



The attached policies have been approved by the Sunset Elders. Any questions pertaining to the content of the items enclosed, please feel free to contact any one of the elders.



Last Revision February 25, 2026

Policy Index

Building and Property Policy	2-7
Building Keys	2
Phone Use	2
Copier Use	2
Laminator Use	2
Fax Machine Use	2
Borrowing Policy	3
Tables	3
Sunset Property	3
Kitchen Goods	3
General Building Use	4
PowerPoint Presentations	4
Scheduling the Use of the Building	5
Music in the Building	5
Wedding Policies (These are in addition to other Building Policies)	6
Building Use Form	7
Food Pantry	10
Weather Cancellation Policy	11
Transportation Policy	12-15
Operator Qualifications	12-13
Operation Policies for Use of Sunset Vehicles	13-14
Van Reservation and Use Form	15
Child Protection Policy	16-27
Child Protection Preface	17
Myths & Facts About Child Sexual Abuse	18
Know & Observe Touching Policy	20
Children/Youth Protection Plan	21
Background Check Application	26-27

Building General Policy

Building Keys:

Keys may be loaned to members who need access to the Sunset Facility. Keys issued are subject to approval according to the need. All keys are issued through the Building Facilitator, who is your contact should a key you hold become defective or lost.

Phone Use:

Offices are locked after hours. If you need a public phone you may use the phone located in the Library/Conference RM (Office Wing).

Copier Use:

The copier in the church offices is for staff's use only – trained personnel. Teachers are welcome to use the copiers located in the Curriculum Room. Be kind to the copier machines; if you need assistance seek help from staff. Large copy jobs need to be approved in advance and may be done through the office using the office copier.

Laminator Use:

A small laminator is located in the Curriculum Room for you to use according to directions. The large laminator use would require assistance from those who are familiar with the equipment. This machine is located in the curriculum room. Laminating is expensive so please plan your projects wisely.

Electronics:

Overhead projectors, Video Monitors, VHS/DVD players are available for class use and can be requested through the church office.

Sunset Building Property & Borrowing Policy

Borrowing Policy:

No Property of Any Kind is to be removed from the building. Loaner tables in the garage are available to be **CHECKED OUT**. They can be obtained through the church office, subject to availability. It is the borrower's responsibility to check out and return the tables, when promised, and in good condition after use.

Other Items in the garage are not to be removed, such as yard tools, equipment, etc.

Sunset Property: Items for use in the building such as cleaning devices, projectors and all electronic devices, computer equipment including all visual aids are not to be removed from the building. It is in the best interest of the church not to loan such items and to restrict use to the building and grounds of Sunset Church of Christ.

Kitchen Goods: Things in the kitchen such as plates, paper products, hot & cold cups, coffee makers, punch bowls, table decorations, and table cloths, etc. are to be used at functions held in the building only* and may **not** be removed from the building.

***Exception to the rule** would be things used with an all-church picnic or a function that involved the congregation in whole or part. (Annual Church Camp-out or Connect Group functions) Private functions should to be provisioned with your own items.

Building Use:

All functions must be put on the Building Use Calendar located on the church website and in the Library/Conference Room (Office Wing) and a *Building Use Form must be turned in to the office, in person or online and approved (this includes: staff / elders/ deacons).*

Groups that meet in the Sunset building are responsible for the setting up and restoring rooms and items used back to the condition in which they were found.

Building Use Policies

Please Note - These Rules Apply when using this facility:

No contemporary musical instruments may be brought into or used in the building. Replicas of instruments used during Bible times may be demonstrated in classrooms to assist with learning.

If you are holding an event, you are responsible for where your guests roam. Please see that they stay in the designated area for your function.

All Teen and Youth Events require Adult supervision 21 years or older - **No Exception**

The event host will be responsible for the cleanup of personal belongings, of any messes, and for returning the area and any items used back to the condition in which they were found.

You will be responsible for taking the trash to the outside receptacles **after your event**.

You may be asked to secure the building after your event. Any loaned keys to the building will be subject to approval and should be returned to the Building Facilitator or office personnel afterwards.

Please note the **heating or cooling of the building must be** programmed in advance. The thermostats are locked and are to be operated by the Building Facilitator only. Because of the size of the congregation and building we need to schedule events in advance. By doing this we will be able to better accommodate events without any issues.

The Sunset Facility is **reserved for the use of its members only**. Any other use must be approved in advance through the Building Facilitator or the elders.

Church Groups with activities held in the building are responsible for the setup, the cleanup and for returning areas and items used back to the condition in which they were found. They must also fill out a **Building Use Form**.

Custodial fees may apply for the personal use of the facility such as for Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc. **All events must be approved in advance for availability purposes.**

Users of the building must provide their own paper goods, supplies etc. for personal events.

Feel free to contact your Building Facilitator or the church office with your questions.

