

First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, UCC

PO Box 444
BLUE HILL, ME 04614
207-374-2891
info@bluehillcongregational.org

Building Use Procedures

Contact Numbers: Office---374-2891, Minister---374-2892

General Use Guidelines:

The Church Board of Trustees in consultation with the Minister will approve or deny all new applications for the use of Church facilities. Incompliance with the IRS code, it is the policy of the Church not to allow the use of its premises to participate in any political campaigns, either for or against any candidate for office, for the advocacy of hatred or violence, or for any commercial purpose.

The Church welcomes the use of the building by local groups and organizations that improve the well-being and education of our members and neighbors and present a positive social experience. Groups using the building may arrange the furniture for meetings as needed then put it back when finished. All rooms are to be left clean and in order.

If you have not received a Financial Offset Schedule, please request it, complete, sign and return it to the Church Office. The Trustees have adopted the following procedures for the use of the building, and any group that uses our facilities agrees to comply with these regulations.

Permission: Arrangements to use any part of the Church building must be scheduled in writing with the Church Office (374-2891) and must be made in advance. Note: Board of Trustees meets once a month.

No smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages, gambling and/or illegal drugs are permitted on Church property. No one is to remain in the building overnight unless prior permission is granted by the Trustees.

An adult member of the group, age 21 or older, must always be present.

Use of the Sanctuary: Use is limited to those activities appropriate for a church sanctuary.

- No food or beverages are allowed in the sanctuary.
- Do not tape, nail, or tack anything to any surface in the sanctuary or the narthex.
- Use of the grand piano and organ in the sanctuary is granted ONLY with express permission from the Music Director.
- Please note: The balcony is not to be used by audiences during performances.
- Any configuration using risers or platforms or extending into the seating area must be approved in advance.
- The aisles and hallways are not to be blocked for any reason, to ensure emergency access to all exits at all times. This includes not placing performers or equipment on the same landing as the two exit doors.
- Furniture may be moved if it is returned immediately after a performance.

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- Please do not block access to other rooms with the temporary relocation of the furniture.
- Any damage to furnishings will be charged to the group's responsible person.
- Please make sure that the front doors to the Church are locked properly upon leaving.
- Please make sure that all lights are fully turned off, including the sconces on the front of the church.
- Under no circumstances will anyone be prevented from using the stair lift, unless of course it is not operational. In that case, please notify a staff or Board member of the church as soon as possible.
- Please leave the Sanctuary as clean as you found it. There is a vacuum cleaner in the small closet under the choir loft stairs.

Use of the Kitchen: No equipment, dishes, or other articles are to be taken from the Church. When dishtowels and tablecloths are used, they must be laundered and returned. As per the Fire Marshall, no frying or sautéing on top of the stove is allowed. After kitchen use:

- All areas used must be returned to their original order.
- Use the exhaust fan while cooking.
- Follow lighting instructions provided for the range. Any questions, please contact the Church Administrator.
- All equipment and utensils used must be washed and put away.
- The stove must be wiped off.
- No food may be left in the refrigerator.
- The floor must be left clean. Dustpans, brooms, and mops are available in the kitchen hallway.
- All garbage and trash must be removed.

Trash Removal: All trash generated by your event is to be removed; including the restrooms. The trash receptacle is just outside of the Jonathan Fisher Hall entrance.

Use of Jonathan Fisher Hall: There are normally some chairs and tables set up in the room. Additional chairs and eight-foot-long tables can be found in the closet in Fisher Hall. Six-foot long folding tables are kept in the Harmony Room closet upstairs. Card tables are kept in the downstairs hallway closet across from the mailboxes. When your gathering is over, please follow these procedures.

Tables: Wash the tables. Leave three (8-foot) tables standing in the room and put the others away. Long (8-foot) tables should be stacked in the closet in Fisher Hall.

Chairs: Folding chairs should be stacked in the closet in Fisher Hall, leaving 10- 12 chairs left at the tables.

Floors: Please leave the floors clean, wipe up any liquid spills. There is a dry mop for the Fisher Hall floors, brooms and dustpans, in the kitchen back hallway. A vacuum cleaner is in the closet in Fisher Hall.

Trash: Remove all trash.

Departure: Plan to be out of the building at the agreed upon time as other meetings may be scheduled.

General policies: It is not the policy of the Church to rent or loan Church property and there is no storage space available for groups using the Church.

Guidelines for TV Use: The church has installed a television in Jonathan Fisher Hall. Its primary use will be to promote church activities and can also be used for movies, memorial and wedding service slide shows, educational videos, etc.

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1. Unless prior approval has been obtained by the Board of Trustees or the Pastor, the TV will always remain on; arm extended and shall not be moved or turned off

2. Any non-church related use must be approved by the Trustees or the Pastor well in advance.

Liability and Hold Harmless:

- At times, groups or individuals may choose to leave artwork, musical instruments, or personal possessions at the Church. The Church does not accept responsibility for any such items.
- By signing the Building Use form, the group (i) accepts all liability relating to its use of the premises, including any loss of personal property; (ii) releases the Church from any liability whatsoever; and (iii) indemnifies and holds the Church harmless for any personal property damages or bodily injuries arising from the group's use of the premises.
- For those organizations that have liability insurance coverage, we request that you provide evidence of insurance, preferably naming the First Congregational Church of Blue Hill as an additional insured.

