



# OLIVE BRANCH AME CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY 1.1

Approved by the Official Board on September 12, 2016

**Olive Branch AME Church**  
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# **OLIVE BRANCH AME CHURCH BUILDING USE POLICY 1.1**

## **PURPOSE**

Olive Branch AME Church facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of its 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.

The primary purpose of Olive Branch AME Church is to carry out the ministries of the local church. Olive Branch Church has an active ministry to children, youth, adults, and senior adults. Our programs and our people are the top priority when it comes to the use of church facilities. However, Olive Branch still wishes to expand its outreach into the community by offering the use of its facilities. Building use activities fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees which manages the use of all Temporal concerns. No commitment for building use is finalized until the **Facility Use Agreement** has been completed and executed by the Board of Trustees or its designee.

Olive Branch Church has had a number of long-standing relationships with several community organizations for ongoing use of the facility. Other local organizations and individuals have also used our facilities for one-time or short-term usage. Availability for ongoing usage is limited, but can be considered. Our first priority is for the program and membership needs of Olive Branch Church. Lesser use priorities are for nonprofit groups that are supported by the church, then (2) other nonprofit organizations and finally (3) other for-profit organizations.

Approval of the use of the grounds and facilities does not constitute or imply endorsement of any group, their mission, or their positions. Groups approved to use facilities must not advertise the event in such a way as to imply endorsement by Olive Branch Church. No activities or advocacy may take place within our buildings or grounds that conflict with the policies and the practices of Olive Branch AME Church and The African Methodist Episcopal Doctrine.

Included in this guide are the following:

1. Steps to Facility Use Scheduling
2. Fees for Facility Usage
3. Rules and Regulations of the Board of Trustees
4. **Facility Use Agreement** Form
5. **Facility Closing Checklist** Form

## STEPS TO FACILITY USE SCHEDULING

1. Fill out a **Facility Use Agreement**. One is included in this guide or you may obtain one from the church office or at our website: <http://greaterolivebranchame.org/> under the Contact Us tab.
2. Attach any additional information you feel might be useful in helping us determine if we can accommodate your group.
3. Use the calendar in the Fellowship Hall to write in the date of the event.
4. **Return the completed Facility Use Agreement to the Church Office at least one week in advance of the event along with a \$50.00 deposit which will be refunded when the keys are returned and the facility is clean to the satisfaction of the Trustee inspector.** The Board of Trustees will then evaluate your request and you will be notified on the disposition of your request.

## FEES FOR FACILITY USAGE

There is no charge to church members for the use of the facilities for weddings, family reunions, birthday parties, showers, etc. unless specified below. A \$50.00 deposit is required which may be refunded when the keys are returned and the facility is clean to the satisfaction of the Trustee inspector. Custodial and repair fees will be charged if a group or organization neglects the clean-up rules of this policy and does not responsibly take care of the facility. Church facilities are available to the following:

**Type A** Non-profit educational and other activities that are considered an extension of our ministry as evidenced either by our financial support or annual application through our Church Council.

**Type B** Civic and service activities, including musical groups, service clubs, fraternal organizations, etc.

**Type C** For-profit organizations, Receptions, Weddings, and other one-time Special Events

## RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church describes the specific responsibilities of Board and Committees. This includes the responsibilities and duties of the Board Of Trustees (see 2008 Book Of Discipline, Section II Local Church Organization, Section b5, Duties of Trustees). The paragraphs clearly outline the responsibilities the Board of Trustees has for church property. The paragraph is critical in outlining these responsibilities:

- a) The trustees shall manage all the temporal concerns of the church not otherwise provided for and shall have a treasurer elected by the Board
- b) They shall guard for the Connection all real estate, churches, parsonages, schools, and any other property obtained by the local church.
- c) They shall make improvements upon the property or real estate when authorized to do so by a majority of the legal members of the church.

