

Facilities Usage Policies

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills

Facilities of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills are available for congregation events and for the use of Voting Members of the congregation, as defined by the UUCSH by-laws. They may also be used by non-members to celebrate life events, as described below.

A. Primary Purposes

UUCSH Facilities may be used for the following:

1. To hold worship services, meetings of our congregation's committees, and small group ministries (SGMs).
2. For community-building social gatherings (such as Circle Suppers) and congregation events.
3. To promote our Unitarian Universalist faith and values to our own members and friends, and to the community at large (where appropriate) through activities such as children's religious education, adult faith development, socially-conscious films and book discussions.

The primary purposes of UUCSH Facilities take precedence over facility usage by outside groups.

B. Spaces at UUCSH

Spaces available include:

1. The Sanctuary. The nave can accommodate up to 140 people in fixed row seating.
2. The Fellowship Hall (all or part, as needed). This flexible space can accommodate seating in rows or at rectangular tables from 2-100, if necessary. Note: the Fellowship Hall cannot easily be used by multiple groups at once.
3. The Vestibule. The lobby in front of the sanctuary can accommodate up to 15 people for a small group gathering.
4. The Nursery. The nursery can accommodate small groups of up to 6 people in a private space.

C. Those Eligible to Use Space at UUCSH

1. Internal Use – Refers to use by UUCSH staff, organizations, SGMs, and committees for regular congregation business and special events. [Attendees are likely to be members and/or friends of UUCSH.]
2. UUCSH-Sponsored – Refers to an event or series of events organized by a group within the congregation to which the general public is likely to be invited. Admission may not be charged but donations to UUCSH may be accepted. Donations to other charitable causes must be approved by the UUCSH Board of Trustees.
3. Individual Use – Refers to use of UUCSH facilities by an individual who has been a pledging member or friend of UUCSH for at least six months. Uses include life events (wedding, civil union, memorial service, child dedication) as well as gatherings of a personal nature that involve one or more UUCSH members.
4. External Use – Use of UUCSH facilities for events not directly affiliated with UUCSH.

D. Use of UUCSH Facilities by External Parties

UUCSH facilities are not available to individuals or groups for any commercial or political purpose. External parties may reserve UUCSH facilities subject to availability, deposit (where applicable), and agreement to the UUCSH Facilities Usage Policies.

1. Life Event . Any individual or family may use the sanctuary of UUCSH for a life event such as civil union, wedding, memorial service or child dedication ceremony.

a. The minimum fee for such use is \$150 for an event with less than 50 people; \$200 for an event with 50- 125 people for the first hour. Each additional hour or part thereof is \$75.

b. A 50% deposit is required at the time of reservation. Balance is due on the day of the event. Payment may be by check , money order, or cash. If the space reservation is cancelled greater than 14 days prior to the planned event, the deposit will be refunded.

c. A separate \$200 refundable security deposit is required to reserve the space. Once it has been determined that no damage has occurred to the sanctuary, the money will be refunded within 14 days.

2. Community and/or non-profit organizations. Community and non-profit organizations may use UUCSH facilities only when the following criteria are met, subject to availability:

a. A UUCSH Member agrees to be available on site during the entire duration when the space is used.

b. The organization's activities are in line with Unitarian Universalist principles.

c. Use by any organization is limited to 12 times per calendar year.

d. A maximum of 100 persons may be in attendance at an event in the Sanctuary. Up to 50 people may attend an event in the Fellowship Hall. If necessary, the group should request RSVPs to ensure this limit is not exceeded.

e. In promoting an event, the group may not imply sponsorship or participation by UUCSH.

f. In the rare event that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills has need for a space for one of its primary purposes and that space is reserved by an external group or individual, UUCSH may, with 72 hours' notice, inform the party that they may not use the space. Every effort will be made to accommodate a reservation at another time.

E. Reserving Space

1. Any individual or group who wishes to reserve space at UUCSH must contact the Office Administrator via telephone (908-927-0601) or email (uucsh@uucsh.org) with the following information:

_____ His or her name and contact information

_____ Group for which space is sought, if applicable

_____ The purpose of the space reservation (meeting, dinner, event, class)

_____ Preferred dates and times

_____ Recurring schedule information, if applicable (2nd Wednesday, 1st Friday, etc.)

2. If the UUCSH Office Administrator determines that the requested use is in accordance with our Facilities Usage Policies, the Administrator (or, in her absence, the Minister or other designee) may approve the request. Under normal circumstances, the requesting party will receive notice within five business days.

3. Rooms are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. If a specifically-requested space is not available, an alternate may be suggested to the requesting party.

4. A request for space is not considered confirmed until the requestor receives confirmation that it has been approved.

UUCSH Facilities Usage Policies

1. The user agrees to leave the space in “as found” condition or better.
2. Smoking is not permitted in any part of the building. Open flames are not permitted at any time.
3. UUCSH-affiliated groups may use all coffee supplies and equipment, as well as easels, markers and supplies.
4. Neither food nor drink are permitted in the Sanctuary.
5. Special attention must be made to ensure that events at which food is served are thoroughly cleaned following the event. This includes sweeping the floor and disposing of trash in the receptacles behind the building.
6. When children are invited or permitted to attend an event, they must be supervised at all times.
7. UUCSH shall not be responsible for the loss or damage of any personal property.
8. Alcoholic beverages.
 - a. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted, provided the group complies with all applicable state and federal laws. Adults consuming alcohol must do so responsibly.
 - b. Under no circumstances may alcoholic beverages be sold on UUCSH property.
 - c. There are no circumstances under which persons under the age of 21 shall be permitted to consume alcoholic beverages.
 - d. Containers from any alcoholic beverage (including empty containers) must be removed from the premises following the event. Do not use UUCSH recycling bins for alcoholic beverage containers.
9. UUCSH is committed to being a courteous and considerate neighbor in its residential setting. The Borough of Somerville has reduced noise levels during the hours between 10pm and 7am. Loud noise should be avoided at all times, but must be curtailed by 10pm.
10. Events must end by 11:00pm. Cleanup must be completed and the building must be vacated by 11:30pm. Overnight use of UUCSH facilities is limited to UUCSH functions.
11. The person reserving the space is responsible for set-up and clean-up unless other arrangements are made.
 - a. The space is to be returned to its “as found” condition in terms of table and chair arrangement.
 - b. The floor is to be swept and trash properly disposed of.
 - c. When leaving the building, lights are to be turned off and coffee pots are to be cleaned.
 - d. All exterior doors must be locked.
12. To protect the walls, anyone using UUCSH space is asked to use non-marring tape provided by UUCSH. In the Sanctuary, use the art rails to hang any items.