

Southwood United Church (SWUC) Sanctuary Use Guidelines

February 2020

This document is intended to serve as a guide to all user-groups of the Sanctuary at SWUC. These spaces have been dedicated to the worship of God by a community of people of all ages who follow the Christian faith. The conditions for use outlined below apply equally to the members/adherents of SWUC and to those persons/groups of the wider community who have been authorized to use the facility. Failure to respect these Guidelines will affect future requests for space usage and will impact the return of the damage deposit, where applicable.

General Use

The symbols and special areas within the Sanctuary are instruments and tools used for the worship practices of this congregation. Care and respect for the symbols and places of honour in the Lobby and Sanctuary is required by all user-groups and individuals.

- Normally, coats are not to be placed in the pews, on the stairs to the chancel, or laid on any of the fixtures in the Sanctuary; please use the coat rack areas located in the South and East hallways off the Lobby.
- No food, candy, or drinks of any kind (other than water) are permitted in the Sanctuary, unless special arrangements have been made in advance as part of a Rental Agreement (additional care-taking charges will apply).
- SWUC is a place of Christian worship. As such, use of the Sanctuary is restricted to the following purposes: (A) services of worship that are specifically and explicitly Christian; (B) events related to Christian education, prayer, worship, or formation; or (C) public performances, recitals, or workshops where the leaders/presenters are able to articulate either their agreement with OR neutrality regarding the mission and Church Practices of the congregation. Under no circumstances shall a non-Christian group be permitted to use the Sanctuary for religious or spiritual activities. **Any use of the Sanctuary** must also be approved in advance by the Lead Pastor and Church Council** and is subject to the policies laid out in the “Rental Groups Guidelines” document.

***Recitals held by private music teachers/studios are special cases and are exempt from the requirement of Church Council approval. They shall be hosted at the discretion of the Church Administrator, in consultation with the Lead Pastor and/or staff team.*

The Baptismal Tank, Stone Wall, and Mosaic Floor

This area is one of the focal points of the Sanctuary and is located at the top of the chancel (or “stage”). This area is normally reserved for one purpose—the Sacrament of Baptism. There is a removable floor that is fixed over top of the baptismal tank—it is not to be removed except with the explicit permission

and oversight of the Lead Pastor. **If the tank is found to be uncovered (it shouldn't be), it may not be used for equipment storage or as "extra stage space" for public performances. Please notify the church office as soon as possible and adhere to the following guidelines:**

- Coins or any other objects are not to be thrown into the tank.
- Whether or not the baptismal tank is filled, activity undertaken by rental groups/individuals is only permitted up to the barrier surrounding it.
- No equipment, performers, chairs, coats, etc. should be placed beyond the barrier.

The stone wall located at the very back of the chancel should not be used for any purpose. It is intended as a sacred art installation. It should not be climbed, nor should anything be placed on it or affixed to it for any reason.

The mosaic floor is also a sacred art installation intended to be a place of prayer and reverence. It should be respected as such—chairs and equipment should not be placed directly on top of the tiles. If the space is required as part of a presentation, please arrange with the church office in advance to have a protective carpet placed over the mosaic floor to prevent damage.

The Communion Table

The Communion Table is a sacred fixture that is reserved for the Sacrament of Communion and worship practices of the congregation. It is moveable. When the space is being used for purposes other than services of Christian worship, the Table should normally have been moved out of the Sanctuary or to the back wing (under the lowered ceiling). If the Table is found to be on the chancel or in front of it (down on the floor), please carefully move it either into the Choir Room (through the double doors at stage-left) or to the back wing. It is on Teflon sliders and should slide easily without the need for sustained lifting. **Wherever you find the Communion Table, whether inside the Sanctuary or not, please do not use it as a depository for "stuff"—no coats, hats, food, drinks, paper, or any other material should be placed on the Communion Table at any time, nor should anything be hung on the brass cross.**

The Cross and Liturgical Fixtures

The wooden cross on the South wall of the Sanctuary is a sacred fixture. It is not moveable. Under no circumstances is the Cross to be altered, covered, or have anything hung on it, except Lenten liturgical fabric that is approved in advance by the Lead Pastor. Throughout the year, there may also be various banners, hangings, or other liturgical fixtures that are a part of the worship practices of the congregation. They are not to be removed, covered, or altered in any way by user-groups.

Audio/Visual System

Users of the Sanctuary may require use of the audio/visual system. In such cases, an authorized technician from Southwood United Church will be provided (additional fees will apply). No one other than an authorized technician from Southwood United Church is permitted in the A/V booth.

Piano

Users of the Sanctuary may require use of the grand piano. In such cases, the piano will be moved into place by Southwood United Church personnel as directed in the event setup instructions. User-groups are asked not to move the piano on their own before, during, or after their event. In addition, the piano's installed humidifier and microphone are plugged into an electrical socket and mic input, respectively, and should not be removed for any reason.