



POLICY REGARDING TEMPORARY NON-USE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

**Adopted by the Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church Board of Trustees
on April 21, 2021**

This policy applies to use of the Church and Annex during the pandemic by Staff, Members and Friends. At this time, access to, or rental of, church buildings by outside groups or individuals is prohibited.

The Board of Trustees is studying potential guidelines for reopening our doors once it becomes safe and prudent to do so. Four values guide that work: effective ministry; being inclusive of all, particularly those in high-risk groups; safety for all; and moving forward with our loving and respectful use of shared space. These values lead us to state that, at this time in the pandemic and for the time being, all OBUUC meetings or gatherings, large, small, on our grounds or off, should be held remotely rather than in person. Safety dictates that, other than for the Minister and paid Staff, no church building can be used by church or non-church groups at this time. Exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case basis, under the following circumstances, done in this order:

1. The requesting person or group ("requestor") shall secure the approval of the Board of Trustees;
2. The requestor begins that process by filing an application with the Church Administrator (in the format and with the content required by the Church Administrator), who after consultation with the requestor, finalizes the application and forwards it to the Board for consideration as expeditiously as possible;
3. When requesting an exception to this policy, the requestor shall inform the Board of the following:
 - a. The exact identity of all people who will enter the building(s), and the number of times;
 - b. The specific parts or rooms of the building(s) to be used;
 - c. Whether, and to what extent, the requestor plans or wishes to use any facility in a building, including the kitchen, restrooms, etc.
 - d. Anything else that a prudent, reasonable person would expect the Board to know to be able to make a decision on the request.

4. When requesting an exception to this policy, the requestor shall inform the board about the safety procedures and steps that will be followed (e.g., social distancing; mask use; etc.);
5. The requestor shall coordinate access with, and secure the approval of, the Church Administrator regarding scheduling of access to the building(s);
6. The requestor, using self-supplied disinfecting wipes, shall ensure that all surfaces in the building touched or used by those who had access are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of the time in the building; and
7. Afterwards, the requestor shall confirm with the Church Administrator that the access has taken place and shall expeditiously return any keys that were used to gain access.

If a group decides to meet in person somewhere other than in a church building, please understand that, by definition, that use cannot be considered to be an OBUUC activity and cannot be promoted within our media or communication structure. Let us return to in-person meetings and use of church buildings when it is safe to do so

The Board of Trustees will continue to study this fluid situation and will update its policies regarding use of church buildings as guidance from federal, state and local public health officials indicate that it is safe to do so. Relaxation of this policy likely will be done incrementally, in accordance with official guidance.