SCHEDULING THE USE OF FACILITIES

The use of the facilities is limited to members of the Sunset Church of Christ only. Members who plan on using the building must schedule the time of use well in advance, complete a **Building Use Form**, and have the event put on the calendar. All events are subject to approval by the elders of Sunset. All events at the building on Wednesday and Sunday will

be scheduled around the regular weekly activities of the church. **The elders reserve the right to refuse the use of any and all of the facilities to any and all groups, couples, individuals or organizations.**

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN SCHEDULING THE FACILITIES:

- a. All areas of the facilities needed for an event should be listed at the time of the initial scheduling. Time needed to decorate or prepare for the event should be included as well.
- b. **Those reserving the facilities must be Sunset members. Those members will be responsible for any damages incurred and for the cleanup of any flowers, decorations and personal items after the event.**
- c. No furniture should be **removed** other than by the **Building Facilitator, or in his absence, an elder, preacher or one of the assigned persons in charge.**
- d. No posters, signs, or decorations shall be attached to the walls or furniture unless approved by a church representative (**see c. above**).
- e. **All food and drinks are to stay in the room in which they are served. No food or drinks are allowed in the carpeted areas of the building.**

MUSIC:

Music **during** Sunset's **worship services** is and will remain exclusively a cappella, including any music embedded in video clips or other recorded music. Recorded instrumental music **may be used during non-worship activities such as weddings, funerals, social events or before or after services** with prior approval by the building facilitator. All music must be preapproved before being played. **For this reason, and to make sure the digital files are compatible with our equipment, all files must be turned in to the office at least 24 hours before they are scheduled to be played.** Instrumental music that is a part of a video, CD, PowerPoint, Cassette Tape, DVD, Flash Drive, etc. may be used for teaching and instructional purposes in a classroom, when approved in advance by the elders.

USER AND GUESTS OF USERS:

The parties using the facilities will act with dignity and respect during the activities. No tobacco or alcoholic beverages are to be used **ANYWHERE ON THE CHURCH PREMISES.**

Apparel worn by all present at the event is to be dignified and appropriate for the occasion.

The user party is responsible for all personal belongings such as purses, garments, shoes, etc., and all items left throughout the building. You as the user party will be responsible for assigning a key person to direct and manage the clean-up after your event. It is advised that purses and anything of value be locked up while you are in the building.

The Sunset Church of Christ will not be held responsible for lost or stolen items.

Building Keys are not loaned out unless pre-approved. Reasonable time frames for opening the building for set ups and deliveries will be agreed upon in advance. **If the Building Facilitator is required to be at the building at times other than his/her regular work times a \$25 fee will be assessed.**

BUILDING USE FOR WEDDINGS:

In addition to the policies listed above, there are additional policies for Weddings.

FEES AND USE TIMES:

For Wedding Events there are fees charged for custodial and other services as follows:

\$125.00 for the set up and clean-up of the auditorium (if used).

\$50.00 for the use of the PA system. (This system is only to be operated by one of the regular operators.) This includes the preparing of your music choices and operating the sound booth according to your needs.

\$150.00 for the set up and clean-up of the fellowship hall including other areas used for wedding events.

It is required that the Building Facilitator be the one to remove, set up, clean and restore the building to its original form as he is most familiar with the building set up. The church pays for custodial services to maintain the facilities, not for the clean-up of personal events. You are required to use the Sunset Building Facilitator and pay the set fees as stated above though these fees may be negotiated. If both the auditorium, Fellowship Hall, & PA system are used the fee would be \$325.

MINISTER FOR WEDDING CEREMONIES:

Only a Male member of the Church of Christ may conduct a wedding in the building.

PLEASE NOTE:

Rice may *NOT* be thrown on any of the premises. In lieu of rice, bird seed and bubbles are welcome, **but may be used only outside of the building.**

PLEASE READ, FILL OUT, AND RETURN THE BUILDING USE FORM TO THE OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR APPROVAL.

Link for the online Building Use Form is <https://sunsetchurchofchrist.org/building-use-form/>

Building Use Form

Sunset Church of Christ

Date of Use Requested: _____ Time Frame: _____
 (Please include any time needed to decorate or clean the facility in the Time Frame listed above.)

Circle Areas You Will Want to Use on Attached Map:

Upper Level Multi-Purpose Room #4C and/or #4B and/or #4A

Lower Level Activities Area: North Bay # 1 and/or South Bay # 2

 Name of Event: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

The Building Facilitator will contact you after receiving this form to confirm your event.

At that time he will go over the area of the building you wish to use and make the necessary plans. Please let him know if you will need to use any electronics, move any furnishings or arrange for any supplies for your event.

