

## **Facilities Use Policy**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Mound City, Missouri

### **Statement of Faith**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Holt County (hereinafter “Holy Trinity”) is a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (hereinafter “LCMS”). The LCMS is a Bible-based, mission-oriented denomination that confesses the historic Christian faith in the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. The confession of faith and its practice as adhered to by the LCMS rests upon “the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone” (Eph 2:20). With the universal Christian Church, the LCMS teaches and responds to the love of the Triune God, who created, ordered, and sustains all that exists. In love for fallen humanity, God the Father sent forth His Son, who became man to suffer, die, and rise again for the redemption of the world. The Holy Spirit calls people to faith and new life in Christ through His Word and Sacraments.

LCMS congregations, although diverse in many ways, all hold to a shared confession of Jesus Christ as taught in the Holy Scriptures. Holy Trinity believes and teaches unconditionally that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments are the written, infallible Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. Holy Trinity also confesses that the Lutheran Confessions, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, are in agreement with, and are a faithful exposition of, this one scriptural faith. The doctrine and practice of Holy Trinity as a congregation is governed by the Word of God, the historic Christian faith, and the Lutheran Confessions, according to the confessional standards in the constitution and bylaws of Holy Trinity, and according to the standards of the constitution and bylaws of the LCMS. Where a matter of doctrine or belief is to be explained, interpreted, or clarified publicly, the Pastor of Holy Trinity is designated to state the official position of Holy Trinity.

In accordance with and subject to the doctrine mentioned above, the mission of Holy Trinity is the faithful preaching and teaching of the Word of God, the administration of the Sacraments of Christ according to His institution, mission work in the local community and throughout the world, and confessing the holy Christian faith through association with members and nonmembers.

## **Statement on Marriage and Sexuality**

Holy Trinity believes that God creates each person as male or female wonderfully and immutably. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26–27). Therefore, the rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Holy Trinity believes that the term marriage has one meaning only: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen 2:18–25). Marriage has extraordinary, symbolic significance. It is an image of God’s intra-Trinitarian relationship (Gen 1:26–27). Marriage is instituted (Gen 2:24) and sequenced (1 Cor 11:3) by God. It symbolizes the unwavering, sacrificial love of Christ for His Church (Eph 5:22–33). The marriage bond is indissoluble (Exod 20:14), therefore rendering divorce highly disfavored (Matt 19:3–9; Mark 10:2–9). These features make marriage a reflection of God’s own being.

Holy Trinity believes that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2–5; Heb 13:4). Holy Trinity believes that God has forbidden sexual activity outside of the marital union between a man and a woman. Holy Trinity believes that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and the use of pornography) is sinful, offensive to God, and harmful to man (Matt 15:18–20; John 8:34; 1 Cor 6:9–10).

Holy Trinity believes that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seek His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and strive to live a life of repentance and holiness (Acts 3:19–21; Rom 10:9–10; 1 Cor. 6:9–11).

The official position of the LCMS is that same-sex unions come under categorical prohibition in both the Old and New Testaments (Lev 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor 6:9–10; 1 Tim 1:9–10). This position, along with other statements, papers, and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex unions can be found on the LCMS website, *lcms.org*.

## **Marriage Policy**

Marriage ceremonies at Holy Trinity are generally available only to confirmed members of Holy Trinity, or confirmed members of sister LCMS congregations, who are willing to submit to pastoral care from the Pastor of Holy Trinity. In exceptional cases, marriage ceremonies may be available to non-members who complete marriage counseling and/or who receive catechesis or similar training through Holy Trinity, subject to the Pastor’s approval.

The marriage policy of Holy Trinity remains consistent with the beliefs of the LCMS on marriage. In accordance with its deeply held religious beliefs, Holy Trinity believes, teaches, and confesses that “same-sex marriage” is sin, and should therefore not be condoned. This belief is central to the lives and faith of its members. Pastors at Holy Trinity will not officiate or otherwise assist in any marriages inconsistent with Holy Trinity’s own Statement on Marriage and Sexuality or LCMS policy. Church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception, or other activity that would be inconsistent with the beliefs of Holy Trinity or this Policy.

