

Event and Rental Space Policy and Procedures **Trinity-St. Paul's United Church**

Purpose

To provide practical policy materials to enable TSP to hold events and to offer its rental space for events with full confidence and integrity to satisfy TSP's mission to support human dignity and social justice, and enable diverse voices in the community.

(Although the materials are general and non-specific, they can serve to counter accusations of anti-Semitism, claims promoting violence, or attacks on events hosted or rented on the premises.)

Mission Statement

TSP is an inclusive and affirming Christian community celebrating God's presence, seeking justice and peace, strengthening faith and nourishing the creative spirit.

Guidelines for holding events or renting event spaces

The criteria for evaluating an application for rental is based primarily on the merits of the event or sponsoring organization in general and in demonstrated attitude, words and deeds relative to:

- The TSP Mission statement
- Respect for human dignity, human rights and international law for all persons regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

Specifically,

- Events which, or sponsors who promote greater education and engagement for all, are encouraged.
- Events which or sponsors who promote or incite direct acts or policies of hatred or violence against people or groups are not accepted.
- Events or sponsors critiquing or condemning the policies and actions of nations or states do not constitute incitement to violence or hatred.
- Expressions of support for armed struggle or resistance, as outlined in international humanitarian law (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949) including wars of national liberation as a protected and essential right of occupied people everywhere, does not necessarily constitute violence.

Guidelines for handling complaints received against an event or organizer

Organizations or parties contesting an event or sponsor must provide concrete and verifiable evidence of claims against an event or sponsor. Guilt by association, membership or relationships, or a post or writing on social media does not necessarily constitute grounds or evidence. Claims must provide sufficient time to adequately conduct independent due diligence. In researching the validity of claims made, TSP may contact and engage community partners and others to assist in arriving at a full and fair assessment.

Process for handling complaints

- Receive and acknowledge complaint (see sample)
- Provide information about guidelines to complainant
- Undertake due diligence regarding concerns
- Notify the focus of complaint and ask for response / input
- Seek input from church resources (General Council Office, etc.)
- Seek input from allies in the field (MEWG Group) & partners (Zatoun, etc.)
- Seek clarification or further substantiation from complainant (as necessary)
- Verify claims independently with additional references and sources
- Develop a formal but brief recommendation to Board or other body
- Notify complainant of decision (continue or cancel) in writing (see sample)
- Notify renter of decision (continue or cancel) in writing"

Education

- Engage in an ongoing process of education on issues of justice especially concerning countries and international regions where media information or knowledge in the community may be limited.
- Wherever possible, invite partners and affected people or individuals to provide personal stories, witness and perspectives.
- Encourage participation in programs and activities identified and approved for action in General Council meetings and supported by United Church of Canada social policy.

Resources:

UN General Assembly Resolutions: Resolution 37/43 (December 3, 1982)

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/un-general-assembly-resolution-37-43-december-1982>

Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol I (1977)

<https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions/overview-geneva-conventions.htm>

<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/INTRO/470>

[https://ihl-](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=6C86520D7EFAD527C12563CD0051D63C)

[databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=6C86520D7EFAD527C12563CD0051D63C](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=6C86520D7EFAD527C12563CD0051D63C)

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men(sic) who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle.

U.S. slave and abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, 1857