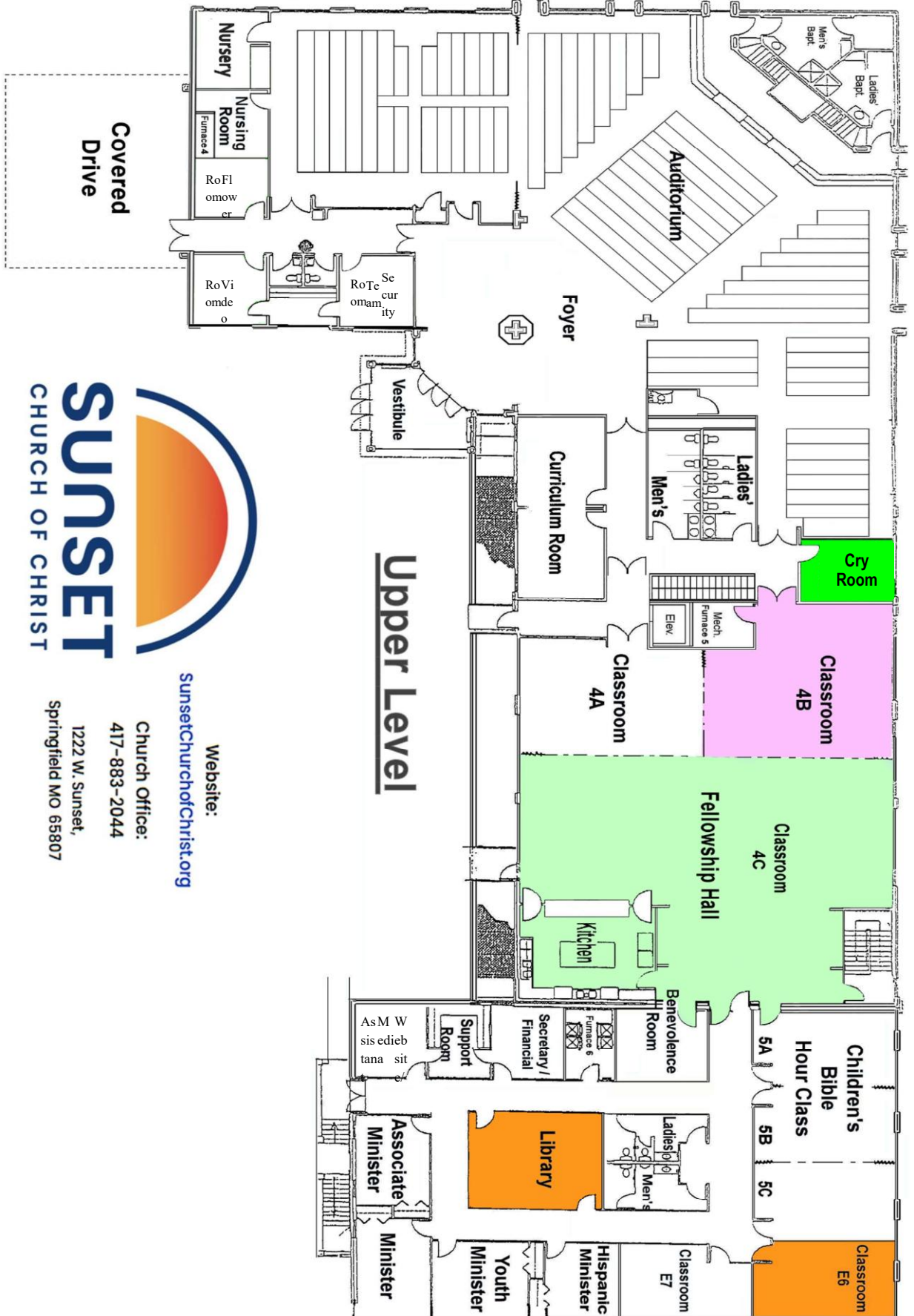
Be sure that you have reserved the date on the Church Event Calendar located in the Library / Conference Room (Office Wing).

If you have any Questions, feel free to contact your Building Facilitator or the church office.

Attached to this form is a Building Use Policy; please read and sign that you fully understand and will comply with the rules listed. You may detach the copy to keep as your reference.

