

Purpose

This handbook was created for the membership of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church to act as a guide for general information, as well as, the use and care of the facilities and properties needed for the orderly well-being of the church.

Exception Policy (revised 7/2007)

Policies are designed to create order and consistency to church operations. They generally state constraints and restrictions that are developed to instruct proper use of church property. They are meant as a preventative measure to control unnecessary expense, or abuse of the facilities. They also show preference to members of Mt Mitchell UMC over and above outside persons wishing to use our facilities.

That said... regardless of how much effort is exerted in addressing all possible scenarios... there is always an "exception". Therefore, all policies in this manual may be "excepted" by a meeting of the Administrative Council.

- The person requesting the "exception" should write a letter to the Council stating the variance and the reason they deserve being "excepted".
 - The Council will then vote on the matter, allowing, disallowing or modifying the variance. (i.e. reduced rates rather than free use of the facilities).
 - Each "exception is to stand on its own"... a ruling in one direction today does not apply to all requests afterward. (***There is no set precedence rule!***)
 - Once the Administrative Council has voted, the matter is settled (there is no higher court).
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Church Sanctuary and Educational Facilities (Revised 7-2007)

The church building is intended for the worship of God and the study of His Word. Therefore, it should be used only for this purpose. The Minister is in charge of the church as he has been appointed to serve and supervise the activities in these facilities. It shall be cleared through the Pastor, when any function is to take place in the church or educational building other than regularly scheduled programs.

Candlesticks, furniture, etc., cannot be removed from the Chancel area except with ministerial approval. No tacks, pins, or nails are to be used to attach decorations or makers to pews, walls, or Chancel furnishings.

It is the policy of the church that all lights and air conditioners are turned off. In winter, the heat

should be turned down but not completely off. Opening and closing of the church building is the responsibility of the church sexton. All doors should be locked when the building is not in use. **All members** of our fellowship and **other groups** who use the facilities are to be very sensitive to this policy.

The following fee will be charged for the use of the Sanctuary:

* **Member**.....No Charge
 Non-Member.....\$400.00
 Sexton.....\$100.00
 Total Fee.....\$500.00

The fee charged for the use of the Church Parlor or Chapel:

* **Member**.....No Charge
 Non-Member.....\$75.00 (per day)

Honorariums for the organist, pianist, and sound system operator are to be handled with the individual. (Check with your Wedding Planner or Funeral Director for what is customary.) If an organist other than the church organist is used, the church organist or other responsible person is to meet with them before usage.

The sound system is to be operated by a **Trained Member of Mt Mitchell UMC only**.

* A person is required to be a member of the church six (6) months prior to requesting a date to use the church facilities.

Fellowship Building - Fundraising Events (Revised 7-2007)

All functions other than regularly scheduled events must be scheduled through the Church Secretary, subject to approval by the Administrative Board. In the event of a conflict in scheduling, the Church Secretary, with the aid of the Pastor, will make the decision which may be appealed to the Administrative Board.

The following groups or events will have priority in the order listed when scheduling church functions:

1. *Traditional Events (Homecoming, Revivals, Cantatas, Christmas Programs, etc.)*
2. *Other Church Activities*
3. *Church Members*
4. *Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts*
5. *Non-Members*

Fellowship Building Activities:

- a. *A fee of \$35.00 per day will be charged for an event sponsored by a church member or group who uses the Fellowship Building for reunions, bridal showers, baby showers, rehearsal parties, wedding receptions or a similar event.*
- b. *A fee of \$200.00 per day will be charged for an event sponsored by a non-member who uses the Fellowship Building for any event.*
- c. *Fellowship Building Maintenance Rules are posted at various places throughout the building. All groups will be responsible for leaving the Fellowship Building in a clean and orderly manner.*

Persons or groups involved in activities 2, 3, and 4 above should present their request for scheduling to the Church Secretary as soon as possible prior to the planned event.

Rules for Fundraising Events

Fundraising events involving food service from the Fellowship Building should never occur on back to back weekends. There should be at least one free weekend between events. Other fundraisers (such as soda sales, popcorn, cookie dough, etc.,) can function simultaneously with meal events.

It is anticipated that fundraising events involving church facilities will always include tithing to the church.

