

"Facility Use Policy"

South River Baptist Church in Statesville, NC

The church facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and always to God's glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-member persons and groups as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

However, facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's governing documents such as our Constitution and Bylaws. Nor may facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed by the church as inconsistent with or contrary to, the church's faith or moral teachings.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice (*2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22*).

Second, it is crucial to the church that we present a consistent message to the community, which the church staff and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To allow facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a negative impact on the message that we strive to promote. It could also be a source of confusion to our church members and the community at large because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church is in agreement with the beliefs or practices of the persons or group using church facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict those of South River Baptist Church use any church facility. Nor may facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are physically connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God (*Colossians 3:17*).

The final and exclusive authority for any decision whether any particular use of church facilities of South River Baptist Church would violate this policy shall rest exclusively with the church body acting in accordance with Holy Scripture and the church's governing documents.

(adopted October 2, 2016)