all TUUC rules regarding use of the TUUC Facility. Renters are not allowed to use the fireplace for any purpose.

TUUC members and friends, Church-Sponsored Groups, outside groups and non-members may use the grill in the Grove area and the fire pit in Thoreau Meadow, provided that they receive prior written approval to use the grill and/or the fire pit from the Chair of House and Grounds Council and strictly adhere to Baltimore County fire code and all TUUC rules regarding use of TUUC facilities, which include keeping a bucket of water at hand to extinguish the fire and not leaving until the fire is extinguished.

### 12.0 PROCEDURES

The Chair of the House and Grounds Council in consultation with the Administrative Team shall promulgate rules and procedures for the reservation and use of TUUC facilities and shall regularly review and revise the procedures, as needed, but at a minimum annually.

### 12.1 SCHEDULING OF TUUC FACILITIES

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### 12.1.1 General Procedures for Requesting Use.

Any individual, group, or committee, whether a TUUC committee or group, Church-Sponsored Group, or not, wishing to use TUUC facilities must make a request *in writing* via an email or in-house use form to the Church Administrator. Potential renters must make a request using a rental request form provided by the church office.

The request must include the following information and will not be considered complete if all information is not provided:

- The name of the individual, group or committee requesting use;
- The relationship of the individual, group or committee to TUUC;
- The type of event, i.e., meeting, concert, group activity, etc.;
- The desired date and time, the length of time the event or activity is expected to last, including set up and clean up time;
- The number of individuals expected to attend;
- The name of and contact information for the organizer of the meeting, event or activity; and
- The desired room or area of the Facility to be used.

Completed requests for building use must be made at least:

1. One week in advance for church committees or groups;
2. Two weeks in advance for Church-Sponsored Groups;
3. Thirty days in advance for Members and outside community groups and non-profit organizations;
4. Six weeks in advance for outside for-profit organizations and non-members; and
5. Two months for whole building rentals.

Upon receipt of a written request for TUUC Facility use, the Church Administrator may add the meeting, event, or activity to the TUUC master calendar, if the individual, group, or committee is approved to use the Facility pursuant to this policy, the request is timely, and the date and time requested are available in consideration of other events that may be occurring on the same day.

If no space is available for the day and the time requested or if the event or meeting may interfere with another event scheduled for the same time, the Church Administrator may propose alternate dates and/or times.

A rain or snow date for a one-time event may be reserved if made with the original request for use of TUUC facilities and the date is available. TUUC may charge an additional deposit to hold a rain/snow date.

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### 12.1.2 Procedures for Outside Community Organizations or Non-Profit Request for Use.

If an outside community organization or non-profit requests use of the facility for either a one-time event or for regular use, e.g., weekly or monthly, the Church Administrator shall inform the Chair of House and Grounds Council of the request. The Chair of House and Grounds Council or Church Administrator may approve use of TUUC facilities if the requesting group squarely meets the criteria set forth herein. Should there be any question whether an outside group requesting use of TUUC facilities meets the criteria set forth herein, the Chair of House and Grounds Council or Church Administrator may disapprove the request or bring it before the Administrative Team for a vote.

Upon approval of the request, the Church Administrator shall forward a Facility Use Agreement. The space shall not be reserved, however, until the outside community organization or non-profit has submitted a completed Facility Use Agreement, a security deposit, if required, and a certificate of insurance.

### 12.1.3 Procedures for Extended Rentals

Requests for rental of the TUUC Facility for daily and/or weekly use for more than one month total duration ("Extended Rentals") must be approved by the Administrative Team and the Board of Trustees. Upon approval, Extended Rental lessees must sign a Facility Use Agreement and/or lease, make a security deposit, and provide a certificate of insurance naming TUUC as an additional insured. The Rental Committee or a task force appointed by the Board of Trustees, which shall include at a minimum the Chair of House and Grounds Council, the Church Administrator, and a member of the Board of Trustees, shall be responsible for negotiating the terms of the lease for an Extended Rental. The Extended Rental lease shall be reviewed by an attorney who is an active member of the Maryland Bar and has given legal advice on real estate matters.