Holy Trinity will continue to confess and teach this historic and biblical view, and notes the First Amendment protections for religious organizations reaffirmed by the United States Supreme Court in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 135 S. Ct. 2584, 2607 (2015); *see also id.* at 2625–26, (Roberts, C.J., dissenting).

### **Facilities Use Policy**

Holy Trinity believes that its property and facilities are to be used for the fellowship of the body of Christ and the glory of God. Although its facilities are not generally open to the public, Holy Trinity reserves the right to approve use of its facilities by nonmembers on a per occasion basis as a witness to the Christian faith, and out of Christian charity for the benefit of the community, in a spirit of Christian service that is consistent with the doctrine of the universal Christian Church. However, facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church’s faith or moral teachings.

These limitations are consistent with the belief that allowing the facilities of Holy Trinity to be used for purposes that the Pastor and the Board of Elders of Holy Trinity determine are contrary to the doctrine of the Christian Church, the LCMS, and/or the congregation of Holy Trinity would be an endorsement of those purposes and a contradiction and grave violation of the church’s faith and religious practice (2 Cor 6:14; 1 Thess 5:22). It is important for the church to present a consistent message to the community and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their Christian life and identity, and as a witness to others that is consistent with the church’s doctrine. Holy Trinity will not promote, perform, or participate in any activity that would impair its ability to preach, teach, and confess the truth of God’s Word to its members or to the nonmember public. *See Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*, 530 U.S. 640, 648, 653 (2000).

Consistent with this Policy, church property, facilities, and equipment may be made available to nonmembers or outside groups which affirm that their practices and planned uses of the facilities will be consistent with the faith and practice of Holy Trinity.

The Pastor of Holy Trinity or his official designee must approve all uses of church property and facilities, subject to review and approval or disapproval by the Board of Elders of Holy Trinity. Generally, priority shall be given to members of Holy Trinity, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church.

## Facilities Use Fees & Deposits

Fees may be applicable, on a per occasion basis, for individuals and organizations utilizing the facilities and/or property of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church according to Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Facility Use Fees**

Individual/Organization	Deposit	Facility Fee	Insurance Certificate
Members of Holy Trinity	None	None	None
Organizations affiliated with the LCMS, or other religious organizations in spiritual agreement with Holy Trinity	None	None	None
Not for Profit 501(c)3 groups which engage in charitable or educational work consistent with the mission of Holy Trinity	\$ 200	None	None
Other Not for Profit 501(c)3 groups	\$ 500	None	None
Private gathering of individuals not affiliated with Holy Trinity or the LCMS	\$ 1000	\$ 100 / hr	Liability Insurance Certificate of \$ 1 M
Private gathering of an organization not affiliated with Holy Trinity	\$ 2000	\$ 200 / hr	Liability Insurance Certificate of \$ 1 M

Other definitions of individuals or organizations other than those defined in Table 1 will not be accepted.

In exceptional circumstances, Holy Trinity reserves the right to waive any applicable deposit, fees, or insurance requirements associated with facility and/or property use, at the

recommendation of the Pastor, and with the approval of both the Board of Elders and the Church Council.

Checks for deposits must be separate from checks for rental fees. Deposits and a self-addressed stamped envelope (for use in returning the deposit) are due with the submission of the reservation form. The deposit check will be returned within five working days of the event and following inspection of the facility after its use. Rental fees are due no later than the day of the reservation. Make all checks payable to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Liability insurance certificates will list Holy Trinity Lutheran Church as an additional insured on the endorsement.

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Approved by Board of Elders – November 24, 2019.

Approved by Church Council – December 12, 2019.

Approved by Congregational Voters Assembly – January 19, 2020.