Fellowship Building Rules (Revised 7-2007)

1. Any item (food, dishes, utensils, jars, etc.) brought to the Fellowship Building by a participating party should be removed at the end of the event by the person responsible for bringing that item.
2. Use of the fellowship building dishes and/or stove is prohibited by ***non-member*** groups unless a church member is present and takes responsibility.
3. ***Non-members*** are to provide their own glassware, etc.
4. The movement of the chairs/tables/carts **MUST BE DONE BY TWO (2) OR MORE** persons to prevent damage to the walls and floors.
5. Twelve (12) tables (with chairs folded and placed on top of the tables) are to be left up at all times. Other tables and chairs are to be returned to the Storage Room.
6. **NO** recreational activities such as tag, racing, or ball playing shall be permitted inside the Fellowship Building. All activities must be supervised. Any damage incurred to the building or its contents by any group or individual will be the responsibility of the user to pay for that damage.
7. **ALL HEAT/AIR** should be controlled by the **ON/OFF** switch. **Do not change the temperature controls**. Use the settings posted above the thermostat.

8. No posters, signs, or other objects can be nailed, glued, taped, stapled, or affixed to walls and/or ceilings as to cause damage. Marring-free materials are available for posting needed signs.
9. No chairs, tables, or other equipment shall be loaned or removed from the Fellowship Building. No painting or other craft activities shall be done on the tables that may cause damage to the surface. (See the [Exception Policy](#) for the variances to this ruling.)
10. The building shall be left in a clean condition or future use will require the approval of the Administrative Board.

- a. *Floors swept in entirety.*
 - b. *Check bathrooms.* (Be sure toilets are not "running".)
 - c. *Check thermostat.* (See [#7](#) above.)
 - d. *All garbage should be carried out to the dumpster after activity. If dumpster is full, leave excess garbage bags in basement near the outside door.*
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Secretarial Office, Equipment, & Library (Revised 7-2007)

The Secretarial Office and it's equipment are the expressed use by the secretary but can be accessed by other church agencies that may need to use the copier from time to time.

The Following Will Apply:

1. *No office equipment is to be moved from the premises.*
 2. *Office equipment (copier, computer, etc.) is to be used by trained personnel only.*
 3. *Copier supplies (paper, toner, etc.) should be paid for by the organization using the machine.*
 4. *The Secretary is responsible for control over audio-visual equipment. This equipment must not be removed from church property.*
 5. *The Library is under the supervision of the Librarian. All books and other materials can be checked out using the honor system. This is to encourage greater use of the library and develop more flexibility in its hours.*
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Membership Assistance Program (Revised 7-2007)

1. The Membership Assistance Program of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church has been established to help members of the church who may need financial aid because of sickness, tragedy, or some other circumstance which has caused financial difficulty.
2. Money for the Member Assistance Program is to be raised by free will by those who pledge to give \$1.00 or more per month and by persons or groups who desire to make a contribution of any amount.
3. The Administrative Council shall administer the Membership Assistance Program

a. If appropriate, a small group of Council members could be created so that the applicant's unfortunate needs are not subject to everyone's judgment.

4. Guidelines for the Membership Program:

a. Any information regarding a membership need should be relayed to the Chairperson of the Administrative Council by anyone recognizing a problem. The Administrative Council or the designated committee shall study the need very thoroughly and check into the details of the need.

b. The Administrative Council may approve an amount up to \$250.00 to be granted to a needy person from the Membership Assistance Program.

c. If the amount to be given exceeds \$250.00, the Administrative Council shall determine if the amount over \$250.00 shall come from the church budget or the Membership Assistance Program.

d. The total amount given by the Administrative Council may be given in a lump sum or, as in general cases, remittances are made to outstanding bills.

e. All monies from the Membership Assistance Program shall be dispensed by the Church Treasurer who will keep them in a separate fund.

f. An accounting of funds shall be made annually to the Administrative Council.

Application for Membership Assistance Program Aid

Recipient Name:

Mailing Address:

Cause of Need:

Has the applicant received prior assistance from the church?

If so, how much?

Submitted by:

Ernest T. Yost Park Rules (Revised 12-2008)

1. ***NO GROUP MAY USE THIS FACILITY WITHOUT RESERVATIONS.*** All reservations are made through the church office
(704 - 933 - 0155, 9:00 am - 1:30 pm).