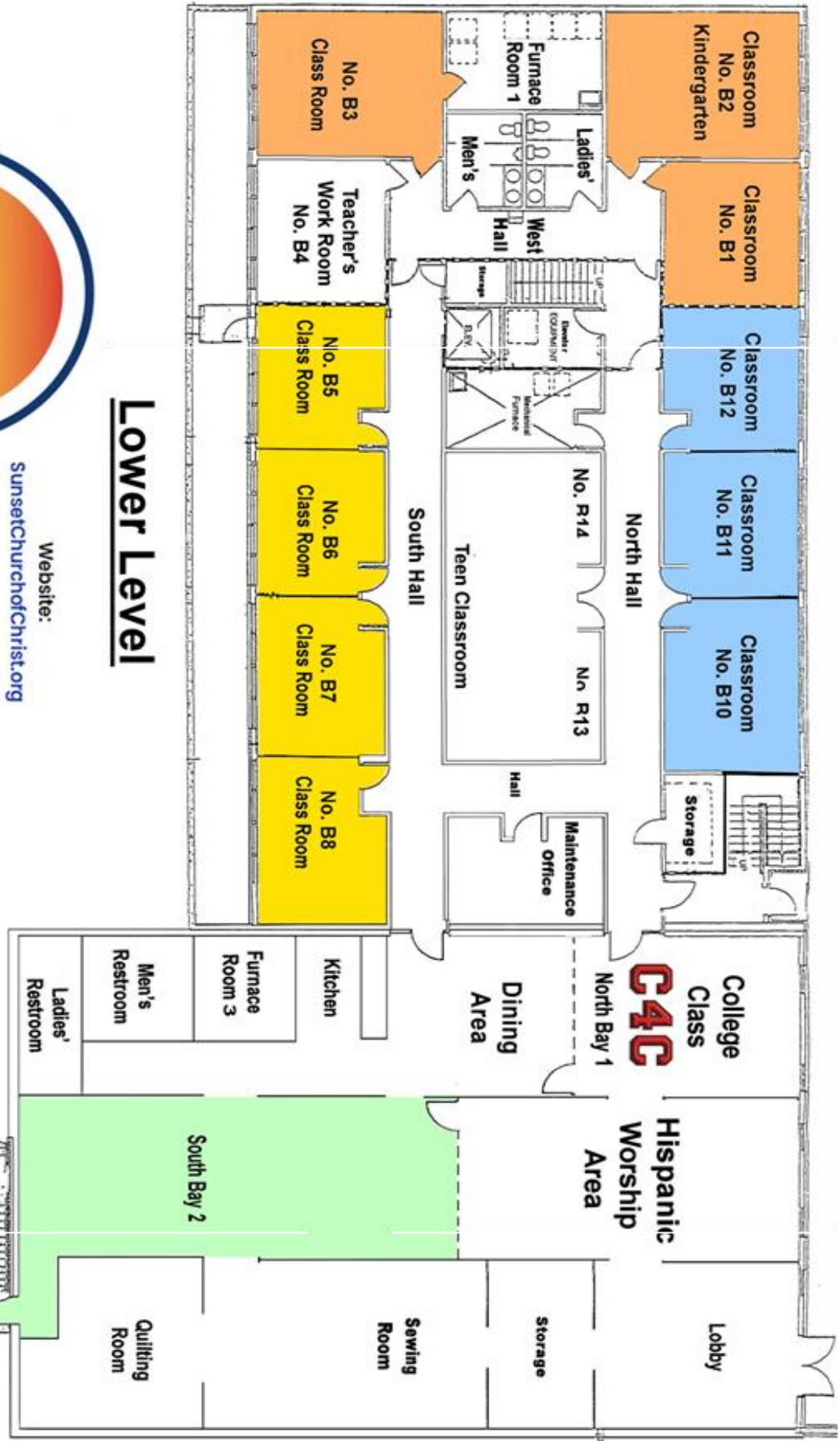
Custodial fees for use of the Fellowship Hall and restrooms for Wedding, Anniversaries, private Birthday celebrations etc. may apply. Please address this with the Building Facilitator when he/she confirms your event.

Sign: _____ Date: _____



Website:
SunsetChurchofChrist.org

Church Office:
 417-883-2044
 1222 W. Sunset,
 Springfield MO 65807



Lower Level



SUNSET
CHURCH OF CHRIST

Website:
SunsetChurchofChrist.org

Church Office:
417-883-2044
1222 W. Sunset,
Springfield MO 65807

Pantry Policy and Procedures

The normal policy is that all requests come through the church office. The office personnel will discuss the needs of the caller, check to see if the caller has had a food request before and when, and if the caller is in our established area. Records are kept on the computer. We have a policy regarding community requests of 90 days between requests and no more than 3 requests per year. If the caller meets the requirements for receiving food, the number of adults and children is established as well as receiving address and phone numbers.

There is a different policy if the request is from a Sunset member. Most of these requests are from members to staff, elders or a deacon. Occasionally, the request may come from another member saying a member, due to economic conditions, may need food. Usually when these requests are passed on, we call the member and ask if we could help with food. Some decline, but others accept and we determine their needs and make a delivery or they may pick up the food at the building. ***For members there is 30-day requirement between requests.*** There is no area defined for where they live. The member food request information is recorded in the office and kept confidential.

Procedure for filling a food pantry request:

This depends on the need and the number in the family. Some will say they only need a week's worth of food until they can cover their needs. ***We do not invite people to come into the pantry for the pick-up. Food is boxed and/or bagged for them ahead of time.*** We try to give one or two weeks of food as needed, including some of everything we have on hand, ***according to the list provided in the pantry.***

In the freezer we keep: meat, bread, and frozen food. In the refrigerator next to the freezer we keep butter and eggs. On the shelves we keep powdered milk, canned milk, shelf stable milk, and instant potatoes. Bisquick (or similar brand), canned fruit, vegetables, meat, cereals, oatmeal, spaghetti noodles & sauce, beans, rice, boxed food, cake or brownie mix, peanut butter, jelly, sugar etc.

We are fortunate to have a caring congregation to supply the basic needs. It is not possible to supply everything a family might need, but we do the best we can. We always invite everyone to attend church services, and insert a church leaflet in a box or bag.

Sunset Church of Christ

A black rectangular graphic with the text "WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background of the graphic shows a dark, snowy landscape with trees.

WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

Call the church office: 417-883-2044 (After 3 PM Weekdays)

Services may be cancelled due to snow, ice, severe storms and /or road conditions and parking lot conditions. When conditions warrant a cancellation, please note the following action plan:

We ask our members to call the church office when snow or ice falls, check the Sunset Family Group page, or check your email and text messaging for updates. Messages with the latest news of any cancellations, service time changes or if a service is still scheduled will be available.