Further, South Carolina State law will not allow use of NON-TAXABLE property of religious and Educational institutions to be used for private profit (without taxing), therefore, in keeping with what is believed to be the law of the Church and the State of South Carolina the following guidelines for use of church property are offered:

### **SCHEDULING:**

Availability of facilities will be determined by the Church calendar IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. The date and facility to be used shall be entered including the use of the Kitchen when needed. The Facility Use Form should be filled out and turned in to the Office for approval by the Board of Trustees. Regularly scheduled meetings of church groups have priority in use of facilities and equipment. Adequate notice (at least 10 days) must be given for approved special activities when in conflict with regularly scheduled meetings. Unlocking and locking the doors are the responsibility of the group using the Church facility. The keys can be picked up the day before the event and returned the day after the event.

### **BREAKAGE:**

All persons and/or groups using our facilities are expected to exercise reasonable care and judgment in such use in order to prevent defacement, damage, or breakage. The persons signing the Application for use shall be responsible for paying costs incurred by the church in cleaning, repairing, or replacing any part of the building or its furnishings and equipment which in the judgment of the Board of Trustees has been carelessly or irresponsibly subjected to more than normal wear and tear by the persons or group involved.

### **ROOM SETUPS:**

All rooms have been designated with a standard room setup. Any setup changes requested by the group are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

### **ORGAN AND PIANO USE**

Permission to use the organ, or piano must be granted by the Director of Music. If the user wishes to have instruments tuned, a craftsman approved by the Director of Music or Organist will tune them at the user's expense. Pianos cannot be moved except by permission from the Director of Music or the Board of Trustees.

### **FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT**

No furnishings or equipment shall be borrowed or removed from the buildings and grounds without permission of the Board of Trustees.

### **AUDIO/VISUAL EQUIPMENT**

If audio/visual equipment is needed arrangements must be made in advance through the Board of Trustee. The Sanctuary sound reinforcement or video recording systems may be made available upon request. The systems may only be operated by authorized church personnel or by technicians pre-approved by the Board of Trustees. Group-provided sound, recording, or video equipment may not be attached to church systems (including the electrical system) through cables or connectors without prior approval.

## **SMOKING POLICY**

All members of all groups using our facilities shall abide at all times by a “No Smoking” rule on church property. Violation of this rule is sufficient ground for a church staff member to withdraw immediately any group’s use of the facilities and/or to deny use in the future.

## **ALCOHOL POLICY**

The serving, consumption, or use of alcoholic beverages, marijuana, or other controlled substances shall not be permitted at any time on church property, including the outdoor areas and parking lots.

## **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

All users of the facility are expected to follow the guidelines of this policy. The safety and well-being of all those who enter is of utmost importance. All individuals or groups who use church facilities or its grounds are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

1. All children, youth and vulnerable adults must be supervised by a minimum of two adults at all times.
2. All children, youth and vulnerable adults shall remain in the area of use and cannot wander the church building or grounds unsupervised.
3. All children, youth and vulnerable adults are the responsibility of the group/groups using the church and its grounds.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Pastor or Board of Trustees.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

No food or drink is allowed in the Sanctuary except for water. All other food and drink requires approval in advance as noted in the *Facility Use Agreement*.

## **DECORATIONS**

All decorations require prior approval of the Board of Trustees or their designee. Decorations may only be attached to wooden trim, and wooden doors with masking tape only. No decorating is permitted in the hallways. All such decorations must be removed immediately and completely following the event.

## **STARTING AND ENDING TIMES OF SPECIAL EVENTS**

Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM. through 9:30 PM.

Friday & Weekends from 9:00 AM. Through 10:30 PM.

The building must be completely cleared not later than 10:00 PM on weekdays or 11: PM on weekends to allow the building to be closed promptly. Exceptions to these times must be approved in advance by the Board of Trustees.

**The Sanctuary and Annex are not available for outside use on Sundays.**

## **RECYCLING**

Recycling is a policy of our church. As a part of that policy, no Styrofoam cups, bowls, plates or other Styrofoam articles are to be used by anyone at the church. Receptacles for recycling glass, tin, aluminum and paper will be available for your use. Every organization is responsible for complying with this policy.

## **STORAGE**

There is no excess storage available for organizations other than church groups and, as

such, all organizations using the facility will be responsible for the storing of their materials offsite.

### **PARKING**

Parking in the church parking lot or designated handicapped parking spaces is available only during the period of time that a group has contracted to use the facility. Parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis and excludes certain spots that may be specifically reserved at all times for staff of the church. Any damage to vehicles is at the owner's expense; the church is not responsible for theft or damage to personal property.