2. The following groups or events will have priority in the order listed when scheduling church functions:

- a. Traditional Events (Homecoming, Revivals, Cantatas, Christmas Programs, etc.)
- b. Other Church Activities

- c. Church Members
 - d. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
 - e. Non-Members
3. Fees for keys to the facility are as follows:
- a. Church Groups - No Charge
 - b. Church Members, Private Use - No Charge
 - c. Non-Members, Private Use - \$25.00
 - d. Single Families - No Keys - No Charge
4. Hours of use for the facility are 9:00 am - 10:00 pm. Any exceptions must be approved by the Administrative Council.
5. All utensils and supplies are to be provided by user.
6. Adult supervision is required for persons 18 years of age and under.
7. Any person or group that misuses the facility will be held financially responsible for all damages.
8. ***Each person or group is responsible for cleaning the premises after use.*** Garbage is to be carried to the dumpster (located at the side of the Fellowship Building) or taken home after the activity.
9. **NO SMOKING, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, DRUGS, OR WEAPONS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PARK GROUNDS.**
10. **MT MITCHELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS.**

When You Arrive:

- Turn on circuit breakers labeled with the word "**OFF**".
- Sports equipment is located in the kitchen for your enjoyment.

Before Leaving the Shelter:

- Remove all decorations and fasteners used. The use of invasive fasteners (nails, screws, etc.) is forbidden.
- Police the area for loose trash that might blow onto neighboring property.
- The kitchen, tables and floors should be cleaned of any spills and all trash must be removed. (See rule [#8](#)).
- Turn off the circuit breakers which are labeled with the word "**OFF**". (***DO NOT TURN OFF ALL BREAKERS.***)

- Turn off remaining lights at their switch.
- Make sure toilets have been flushed and water has stopped running. Lock the bathroom doors.
- Double-check the roll-down windows to ensure they are latched on both sides.
- Return all spots equipment to the kitchen and place the key on the kitchen counter and lock the door.

Note:

*The Yost Picnic Shelter is an "outside" building that is only occasionally used and thus accumulates spider webs, leaves, pollen and dust in general. These premises **DO NOT** fall under the responsibility of our custodian for weekly cleaning. It is the responsibility of the last user to leave the shelter in an acceptable condition. It is highly recommended that you inspect the premises **prior** to your event to assure it meets your expectations.*

Wedding Policy (Revised 7-2007)

The marriage ceremony in the Christian Church is a worship service. As stated in the United Methodist Book of Worship, the service of Christian marriage *"is provided for couples that wish to solemnize their marriage in a service of Christian worship, parallel in its structure to the Sunday service, which includes the proclamation of the Word with prayer and praise. Christian marriage is proclaimed as a sacred covenant reflecting the Baptismal Covenant. Everything about the service is designed to witness that this is a Christian marriage."*

I. General Information

Contact shall be made with the pastor (*at the earliest date possible*) by the couple wishing to be united in marriage. It is required that the minister of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church be a part of the ceremony. If another minister is to be invited to perform the wedding, the minister of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church must invite that minister.

II. Fees

	Use of Sanctuary	
	Member	No Charge
	Sexton	\$100.00
	Non-Member	\$400.00
	Sexton	<u>\$100.00</u>
Section 1.01	Total Fee	\$500.00

Use of Fellowship Building

Member	\$ 35.00
Non-Member	\$200.00

Use of Church Parlor or Chapel

Member	No Charge
Non-Member	\$ 75.00

III. Music

The wedding is a sacred service of worship in which we celebrate the holy marital covenant of our Christian tradition. Therefore, all music shall be sacred and in keeping with the occasion. All musical selections shall be made by the couple in consultation with the church organist. Any musicians other than the Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church organist such as vocal soloist, violinist, cellist, trumpeter, guitarist, etc., and the music they perform must be approved by the Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church organist and the minister.

IV. Flowers and Decorations

The pulpit and altar table shall not be moved. Candelabra and floral stands may be used inside the altar rail. On the altar table, if a floral arrangement is used, the floral arrangement cannot hide the cross.

The furniture, floor and carpets must be fully protected against moisture and candle wax. Altar Paraments should be white or the color of the season.

Hurricane globes and candles are available for use in the windows. The cost of candles is \$50.00. The hurricane globes and candles should be removed from the windows immediately after the wedding.

Only masking tape can be used on the end of the pews to attach bows, flowers, etc..

Candelabra, floral stands, etc. are to be removed from the church immediately after the wedding. If the wedding party chooses to leave the flowers in the sanctuary for the Sunday morning worship service, the church office should be notified.

V. Photographs

Flash photographs will not be allowed during the service of worship, however, available lighting photos from the back of the Sanctuary are permitted. The wedding party may return to the altar after the service for photographs. Videotape cameras shall remain stationary.