The Elders and Deacons in charge of this area will try their best to make a decision as early as possible. **We will try to decide about an evening service by 3pm that day or for an early service by 7am or earlier if possible. We ask that you refrain from calling the church office before 3pm on week days so the office staff can focus on doing their jobs and not be flooded with calls.** We hope this will keep you informed in the event of a cancellation.

You may also join the “Weather Alert” group to receive a text when services are canceled. As always, **use your good judgement when deciding whether you should venture out.**

Sunset Church of Christ Vehicle Policy

Operator Qualification Policies

Valid and Current License and Insurance No person shall operate any Sunset owned vehicle unless that person holds a **current Missouri driver's** license permitting the person to operate that type of vehicle and **has personal vehicle insurance**. If any Sunset owned vehicle requires operators to carry one or more specific endorsements to their license in order to legally operate that vehicle, they must have it. All persons qualified to operate a Sunset owned vehicle shall do so only within the restrictions and requirements of their license and any applicable endorsements for that vehicle. **All drivers of Sunset owned vehicles will provide copies of their current driver's license and proof of insurance card to the Sunset office, to turn over to our vehicle insurance carrier.**

Age and Experience Qualifications No person under the age of 23 years or over the age of 69 years shall be permitted to operate any Sunset owned vehicle unless reviewed and approved in advance. No person shall be permitted to operate any Sunset owned vehicle, regardless of age, unless that person has at least five (5) years prior driving experience.

All Drivers must have a current Background Screening on file at Sunset.

Insurance Requirements: Driving Record All persons operating Sunset owned vehicles must, at all times, satisfy all of the church's insurance provider's underwriting criteria as such criteria may be amended by the insurance provider from time to time. Any person who does not meet these criteria for initial qualification or who, after initial qualification, no longer satisfies these criteria as a result of accidents and/or violations or crimes shall not operate any Sunset owned vehicle. **The Church reserves the right to obtain a Motor Vehicle Report ("MVR") through the Church's insurance provider on any prospective operator at the time of initial application and upon any qualified operator as the Church in its sole discretion deems necessary.** The Church reserves the right to obtain and consider the driving record of any prospective or qualified operator for up to seven (7) years prior to the date of the MVR. MVR's shall be at the cost of the Church, or the insurance provider, as the case may be. The Church further reserves the right to adopt qualification criteria that may be stricter than those by the Church's insurance provider.

Disqualifying Incidents Any operator who, while operating a Sunset owned vehicle, is involved in a motor vehicle crash involving personal injuries to a third party and/or to any passengers in the Sunset owned vehicle and/or damage to property owned by a third party (irrespective of the dollar amount of such damage) and the operator is cited for any moving traffic violation in connection with the crash, may be disqualified from operating any Sunset owned vehicle.

Any operator who, while operating a Sunset owned vehicle, causes property damage to the vehicle or to Church property (irrespective of the dollar amount of such damage), may be disqualified from operating a Sunset owned vehicle.

Any one (1) of these following Criteria violations on a MVR *in the seven (7) years prior to the date of the MVR will disqualify a prospective or a qualified driver:*

- *Driving under the influence of an illegal chemical or controlled substances *(in the five (5) years prior to the MVR date).*
- *Driving while intoxicated (in the five (5) years prior to the MVR date).
- *Refusal to submit to test for alcohol, chemical or controlled substances.
- *Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle.
- *Operating a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony.
- *Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority or approval.
- *Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle.
- *Permitting an unlicensed person to drive a motor vehicle - Reckless driving.
- *Aggressive careless driving - Hit and run.
- *Unlawful speed – more than 21 mph over the posted legal limit.

Any two (2) of these following Criteria violations on a MVR in the seven (7) years prior to the date of the MVR will disqualify a prospective or a qualified driver:

- *Unlawful speed – less than 21 mph over the posted legal limit.
- *Improper lane change.
- *Following too closely.
- *Careless driving.
- *Failure to observe a stop sign, yield sign or to obey any traffic control device.
- *Improper passing – including cat and mouse chase with other drivers.
- *Driving with a suspended or revoked license.

Operation Policies for Use of Sunset owned Vehicles

Policy Changes: The Sunset elders may amend any of these policies from time to time as the Elders deem necessary or as changes in the law or the insurance provider's criteria may require. All such amendments may be made with or without prior notice; however, revised policies shall be made available to qualified operators as soon as practical.

Uses of Sunset Owned Vehicles Only on Church-related Programs or Trips Vehicles are to be used only for programs under the auspices of the Sunset Church of Christ. No Sunset owned vehicle shall be loaned or rented to any other organization for any purpose. Personal use

of Sunset owned Vehicles is not permitted, unless authorized by the Building Facilitator or Sunset elders.

Vehicle “Check Out”/”Check In” All vehicles must be “Checked Out” either by the person operating the vehicle or by the person who is in charge of the trip by filling out a **Vehicle Usage Form** in advance of the trip. This is to insure availability of a vehicle. The person operating the vehicle or the person who is in charge of the trip is required to post the trip on the **Vehicle Usage Calendar**. The **Vehicle Usage forms and the Vehicle Calendar** are both located in the Library. All vehicles must be returned to their designated parking areas and keys replaced in the Lock Box and promptly “checked in” upon return.