### **SECURITY**

Our church works to maintain a safe and secure environment within the facility. However, no systems are foolproof. We ask that all users pay close attention to personal property and valuables, not leaving them unattended. The church is not responsible for theft or damage to personal property. Olive Branch AME Church is held harmless in the event of any accident, damage and/or injury incurred to users and their property not due to negligence on the part of Olive Branch AME Church. Doors should remain secured during the events.

### **CLEAN-UP:**

Groups using the facility are responsible for custodial clean up. All furnishings and equipment shall be returned to their original/proper place before leaving the building. This includes chairs, tables, Kitchen equipment and audio/visual aids. Under no circumstance shall food be left in the refrigerators and the interior trash cans. When kitchen facilities are used, the person responsible for the group must signify by placing their initials in the appropriate place on the cleanup form that the group has reviewed the check list and performed all clean-up procedures required to return the kitchen to the condition in which it was found. The Thermostats may be adjusted but must be returned to the original settings. Groups using the facility are responsible for turning off the lights and locking doors.

### **FINAL DECISIONS**

In case of doubt or uncertainty by any outside person or group about the application or interpretation of these regulations, or in our customary practices not specifically mentioned here, the Pastor, or the Board of Trustees or their delegated representative shall decide the matter and all individuals and groups shall abide by the directions or forfeit immediately the use of any part of the facility. Arrangements for access into the church facility will be made upon approval of the Facility Use Agreement.

### **EMERGENCY SCHEDULING CONFLICTS**

**The church reserves the right to pre-empt any facility use for its own in cases of emergencies, such as funerals and Connectional Meetings. Notice will be provided as early as possible.**

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**FACILITY USE AGREEMENT**

*PLEASE COMPLETE ENTIRE FORM ALONG WITH A \$50.00 DEPOSIT.*

OLIVE BRANCH AME CHURCH APPLICATION FOR USE OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS Please return completed form to Olive Branch AME Church at the above address or email.

Group Name \_\_\_\_\_

Application Date \_\_\_\_\_ Person Responsible \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W/C) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Olive Branch Church Group (Y/N) \_\_\_ Other AME Group (Y/N) \_\_\_ Non-Methodist Group (Y/N) \_\_\_

Please circle appropriate group: SOCIAL CIVIC SERVICE EDUCATIONAL CHARITABLE

Are any of your group members of Olive Branch AME Church? If so, please list their names.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please briefly describe your activity: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Expected attendance \_\_\_\_\_ Date Requested \_\_\_\_\_ Time Needed \_\_\_\_\_

Facilities Requested:

Fellowship Hall \_\_\_ Main Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_ Annex \_\_\_\_\_ Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_ Audio/Visual \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Note: Church facilities are available to members for weddings at no charge. However, fees for custodial services may apply when a violator does not abide by Church policy. (Custodial Fee ranges from \$50 - \$75)

Olive Branch AME Church is held harmless in the event of any accident, damage and/or injury incurred to users and their property not due to negligence on the part of Olive Branch AME Church.

I HAVE READ THE POLICIES AND PROVISIONS FOR THE USE OF THE CHURCH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THEM.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For office use only:**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Denied: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Basis for Approved/Denied \_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Closing Checklist**

**NOTE:** The chairperson of each group is designated as "the person in charge" and is

responsible for opening and closing the building and ensuring the building is cleaned and returned to it normal state. This form must be turned to the Board of Trustees indicating that all items were completed along with the key.

1. Turn off Heating/Air (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
2. Put all trash in proper receptacle (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
3. Return furniture to its original place (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
4. Sweep/vacuum floors (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
5. Ensure toilets are flushed and all lights are off in restrooms (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
6. Turn off all lights (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
7. Put rubbish and garbage into the Mt. Pleasant dumpsters outside (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
8. Do not put left over food in refrigerator. Dispose of unused food properly (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
9. Ensure stove top and oven are turned off (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
10. Clean the kitchen area and utensils (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
11. Take down all decorations (Y/N) \_\_\_\_
12. All Audio/Visual Equipment secured (Y/N) \_\_\_\_

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**SIGNATURE OF GROUP LEADER**

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**SIGNATURE OF APPROVING TRUSTEE**