VI. Wedding Party

Members of the wedding party are to be informed that under **no circumstances** should any of them come to the rehearsal or wedding under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The parlor can be used by the bride and her attendants for dressing. A classroom can be used by the groom and his groomsmen for dressing.

VII. Miscellaneous

Birdseed or flower petals may be thrown outside the church. (*No rice, please!*) No smoking or profanity is permitted in any part of the church facilities.

Honorariums paid to the Pastor, Organist and Sound Board Operator are at the discretion of the bride and groom. Please consult with your Wedding Planner as to what amount is customary.

The Worship Committee Chairperson will assist with questions or concerns the bride and groom may have.

***Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church
Kannapolis, North Carolina
Safe Sanctuaries for Children and Youth
Basic Essential Operating Guidelines (Revised 7-2007)***

1. Recruiting, Screening, Hiring, and Training of Youth and Children's Staff and Volunteer Workers:

Beginning 1 January 2006, criminal background checks (criminal - felony/misdemeanor, sexual offender registry) will be performed on all staff and volunteers with a role in working with children and youth (hereafter referred to as children collectively). Those currently in positions above approved by the Church Council will be exempt from this requirement. Exclusion criteria include those with felony convictions and those with misdemeanor convictions involving children or drugs. An appointed designee on the Staff Parish Committee will be responsible for conducting the checks and reporting to the Pastor. Criminal background checks will be repeated on key staff every seven (7) years and/or as necessary. Previous employment and references will be screened for those in a supervisory capacity of children. (Conference recommends training sessions annually.)

Reference is made to <http://www.wnccumc.org/yth/pdf/SafeSanctuaryBackgroundCks.pdf> for additional information regarding background checks and recommended agencies. Results of screenings will be maintained indefinitely.

2. Chaperone:

Only trained/screened adults are allowed to be sole chaperone of children. Adults working with children must be an associate member for a minimum period of six (6) months. (Conference recommends two (2) adults at all times.)

3. Age Limits:

Staff and volunteers should be at least 5 years older than the oldest child being supervised. No one under the age of 18 should be given supervisory capacity. A volunteer 15 - 17 years old may assist with child care under the supervision of an adult.

4. Restroom Visits:

Efforts will be made to insure two (2) unrelated adults are present during restroom visits and clothing changes. In the event this is not possible, only child care staff of the same sex are allowed to assist children in restroom visits or clothing changes. Diaper changes are exempt from the above requirement.

5. Visibility in Rooms:

Every room that is used for activities and teaching of children should have a window in the door or a half door that gives visibility to all areas of that room. The window must be left uncovered. If there is no window, the door must be left open. Attempts will be made to place half doors in the nursery and pre-school rooms.

6. Child Pick-up:

Only a parent or legal guardian may take custody of a child from church children's workers. Identity should be confirmed by child and a verification of an ID if the children's worker does not know the individual. A list should be provided by the parents to the child care staff authorizing other designated adults to pick children up. Only persons on this list will be allowed to pick up child.

7. Open Door Counseling:

Pastoral counseling is expected to be confidential in nature, but is for the protection of both parties that such sessions be held in an appropriate area. The pastor's study should have a window in it (uncovered) or have door remain open with emphasis on maintaining confidentiality.

8. Roving Monitors:

During operational hours of church activities, a roving safety monitor should be deployed when available. This person may also serve to accomplish other tasks such as delivery/pickup of Sunday School rosters, etc.. This person should walk the entire building at least twice during Sunday School hours.

9. First Aid and CPR:

At least one adult present at every church activity should be certified in basic first aid and CPR. The church will offer training annually. An AED (automated defibrillator) and basic first aid kit will be available in the break area of the parlor. A basic first aid kit will be located on each floor in the hall near the fire extinguisher. Miscellaneous care supplies may be maintained in the individual classrooms.

10. Communications and Advance Notice to Parents:

Parents should always be kept abreast of the programs their children or youth are involved in. They should be given advance notice and information regarding any activity which deviates from traditional classroom instruction offered at church during Sunday School, UMYF, bible school, and other regular church activities. Permission forms with medical information should accompany children for any activity involving travel or extreme sports activities.

11. Age and Activity Appropriate Equipment:

The safety and appropriateness of equipment used in the nursery, church, children's rooms, and playground will be examined annually and as needed.