Legal and Other Requirements The operation, maintenance and usage of any Sunset owned vehicle shall at all times be subject to the requirements of applicable State laws and to such rules and requirements as the Required Operators, Chaperone Personnel and Out of State Trips. Vehicles shall only be used and operated with the required number of operators and any required chaperone personnel. Every Sunset owned vehicle shall be operated with at least one adult chaperone as a passenger where the vehicle is being used to transport persons under 18 years of age. **No vehicle shall be used for any trip outside of the State of Missouri without prior approval of the Sunset Elders.**

The Staff, Program Deacons and Committees These groups are to work closely with the Transportation Deacon to notify as far in advance as possible of planned trips and post the dates of trips on the vehicle usage calendar.

Number of Passengers No Sunset owned vehicle shall be operated with more than the number of passengers for which the vehicle is rated. This includes the driver and chaperones, when they are required.

Seat Belts All passengers, chaperones and drivers must wear seatbelts at all times while vehicle is being operated.

Keeping Vehicle Clean Church groups using any Sunset owned vehicle are responsible upon return of the vehicle for cleaning the interior of the vehicle. This includes cleaning floors, aisles, seats and removing and properly disposing of all trash and papers and for removing all personal luggage and other items.

Note – Washing of the vehicle’s exterior is the responsibility of the Building Facilitator unless otherwise specified to the user of the vehicle in certain instances.

The Use of Electronic Communication Devices **No operator of a Sunset owned vehicle is permitted to use a cell phone or any of a cell phone’s accessories for any purpose while driving.** This will be strictly enforced and verified reports by others or accidents caused by this action may be grounds for removal of the privilege to operate any Sunset owned Vehicle. Sunset Staff who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

Any questions or concerns contact the elder over Transportation or the Building Facilitator.

Van Reservation and Use Form

Sunset Church of Christ

Vans are to be reserved and their use approved in advance. Please check the van calendar located in the Library/Conference RM (Office Room) to be sure your reservation is listed for the date(s) requested. Your reservation dates should be from the time you pick-up the van and include any clean-up time you need to get the van ready to be checked out again. To conserve gas, please do your best to schedule a trip with a full van of passengers.

Van drivers must be Sunset members between the ages of 23 and 69 years old.

Sunset Owned Vehicles are not to be loaned out to other organizations or individuals at any time. Van use by staff other than church functions must be approved in advance through the church office.

PLEASE NOTE:

All drivers are required to fill out and sign the **Van Driver Screening Authorization** form, provide a copy of your Driver's license, and a copy of your personal vehicle insurance card in advance of driving the van. In compliance with Insurance regulations and laws we will be required to run a check of your License through the DMV office. Random checks may apply from time to time to update our files.

All Passengers including the driver are expected to wear their seatbelts at all times.

Drivers are expected to obey all traffic laws.

Vans with children under the age of 18 must have an additional approved chaperone accompanying the driver for each van used.

Cell Phone Use by the driver including texting is prohibited. If you need to use your phone, pull over to the side of the road when safe to do so.

Staff who use Sunset owned vehicles must adhere to all driving regulations or be subject to disciplinary action, directed by the eldership, any time an incident occurs.

No Parking of personal vehicles in the garage is allowed. A fire or other damage could result in serious legal and /or insurance issues.



Circle requested vehicle: Van # 1 - 7 Pass. Van # 2 - 15 Pass. Van # 3 - 15 Pass.

Van is being used for: _____ Date(s) Requested _____

Driver's Name _____ Phone #: _____

If you have questions concerning vans use, contact the Building Facilitator and/or the Elder of Transportation. Vehicle registration and insurance cards are located in the dash area of the van.

CHILD/YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

BACKGROUND CHECK APPLICATION

***SUNSET CHURCH OF CHRIST
SPRINGFIELD, MO***

Fourth Revision November, 2016

Reviewed February, 2026

PREFACE

We live in an age where child/youth abuse is a reality in our society. Under the direction of the elders, the following child/youth safety policies have been adopted at Sunset Church of Christ, Springfield, MO. These guidelines are to be implemented and followed carefully by anyone working with children or youth. Adherence to the guidelines will not only protect children/youth, but will also lessen the potential that staff or volunteers would be accused of any inappropriate behavior.

MYTHS & FACTS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Myth #1: Child sexual abuse occurs only among strangers. If children stay away from strangers, they will not be sexually abused.

Fact: National statistics indicate that in approximately 85% of the cases, the offender is known to the victim. He/she is usually a relative, family member, family friend, babysitter, or older friend of the child.

Myth #2 Children provoke sexual abuse by their seductive behavior.

Fact: Seductive behavior is not the cause. Responsibility for the act lies with the offender. Sexual abuse sexually exploits a child not developmentally capable of understanding or resisting and/or who may be psychologically or socially dependent on the offender.

Myth #3 The majority of child sexual abuse victims tell someone about the abuse.

Fact: According to a study by Dr. David Finkelhor, close to 2/3 of all child sexual abuse victims may not tell their parents or anyone else because they fear being blamed, punished, or not believed.

Myth #4 Men and women sexually abuse children equally.

