

**Protecting Your Ministry
Facilities Use Policy
for
Peace Lutheran Church
Sussex, WI**

Statement of Faith

Peace Lutheran Church and Academy (hereinafter “Peace”) is a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (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. Our confession of faith and its practice 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 world’s redemption. 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. Peace 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. Peace 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. Our doctrine and practice as a congregation is governed by the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions, according to the confessional standards in Peace’s constitution and bylaws. Where a matter of doctrine or belief is to be explained, interpreted, or clarified publicly, the pastor of Peace is designated to state its official position.

In accordance with and subject to the doctrine mentioned above, the mission of Peace 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 our community and throughout the world; and confessing our holy faith through association with members and nonmembers.

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

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

We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: 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 (Ex. 20:14) and therefore divorce is disfavored (Matt. 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-9). These features make marriage an allegory of God’s own being.

We believe 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). We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ and by living a repentant life (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 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 Peace are generally available only to confirmed members of the congregation or the LCMS. In exceptional cases, marriage ceremonies may be available to non-members who complete marriage counseling and/or who receive catechesis or similar training through the church, subject to the pastor's approval.

The marriage policy of Peace is and always has been consistent with the Synod's beliefs on marriage. In accordance with its deeply held religious beliefs, Peace believes, teaches, and confesses that "same-sex marriage" is sin and should not be condoned. This belief is central to the lives and faith of its members. Pastors at Peace will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with its 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 our beliefs or this Policy.

Peace will continue to confess and teach this 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

Peace believes that its property and facilities are to be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring glory to God. Although its facilities are not generally open to the public, we sometimes make our facilities available to approved nonmembers as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian service that is consistent with our doctrine. But 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 our belief that allowing our facilities to be used for purposes that we determine are contrary to Peace's doctrine 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 as a witness to others that is consistent with our doctrine. Peace 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 Peace's faith and practice.

The pastor 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. Generally, priority shall be given to church members, 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 Peace Lutheran Church and Academy according to Table 1 below:

Table 1: Facility Use Fees

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

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 5 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 Peace Lutheran Church.

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