12. Liability Insurance Coverage:

Coverage will be maintained.

13. Designated Spokesperson:

The District Superintendent will be the designated spokesperson in case of an incident or allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct.

14. Transportation:

No youth may transport other youth to any off-ground church activity. All church members using their vehicles to transport children must maintain adequate liability insurance on their vehicle and submit to DMV checks. DMV checks must be performed on any person operating a church van/bus or rented van/bus.

15. Nursery:

All persons working in the nursery must be approved by the Staff Parish Committee and meet requirements listed above. Two (2) persons must be in the nursery anytime it is in operation. Any activity determined to be a potential danger to children will be addressed by the Staff Parish Committee.

16. Dangerous Situations:

Any church member has the authority to stop, or caused to be ceased, any activity or situation that may be deemed unsafe, pending a final review by the Staff Parish Committee or Trustees as appropriate.

17. Church Access:

Church keys will only be issued to those with a demonstrated need for special access. Keys will be issued to the Pastor, Secretary, Janitor, Choir Director, Organist, Youth Leader, Administrative Council Chair, Lay Leader, Trustees Chair, Trustees, Scout Leader, Hot Dog Sale Coordinator, Sound System Workers, Staff Parish Chair, and Circle Leaders. All other key issuance will be at the discretion of the Trustees. A key issue log will be maintained and all keys must be returned immediately when a position is changed or requested. The exterior doors must be locked once worship service begins to provide security to the nursery area (no later than 15 minutes after the service begins). The only door remaining locked is the sanctuary door. A laminated poster will be placed on exterior doors advising entrance instructions.

18. Medical Emergencies:

All medical emergencies will be handled as appropriate. 911 will be contacted in cases necessary and then emergency contacts will be made to parents/guardians.

19. Fire:

In the event of a fire, the building will be evacuated. Each group/Sunday School leader is responsible for evacuation of their group. The doors should be left open upon leaving the area. The assembly area is in the parking lot in front of the Fellowship Building. 911 should be contacted.

20. Severe Weather:

In the event of a tornado or other severe weather, each group/Sunday School leader is responsible for movement of their group to the basement hall in front of the chapel/meeting room.

Children and Youth Abuse Prevention Policy ***"Safe Sanctuaries" for Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church*** ***Kannapolis, North Carolina*** (Revised 12-7-2005)

Introduction:

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in April 1996, and the Western North Carolina Annual Conference, in June 2004, adopted resolutions aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of children and youth in the church. This would include sexual, emotional, physical, and ritual abuse. This also includes neglect. The adopted resolutions include the following statement.

Jesus said, "*Whoever welcomes (a) child... welcomes me*" (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "*If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones... it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.*" (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse."

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (ritual abuse refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is

real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conference can cite specific incident of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma. Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotion, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (*From The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church -2000; pages 180 - 181. Copyright@2000 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.*)

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist Congregations, we adopt this policy for the prevention of abuse of children and youth in our church.

Purpose:

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Children and Youth Abuse Prevention Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth.

Statement of Covenant:

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth for all of our children and youth, as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measure in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirement of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

Conclusion:

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child and youth will be "...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (*From Congregational Pledge 2, Baptismal Covenant II, in The United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44*).

Used by permission from *Rev. Joy Melton, "Safe Sanctuaries" (both youth and childrens editions), published by Discipleship Resources.*

Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church

Youth and Children Volunteer/Staff Application (12-7-2005)

Date: Position Applied For:

Name: Alias:

Date of Birth: Location of Birth:

Address:

Previous Address (if not at current address for 7 years):

Employer:

Job Title:

Home Phone: Work Phone:

Length of Time at Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church:

List any criminal (felony, misdemeanor) convictions:

Date:

Nature:

Disposition:

If you will be operating a vehicle to transport youth, list all traffic convictions within the past 5 years:

Date:

Nature:

Disposition:

My signature attests that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge, and I furthermore grant permission for criminal records checks and motor vehicle checks (if indicated) to be performed.