### 12.1.4 Procedures for Non-Member Requests for Use

If an individual who is not a member requests use of TUUC facilities for religious or personal events such as a wedding, reception, recital, memorial service, or funeral, the Church Administrator may grant the request without consulting or approval from the Chair of House and Grounds Council or the Administrative Team, subject to the conditions set forth in this Policy.

### 12.1.5 Rental Monitor

Upon submittal of a signed Facility Use Agreement, the Church Administrator shall schedule a Rental Monitor as needed for the date and time of the event or activity. The Rental Monitor serves as the official representative of TUUC during the use of the Facility by an outside group or non-member. The Rental Monitor's role is to ensure that the TUUC Facility is used by



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outside groups or non-members in a manner consistent with TUUC Policies (including Safe Congregations Policy), Procedures and rules and to act as a resource for outside groups or non-members renting the TUUC Facility.

The Rental Monitor's duties include opening the church at least 30 minutes before the outside group or non-member is expected to arrive and remain in the building for the duration of the rental until the last person leaves.

The Rental Monitor shall be paid at a rate approved by the Chair of the House and Grounds Council, which shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

### 12.2 RENTAL AND USE FEES

#### 12.2.1 Security Deposits

Security deposits are required to cover any damage or costs for clean-up not performed by the renter. Unless waived pursuant to this Policy, all rentals require a security deposit as set forth in Attachment A. The security deposit must be submitted with the Facility Use Agreement. Security deposit checks will be deposited in the church account and a refund check will be issued to the renter in the full amount no later than 30 days after the date (or last date) of the use of facilities, less any costs subtracted out for cleaning or damages. Any returned security deposit will be accompanied by an itemized accounting of all charges made against the deposit.

#### 12.2.2 Certificates of Insurance

When required, certificates of insurance shall name "Towson Unitarian Universalist Church" as an additional insured, shall show that the insurance will be in effect at the time of the event or rental period, and shall provide evidence of the following minimum limits of coverage:

- Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for property damage,
- Five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for bodily injuries to or death of one person, and
- One million dollars (\$1,000,000) on account of bodily injuries to or death of more than one person as a result of any one accident or disaster.

#### 12.2.3 Fees for Non-church Related Functions

Fees and security deposits for Non-church Related Functions are set forth in Attachment A. Fees and deposits are based upon four-hour increments. Rental rates will be charged on a prorated basis for overtime use of the building or its rooms. Unless waived by the Chair of House and Grounds Council or the Administrative Team, all fees and deposits are to be made in advance and will include payment for the Rental Monitor's time.

The fee for the Main Meeting Room includes use of PA only but does not include use of any other audio/visual equipment. Arrangements for use of the audio/visual equipment must be

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made at least 30 days in advance of the event date. The A/V Committee will assign a trained individual to assist with the church's A/V equipment unless the renter has designated a professional, approved by the A/V Committee in advance, to run the equipment during the event.

The fees are set under the assumption that renters will clean up after their event, restoring the area used to its original condition and cleanliness. This means chairs and tables replaced to their original location, and all trash gathered in plastic garbage bags and left in the kitchen area for later removal. Otherwise, a fee (minimum of \$50) for custodial services will be charged and deducted from the deposit.

### 12.2.4 Weddings for Non-Members

The fee for wedding ceremonies and receptions of non-members is \$850. The fee includes a Rental Monitor and custodial fees and use of the entire building for eight (8) hours on the day of the event, the Meeting Hall for a two-hour rehearsal, and the sound system. The fee does **not** include the Minister's fee or musician's fee.

## 13.0 RULES FOR BUILDING USE

- a. All events are required to comply with the church's Safe Congregations policy which can be obtained in the church office or on our website.
- b. No group or group member shall use or be in any part of the facility (classroom, kitchen, Minister's office, administrative office, etc.) not reserved. Use of additional space (i.e. unauthorized presence in the church kitchens) can result in forfeiture of security deposit, and/or refusal to schedule future events.
- c. Groups using the church are responsible for making arrangements to enter and lock the facilities and turn off all lights and fans. If arrangements are not made to have the building secured, any damage or theft resulting from any failure to secure the premises will be the financial responsibility of the sponsoring person(s) or group.
- d. No event should be scheduled to begin or end outside of normal operating hours without an authorized TUUC member present (as keys and security codes will NOT be given out to non-authorized persons for events).
- e. No individual or group using the TUUC Facility may sell products advocating for or promoting discrimination, suppression, subjugation of or violence against any group or individuals.
- f. Users of TUUC facilities are expected to respect our neighbors' rights to privacy and must obey Baltimore County's 10 pm noise curfew.