Signage: Organizations that use our building may put their event signs on the Church's front lawn ONLY on the day of their event. On days leading up to the event, they may place a sign on the section of lawn on the uphill side of the exit driveway. Posting of their events on the Church's marquee may be permitted if space allows; Church-related events are given preference.

AED's and Blood Pathogen and Bodily Fluid Spill Cleanup Kits: You will find both in the rear of the Sanctuary (by the door next to the spiral choir loft staircase) and downstairs by the hallway coat rack. We will do our best to keep the AEDs charged. If you use either the AED or the Spill Cleanup Kit, please fill out an Incident Report and place it in the Trustees mailbox (see below).

Incident Reports: Hopefully, your use of the Church building takes place without incident. However, should something happen that requires that First Responders (medical emergency personnel, Fire Dept., Sheriff's Dept.) be called, the person in charge of the event will need to fill out an Incident Report. These reports can be obtained from the Church Office or. The completed report should be placed in the Trustee's mailbox within 48 hours.

Note on Heating Season: There are five heating zones in the building; each has a thermostat set at 60 degrees when not in use. Sanctuary thermostat may be increased to 66 degrees; return to 60 degrees after use. If you have any questions about heating, please check with the Church Administrator.

Note on Heat Pump in Kitchen: The heat pump may be used to air condition the kitchen when cooking; return to previously set temperature when finished.

Austin Air Purifiers and Portable Fans: There are 4 air purifiers in the sanctuary and 2 in Fisher Hall to aid in reducing the risk of Covid transmission. There are several fans throughout the building. Please be sure to turn these off before leaving.

LVT Flooring: If a spill occurs on the upstairs or downstairs LVT flooring, please use only water to clean it up.

Lighting and Windows: Please be sure to turn off all interior and exterior lighting as you leave. (The two lamp posts out front, the lamp in Jonathan Fisher Hall, the light under the rear fire escape entrance and the Jonathan Fisher Hall entrance, are all set on timers). Please be sure to close and lock all windows before leaving.

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Use of Orange Cones: If holding a concert or large event in the sanctuary, orange cones must be placed in front of the curb for emergency vehicle use. If closing off the parking lot for an event, orange cones must be placed in front of the curb, as well as in both driveways. Cones can be found in the narthex for sanctuary use, and at the back of the church near the Fisher Hall entrance.

INCLEMENT WEATHER: Every effort will be made to make sure the four entrances to the Church and the sidewalk out front will be cleared before scheduled events. If however, snow continues or begins during the event, the group's responsible person is accountable for making sure the entrances are safe. In such an event, the Church will have no obligation or responsibility whatsoever, including clearing the entrances or sidewalks.

*Building closure will be in effect if the National Weather Service has issued a Warning for:

- a) Winter Weather (Blizzard, Snow, Freezing Rain, etc.)
- b) Hurricane or Tropical Storm

Building Checklist:

- 1) Leave the room(s) as you found them; furniture placement, vacuum or sweep floors as needed, etc.
- 2) Turn off all interior and exterior lighting, including the **sconces** on the front of the church. (The two lamp posts out front, the lamp in Jonathan Fisher Hall, the light under the rear fire escape entrance and the Jonathan Fisher Hall entrance, are all set on timers).
- 3) Turn off all Austin Air Purifiers and Portable Fans if used.
- 4) Close all windows.
- 5) Make sure all doors are closed properly.
- 6) Turn down thermostats to 60° (Sanctuary, Fisher Hall, and Annex).
- 7) Remove all trash, including the restrooms if used for large events.
- 8) Return any orange cones back to where they are stored.
- 9) File Incident Report as necessary and place it in the Trustee's mailbox.

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CAPACITY LIMITS

(Set by Fire Marshall and Board of Trustees)

1. SANCTUARY:
 - Main Pews: 260 people
 - Chancel: 80 people
 - Narthex: 50 people
2. CHOIR LOFT: **No Admittance** other than choir during church services
3. JONATHAN FISHER HALL:
 - Sit-down Function: 100
 - Stand-up Function: 200

While we will allow the decision whether to serve refreshments or meals, require masks, or determine the capacity (not to exceed the capacity limits provided) up to the building user, we ask that you consider the impact on our most vulnerable population in making these decisions. Should the CDC change their guidelines, the Church will also.

Regulations

1. The above capacity limits shall not be exceeded under any circumstance. The capacity limits include all people; audience, performers, servers, etc. Consider adding, **“No Public Seating in Choir Loft”** to your program, to avoid confusion.
2. The aisles shall be kept free from chairs and there shall be no standing allowed in the aisles.
3. All exits shall be kept free and clear.
4. For large gatherings, particularly in the sanctuary, make a public announcement as to where the fire exits are located

The organization using the church facility shall be responsible for policing the above regulations. Signing the Building Use Agreement and Financial Offset Schedule carries with it an understanding that the Building Use Regulations paperwork has been read, understood and agreed upon. If there are any problems, please let the Church Administrator or the Pastor know as soon as possible.

Thank you,
The Board of Trustees

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(Revised August 29, 2023)