Signed:

Date:

Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church
Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines
7 December 2005

Approved:

Pastor:

Administrative Council Chair:

Staff Parish Chair:

Lay Leaders/Trustees Chair:

Youth Leader:

Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church
Child Information Form (12-7-2005)

Date:

Child's Name:

Child's Date of Birth:

Name(s) of Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s):

Address:

Phone:

Secondary Phone:

Alternate Emergency Contact:

Phone:

Medical History:

Doctor:

Phone:

Medications:

Allergies (Food/Drug/Other):

Authorized Person(s) to Pick Up Child:

Name:

Relationship:

Cemetery Rules and Regulations (Revised 9-2008)

Purpose Statement:

One of the most costly church expenses is cemetery/lawn care (currently +/- \$14,000.00). This cost is borne by the offerings of current church goers and thus takes away income that would be available for other missions of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church. This means that there are significant numbers of our church givers that are maintaining the grass in the cemetery who do

not have or ever will have a grave site at Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church.

Likewise, there are a significant number of non-members or non-attending members who own lots but give nothing to their upkeep. To equalize this unfair condition, we are requesting some relief with a \$100 yearly maintenance support fee. This amounts to less than \$2.00 per week to keep your grave site maintained. Your support will be treated as an offering to the church and is tax deductible.

General Regulations:

The following rules and regulations governing the cemetery of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church supersede all previous motions, amendments, rules and regulations.

1. A Member of the church shall be appointed or elected by the Administrative Council as a representative of the church to sell cemetery lots or spaces to members of the above mentioned church and to keep records of such transactions as well as the locations of purchased spaces or lots. **Every sale must be accompanied by a copy of these rules and the representative should emphasize Rule #11 verbally.**

2. The Lay Leadership Committee will appoint a Cemetery Committee consisting of no less than three (3) persons plus the cemetery representative for a total of four (4) persons. Each person on said committee will serve a period of three (3) years along with the representative.

3. Three (3) copies of burial locations shall be kept at all times. One (1) shall be kept by the church member (representative) elected by the Administrative Council to sell cemetery spaces or lots, one (1) shall be kept in the lock box by the Trustees Chairperson, and one (1) shall be kept by the Cemetery Committee Chairperson. **These rules and regulations are to be reviewed annually.**

4. Said representative or two (2) Cemetery Committee members must be consulted before a grave is opened. All financial obligations must be met before permission is given to open a grave.

5. Said representative is not responsible for digging or supervising the digging of the grave.

6. No grave shall be less than five (5) feet deep unless authorized by the representative. Any person using heavy equipment and damaging grounds shall be liable for such damage. Any cost associated with failure to meet county and state codes will be the responsibility of the Leasee.

7. The representative or two (2) Cemetery Committee members must be consulted before a monument is erected on any grave. Failure to do so will make person(s) liable for any cost associated with damage to adjoining graves or misplacement of markers.

a. Funeral name markers that are installed at the grave when the grave site is

used will be removed by the family or Cemetery Committee when the monument is installed. If removed by the Cemetery Committee, the marker will be saved for the family.

b. Headstones and grave markers are the responsibility of those leasing the cemetery lot. Expenses incurred from damages remain their responsibility. Repairs must be made under the supervision of the cemetery superintendent.

8. A footing of six (6) inches in all directions is required at the base of the monument to come flush with the ground. All foot stones are to be flush with the ground.

9. No curbing is allowed.

10. The present purchase price of one (1) lot (2 grave spaces) is \$50.00. This includes excess dirt removal. The price of the grave lots will be established annually. Rules and regulations will also be reviewed annually.

a. Burial spaces or lots may be purchased by Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church members only. Non-members may not purchase a space or lot at any price.

b. If a church member who has purchased a cemetery lot dies and is survived by a non-church member or a Non-Supporting member spouse, the spouse may use the extra space for their site if the yearly maintenance fee is paid.

c. When the grave opening charge is paid, the maintenance fee is set to zero and begins accumulating at the start of the next year.

11. Any grave space previously purchased and not used by a member or non-member, may not be transferred to any other person through a will, gift, bequeath or other means. These space lots shall revert to the church, and purchase price or credit will be refunded to the estate at their request. Every effort will be made by the Cemetery Committee to have these unused sites returned to the church on a voluntary basis, then followed by a mandatory repossession for resale by the church.

12. Any current/former pastor and/or spouse will be given free grave sites at time of death, **if space is available**.

13. Any United Methodist minister who was a member of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church at the time of entering the ministry and who remains in the United Methodist ministry until death or retirement, will be given free burial space for him/herself, spouse and dependent children (18 years and under), **if space is available**.

14. Any church member who dies and does **NOT** have a grave space may have one (1) space at the member price purchased by his/her family. If his/her spouse or children under 18 are non-members, their grave will be at the non-member price.

a. If the above church member has not supported Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church in the last 10 years, his/her relatives will be required to pay the non-member price of \$750 per grave site.