Fact: Men are the offenders 94% of the time in cases of child sexual abuse. Men sexually abuse both male and female children. Seventy-five percent of male offenders are married or have consenting sexual relationships. Only about 4% of same-sex abuse involves homosexual perpetrators; 96% of the perpetrators are heterosexual.

Myth #5 If the children did not want it, they could say, "Stop!"

Fact: Children generally do not question the behavior of adults, and have been taught to obey adults. They are often coerced by bribes, threats, and use of a position of authority.

Myth #6 All sexual abuse victims are girls.

Fact: Studies on child sexual abuse indicate one of four females under the age of 18 and one of six to eight males under the age of 18 are child sexual abuse victims.

Myth #7 Family sexual abuse is an isolated, one-time incident.

Fact: Studies indicate that most child sexual abuse continues for at least two years before it is reported. And in most cases, it doesn't stop until it's reported.

Myth #8 In family sexual abuse, the "non-offending" parent always knows.

Fact: While some "non-offending" parents know and even support the offender's actions, many, because of their lack of awareness, may suspect something is wrong, but are unclear as to what it is or what to do.

Myth #9 Family sexual abuse only happens in low-income families.

Fact: Family sexual abuse crosses all classes of society. There is no race, social, or economic class that is immune to family sexual abuse. Incest is estimated to occur in 14% of all families. 10 to 20% of American children are incest victims; 90% of the victims are female and 90% of the abusers are fathers or stepfathers.

Myth #10 Non-violent sexual behavior between a child and an adult is not damaging to the child.

Fact: Nearly all victims will experience confusion, shame, guilt, anger, and a poor self-image. Child sexual abuse can result in long-term relationship problems and be perpetuated from generation to generation. Dr. Nicholas Groth, who has worked extensively with sexual offenders, reports that 60% of convicted sexual offenders have reported histories of child sexual abuse victimization.

This material provided by: Rape & Abuse Crisis Center of Fargo/Moorhead
P O Box 2984
Fargo, ND 58108

KNOW & OBSERVE TOUCHING POLICY

1. Touching and affection should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As teachers/volunteers, our behavior must foster trust at all times; it should be above reproach.
2. It should always be in response to a child's/youth need for care taking, comforting, encouragement, or affection. Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child/youth. Physical contact with the child should never be based upon the needs of the adult.
3. A child's/youth's preference not to be touched should be respected. Never force affection on the reluctant child/youth.
4. Affection displayed should only be given when in the presence of other adults. It is much less likely that touching will be inappropriate or misconstrued when two adult workers are present and the touching is open to observation. This rule is especially important when diapering or helping a young child change clothes or use the bathroom.
5. Teachers are responsible for protecting children/youth under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others. Inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by others must promptly be discussed with the education coordinator in charge for appropriate action or referral.
6. Children should never assist other children in diapering or using the bathroom.

SUNSET CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHILDREN/YOUTH PROTECTION PLAN

General Purpose Statement:

Sunset Church of Christ seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the following practices, our goal is to protect the children and youth of Sunset Church of Christ from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

Definitions:

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child/youth” or “children/youth” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18). All workers should familiarize themselves with this policy.

Selection of Workers:

All employees and all persons who desire to work with the children/youth participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes:

- a. **Six Month Rule** - No volunteer will be allowed to work with children/youth until she/he has been a member of Sunset Church of Christ for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children/youth.
- b. **Written Application** - All persons seeking to work with children/youth must complete and sign a written application provided by Sunset elders. The applicant(s) will be required to provide basic information and previous experience with children/youth, previous Sunset Church of Christ affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The Sunset elders may approve or disapprove any application. The application form will be maintained in confidence.
- c. **Personal Interview** - Upon completion of the application, applicants may have a face-to-face interview to discuss their suitability for the position within the education departments at Sunset Church of Christ.
- d. **Reference Checks** - Applicant's references may be checked before an applicant is permitted to work with children/youth. These references should be of an institutional nature, organizations where the applicant has worked with children/youth in the past as opposed to personal or family references. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file.
- e. **Criminal Background Check** - A national criminal background check will include a sex offender registry search and is required for all employees (regardless of position) and children/youth volunteers. Youth volunteers who:

- Participate in our Bible schools/VBS/preschool/day care center
- Plan/participate in overnight activities with children/youth
- Mentor minors (one-on-one) and have occasional one-on-one contact with minors (i.e., church-sponsored athletic team coaches and vehicle drivers)

Before a background check is run, prospective workers and volunteers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing Sunset Church of Christ to run the criminal background check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, she/he will be unable to work with children/youth.

- f. Disqualifying Offense - A disqualifying offense will keep an individual from working with children/youth. That will be determined by the elders of Sunset Church of Christ in light of the surrounding circumstances. Convictions for an offense involving children/youth and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from working with children/youth. Failure to disclose any criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file.