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- g. The facilities are to be left in the same condition that they are found. All trash must be placed in a trash receptacle. Failure to do so will result in an additional maintenance fee or, for non-church related groups' events, forfeiture of the security deposit.
- h. Refreshments may be served only in the Upper Level Lobby/Lounge or on the Lower Level. No refreshments may be served or consumed in the Meeting Room, except with prior permission and strict adherence to TUUC Rules for Facility Use.
- i. Any spills should be immediately wiped up and reported to the Rental Monitor.
- j. Any repair costs associated with a specific event are to be paid within fifteen (15) days by the sponsoring person(s) or group.
- k. Nothing may be taped, nailed, or tacked to the walls. If materials must be posted, they may be taped to glass surfaces only using masking tape or other paper tape.
- l. There shall be no rice or other materials thrown in the church building or on the church grounds. Bubbles may be used for weddings and parties, except in the Main Meeting Room when there is a Gallery Unicorn exhibit.
- m. All TUUC buildings are smoke-free. Smoking or vaping of tobacco or nicotine products is permitted only in designated outdoor areas on the property.
- n. No controlled substances shall be brought onto or used in or on the TUUC Facility, provided that individuals may carry and used prescription medication that has been prescribed for them.
- o. No firearms, including hand guns, or other weapons, such as switch-blades, shall be brought onto or used in or on the TUUC Facility, except in the case of on-duty law enforcement officers as set forth in Section 11.5 of this Policy.
- p. Renters are not permitted to use the fireplaces.
- q. Use of the grill in the Grove and fire pit in Thoreau Meadow by renters, groups and individuals must be approved in advance by the Chair of House and Grounds Council.
- r. No open flames (other than tea candles for chalice lightings) are allowed in the TUUC building without the approval of the Chair of House and Grounds Council.
- s. Fireworks are prohibited anywhere on the church property.
- t. Restroom and classroom lighting should be turned off when not in use.

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- u. The nursery will close at the end of the scheduled end time of your event. Remaining children in the nursery will be brought to your event.
- v. The Gallery Unicorn is located at TUUC and operates year-round. Paintings, etc. may not be removed or moved from their location for any reason. Violation of this regulation may result in the loss of security deposit.
- w. Overnight Conference Groups must submit in advance their Rules of Conduct to the Administrative Team or Chair of House and Grounds Council for approval.
- x. Renters/Tenants may only use the name and address of this church to identify the location of the event. They may not use the TUUC website, Facebook page, or community bulletin board to advertise their group or event. However, the event or meeting may be listed on the TUUC online calendar.
- y. Renters/Tenants do not have franking privileges, including use of the church email system or the right to have an email address @towsonuuc.org, and do not receive support from the TUUC office staff.
- z. No Renter/Tenant may open a banking account using TUUC's name and Tax Exempt Identification number.
- aa. Musicians who rent the meeting room for performance may rehearse, free of charge, prior to the performance if:
  - They notify the office at least one week in advance of the desired rehearsal time;
  - They rehearse during a time when the church office staff or a Rental Monitor is present;
  - The combination of performance time and rehearsal hours does not exceed the total number of hours covered by the rental fee (4 hour limit). Should the musicians' need for rehearsal time exceed the number of hours covered by the rental fee, or if special arrangements must be made to open and close the building for a musician to rehearse, then the rehearsal shall be treated as a separate rental and fees shall be charged accordingly.
  - They do not move furniture.
  - They agree to allow Gallery Unicorn visitors during their rehearsal.
- bb. The church sound system is available for non-church related events only if requested and approved at the time of scheduling the event. Only authorized technicians may use the sound system.