Rules for Non-Members & Non-Supporting Members

1. Persons who no longer attend services at Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church or have moved their membership, will have to select one of the following options:

Non-Members

a. Sell lots back to the church at the purchase price or,
b. Pay difference between original price and current non-member price of \$750.00 per grave or \$1,500.00 per grave lot. \$100 per grave (\$200.00 per lot) will go to the Cemetery Endowment Fund for perpetual care.

Non-Supporting Members

a. Sell lots back to the church at the purchase price or,
b. Pay a yearly maintenance support fee of \$100.00.
c. Unless paid, the \$100.00 yearly maintenance fee will accumulate to a maximum value of \$500.00 (5 years). If not paid, this amount will have to be reimbursed when requesting the grave to be opened. Upon exceeding that amount your spaces will be forfeited and listed for resale by the church.

2. The Cemetery Committee will contact non-members holding grave spaces or lots and they will have ninety (90) days to select from the above options.

Authorization

These rules will apply to all persons and in extenuating cases a final decision will be made by use of the [Exception Policy](#).

These amended rules and regulations were approved on _____ and will be in effect immediately and remain so until Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church Administrative Council changes or amends them. These and all other amended rules and regulations will be sent to church members, non-active church members, and non-church members who own cemetery spaces or lots.

Accounting & Billing Procedures (Revised 7-11-2007)

1. In January, when the secretary is mailing out the yearly "donation letters", an examination will be made to locate all grave owners who have not contributed to the upkeep of the operations of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church Cemetery.

2. A billing invoice will be mailed to all non-contributing members along with a letter explaining the ramifications of failure to pay.

3. The amount collected on the \$100.00 maintenance fee will NOT go into the General Fund but rather credited to the Cemetery Endowment Fund in an effort to make the Cemetery self-sufficient.

4. Invoice terms will be "net due in 60 days". Non-receipt of payment will require the

secretary to update the space (or lot) owner's record that will be examined prior to authorizing the opening of a grave.

5. In April, a list of all persons with outstanding balances will be furnished to the Cemetery Committee in order for them to make educated decisions related to the returning of grave sites to be resold by the church.

6. Graves will not be allowed to be dug until the delinquent payments are covered based on that list.

7. The Cemetery Committee has a fiduciary duty to be pro-active relating to the cemetery maintenance, billing, collection efforts and repossession of sites.

Memorial Gifts (Revised 7-11-2007)

1. Gifts received which are designated a "Memorial Gift for the '*Decedent*'" are to be recorded by the church secretary in a fund (or account) so labeled.

2. A computerized letter is written to the family of the "Decedent" identifying the giver, their address, and the "to date" fund total.

3. A "Church Memorial Card" is mailed to the giver thanking them for their gift "in memory of" and the amount.

4. Memorial fund balances are used to assist in the general operations of the church. However, this will be at the will of the family.

5. If it is the wish of the family to use the fund to purchase a "memorial gift", they should do so using the church pre-accepted list of needed items.

a. This list will categorize gifts according to price with a concise description of the item.

b. Deviations from the list must be approved by the Administrative Board and are subject to being denied (and thus the family being very disappointed).

Meal Preparation Guidelines

When There Is A Death At Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church

- *Meals will be served to the family of a deceased member of Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church up to a level of food sufficient to serve 50 persons.*
 - *If an immediate family member should pass, and they have a home church, it will first be the responsibility of **their** church to supply a meal. If they have no home church then Mt Mitchell United Methodist Church will offer that service (again, a maximum of 50 plates).*
 - *An immediate family member is defined as husband, wife, child, mother or father.*
 - *The meal will be served at the convenience of the bereaved family.*
 - *Due to complications involved in transporting hot dishes, all meals will be served in our Church Fellowship Building.*
 - *Servers are NOT to fix plates for themselves until the bereaving family has left the Fellowship Building.*
 - *For funerals held out of town, a family size meal will be offered to the bereaving household upon their return. The meal will be delivered to the member's home.*
 - *Cost of supplies used in preparation of the meal can be turned in to the church secretary for a non-monetary credit. Every effort should be made to have all needed supplies donated to the church.*
 - *As with any policy, there are always exceptions. If there is a compelling need to honor a family of the deceased that doesn't fall into the above definitions, then the Executive Committee of the Methodist Women may elect to furnish a meal to the bereaved family.*
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