Two Adult Rule

It is our goal at Sunset Church of Christ to maintain a minimum of two adult workers at all times when children/youth are being supervised during our programs and activities. *Some children/youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, the classroom doors should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher.* We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. *Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.*

Responding to Allegations of Child/Youth Abuse – Mandated Reporter

For purposes of this policy, “child/youth abuse” is any action (or lack of action) which endangers or harms a child/youth’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child/youth abuse occurs in different ways and includes:

- Physical abuse – any physical injury to a child which is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- Emotional abuse – emotional injury when the child/youth is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- Sexual abuse – any sexual activity between a child/youth and an adult or between a child/youth and another child/youth at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- Neglect – depriving a child/youth of their essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

In the event that a staff/volunteer (teacher, assistant teacher, etc) involved in the care of children/youth at Sunset Church of Christ becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child/youth under his/her care this should be reported immediately to Social Services Department/Children’s Division/Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-392-3738 as mandated by state law. If you suspect abuse, you **MUST** make a report to the Child Abuse Hotline immediately, in the presence of another member of Sunset Church of Christ. Do not question the child in such a way that you ask leading questions and do not say anything that can plant an idea in a child’s head. **SIMPLY LISTEN, COMFORT WITH YOUR WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS**, then report the incident to the Hotline. The law specifically states that “the person who has the most direct knowledge of the situation must make the report”—it cannot be passed to someone else. **ALL** persons who witness the child’s abuse/neglect **MUST** make a Hotline report. And, of course, immediately document both the incident and that the call was made.

At the time such report may be made, at least two of the church elders should be notified immediately of the suspected abuse or neglect of a child under our care. The elders of Sunset Church of Christ understand that any children/youth workers are determined to be “Mandated Reporters” as prescribed by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at Sunset Church of Christ during our sponsored programs/activities/ministries, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child/youth will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children/youth pending an investigation.
3. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report.
4. We will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists.

5. We will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, a team will be formed to investigate the circumstances of the incident. The team should act only in consultation with our insurance company and/or attorney.
6. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with children/youth.
7. Minister or legal counsel will be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he/she is alleged to be involved. All other workers should refrain from speaking to the media.
8. A visit with the elders will be arranged for those who desire it.

Teenage Worker

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children/youth during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to such workers:

- teenage workers must be at least age 14,
- teenage workers may have a face-to-face interview to discuss his/her suitability for a position within the education departments at Sunset Church of Christ, and
- teenage workers will be in addition to normal teachers in a classroom and must be under the supervision of an adult and never be left alone with children/youth.

Sick Child Policy

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children/youth at Sunset Church of Christ. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children/youth when deciding whether to place a child/youth under our care. In general children/youth with the following symptoms should not be dropped off:

- fever (100°F or higher), diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours,
- green or yellow nasal discharge,
- eye or skin infections, and
- other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease.

Children/youth who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children/youth and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child/youth be picked up for the day.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of Sunset Church of Christ not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children/youth under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. (see "Sick Child Policy" above).

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children/youth with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such

children/youth should address their situation to the elder and deacons in charge of Education to develop a plan of action.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of Sunset Church of Christ not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with the elder and deacons in charge of Education if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Restroom Guidelines

Children up to and including fourth grade age are urged to use the restroom BEFORE classes begin. If a classroom restroom is not available, teachers/helpers should assist them in taking a child to the restroom during class time (if no hall monitor is available). The teachers/helpers should check the restroom first to make sure it is empty, and then allow the child inside. The teachers/helpers should then remain outside the restroom door. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the teachers/helpers should open the restroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the teacher/workers should prop open the restroom door and leave the stall door open as he/she assists the child.

Accidental Injuries to Children/Youth

In the event that a child/youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

- Minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises: workers will provide first-aid (band-aids etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child/youth's parents or guardian of the injury at the time the child/youth is picked up from our care.
- Any accident or incident that could result in potential injury should be reported by teachers to the deacon or elder in charge of education. This report should be made as soon as possible, followed by a written report of the incident.
- For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first-aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called. (Once the child/youth has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

BACKGROUND CHECK APPLICATION

(for Children & Youth Ministries, Teachers, Volunteers & Employees)

SUNSET CHURCH OF CHRIST - CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FORM

The desire of the eldership is to provide the safest and most secure environment for the children entrusted to our care. Consequently, we maintain a children/youth ministry-screening program. Anyone either presently working in or anticipating working with any children/youth is subject to screening. Thank you for your cooperation.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Legal Name _____

Current Street Address _____

_____ City State Zip

Phone _____
(Home) (Work) (Cell)

Date of Birth / / Marital Status: Single Married SS # - -

Is Your Spouse a Member of Sunset Church of Christ? Email:

Please list the name and location of any church you have attended in the past ten years:

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

How Many Years Teaching Bible School? Grade and/or Ages Taught?

Were You A Coordinator or Supervisor? # Years? Department?

Teacher's Helper? # Years?

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (Please List):

Special Training: _____

BACKGROUND CHECK APPLICATION

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby certify that I have read and completed the application on the reverse side. My answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

I hereby authorize all persons, schools, organizations and law enforcement agencies to supply Sunset Church of Christ with any information concerning my character or background in connection with working with children and I hereby release them from liability or damages which may occur as a result of their response to this request.

I understand that Sunset Church of Christ will refresh its background checks every three years. I give Sunset permission to redo a background check on me if I am still a member of the congregation

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Children/Youth Protection Policy

I Acknowledge I have received a copy of the Sunset Church of Christ Children/Youth Protection Policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
