

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

POLICY FOR SOCIAL USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1. Motivation For Policy

After receiving numerous requests from Westminster members to consider the possibility of allowing alcoholic beverage service on Westminster Presbyterian Church (“Westminster”) property, and after reviewing possible community uses of Westminster facilities following completion of the new wing, the Session hereby adopts this *Policy For Social Use Of Alcoholic Beverages* (“Policy”).

2. Scriptural Reflection

The Bible is replete with references to the use of wine in daily life and in places of sacred meaning and purpose. At the same time, Scripture also includes numerous warnings about the risk of overindulgence in alcoholic beverages. This Policy seeks to honor both dimensions of biblical witness to the consumption of alcoholic beverages by allowing it on Westminster’s premises but with clear parameters, and only under certain conditions. (For a fuller discussion of the biblical references, please see the paper *Biblical-Theological Reflection on Use of Alcohol in Churches* appended to this Policy.)

3. Vision/Intent

This Policy sets appropriate standards for serving alcoholic beverages at Westminster for social occasions. In doing so, we acknowledge that alcoholic beverages can be a fitting part of Westminster sponsored social gatherings and special functions and of privately sponsored use of Westminster’s building and grounds when used in moderation and served in a way that honors the character and heritage of Westminster, respects the concerns of particular congregants and groups, and protects vulnerable populations such as children, youth, and people in recovery.

This Policy is framed in the spirit of trust and sense of responsibility that are essential to our community at Westminster, trusting leaders and staff to work together with good judgment, discretion, and consideration of others in making appropriate decisions. Recognizing that program leadership and operating procedures will continue to evolve over time, the Session will review this Policy one year after it goes into effect, and periodically thereafter, and will take steps regularly to assure that leaders and staff remain aware of this Policy and the spirit in which it was written.

4. General Policies

The following policies apply to both Westminster sponsored events and events conducted by parties or organizations who have rented space at, or are given permission to use, Westminster’s building and grounds. In the rest of this Policy,

individuals and organizations renting or using Westminster are referred to as “private event sponsors” and their events are referred to as “privately sponsored events”.

a. Approval

- (1) All requests to serve alcoholic beverages at a Westminster or privately sponsored event will be sent initially to the Director of Finance and Administration using a form developed for that purpose. The Facilities Use Team will review each request, will decide whether to allow alcoholic beverage service, and will make any modifications or add any requirements to the request deemed necessary by the Team.
- (2) In considering whether to approve alcoholic beverage service and its proposed location, the Facilities Use Team will consider whether the proposed location is exposed to or immediately adjacent to programs for children, youth, or other vulnerable populations that will be conducted at the same time, for example, an Alcoholics Anonymous event.
- (3) Once alcoholic beverage service has been approved for an event, the Westminster calendar entry for the event will indicate that alcoholic beverages will be available.

b. Communications

In keeping with the intent of this Policy that alcoholic beverages are but a component of an event and never the reason in itself for an event, communications about such events will focus on the event’s purpose and will not highlight the availability of alcoholic beverages.

c. Oversight

For every event at which alcoholic beverages will be served, the Building Use Team will designate a Westminster staff person to be present at the event. The designated staff person will be on-site at all times alcoholic beverages are being served and will remain on-site until the event concludes and all alcoholic beverages have been secured.

d. Locations Where Allowed

Alcoholic beverages will be allowed in the following locations:

- (1) Large assembly locations including the Fellowship Hall/Refectory, Great Hall (not including the libraries), Heller Commons (both North and South), Multipurpose Room, Westminster Gallery, and Westminster Hall;
- (2) Kitchen and Warming Kitchen as preparation areas for service in other locations;
- (3) Meeting and conference rooms, including Bates Room, Bushnell Room, Founders Room, Pleasant Hunter Room, Garden Room, and Thompson Room; and
- (4) Outdoor locations including the Courtyard, the Nicollet Mall Plaza, and the Marquette Avenue open space.

e. *Locations Where Prohibited*

Alcoholic beverages will not be allowed in the following locations:

- (1) Sanctuary and Chapel except for liturgical use as approved by Session;
- (2) Administrative, office, and staff spaces, Choir Room, Lowe Library, maintenance and shop spaces, mechanical and storage areas, Music Library, Music Rehearsal Room, premises leased by St. David's Center and Westminster Counseling Center, and Quiet Room; and
- (3) Spaces exclusively used by or for children, including the Children's Library, Children's Music Classroom, Nursery, classrooms and Resource Room in the second floor education area, Scout's Room, and Youth Room.

The use of alcoholic beverages in a permitted space will be strictly limited to that space. Individuals may not leave that space with beverages in hand.

f. *Service By Licensed Caterer*

- (1) When an event is sponsored by a private, non-Westminster party, all alcoholic beverages will be served by a caterer who holds a City of Minneapolis Liquor Caterer's License ("City Liquor Caterer's License"). The private sponsor may choose any caterer from the list of Westminster approved caterers who hold a City Liquor Caterer's License. The private sponsor must identify the chosen caterer and provide evidence that it holds a City Liquor Caterer's License and Dram Shop insurance to the Director of Finance and Administration at least two weeks before the event is scheduled. This requirement for a licensed caterer may be waived by the Director of Finance and Administration, the Executive Associate Pastor, or the Senior Pastor at their discretion for events with small groups when no fee is to be charged individual participants for the event or food at the event.
- (2) When an event is Westminster sponsored and no fee is to be charged individual participants for the event or food at the event, the Facilities Use Team, the Director of Finance, the Executive Associate Pastor, or the Senior Pastor will determine if the event will need to use a licensed caterer. If the Facilities Team determines a licensed caterer must be used, all the requirements set forth in the previous bulleted paragraph for a private sponsor will apply to the Westminster sponsored event unless specifically waived by the Facilities Use Team.

g. *Serving Other Beverages And Food*

- (1) Coffee, soft drinks, tea, and water must always be offered as an alternative for those preferring them. Other non-alcoholic beverage alternatives may be offered also.
- (2) It is strongly recommended that appropriate food, either snacks or a meal, accompany any alcoholic beverage service.

h. Security Required

- (1) For all events at Westminster where alcoholic beverages are served, on-site security will be provided at the event sponsor's expense. If the event is using both indoor and outdoor spaces, security will be provided in both locations. In making security arrangements, the event sponsor may choose any security firm from the list of Westminster approved security firms.
- (2) Proposed security arrangements will be described in the request to serve alcoholic beverages sent to the Director of Finance and Administration and will be subject to modification by the Facilities Use Team before it approves the request.
- (3) Based on the event size, event sponsor, or other relevant factors, this security requirement may be waived by the Facilities Use Team, the Director of Finance and Administration, the Executive Associate Pastor, or the Senior Pastor.

5. Westminster Policies

In addition to the General Policies, these policies apply to events sponsored by Westminster.

a. Attendees

- (1) Social use of alcoholic beverages is primarily for adult events. Alcoholic beverages should ordinarily not be served at intergenerational events.
- (2) When alcoholic beverages are served at an intergenerational event, a parent or adult responsible for each child or young person must accompany them, and the event must allow continuous, direct supervision of children and youth.

b. Occasions

Alcoholic beverages service should be reserved for social occasions apart from the working business of Westminster's committees, programs, and staff.

Examples include:

- (1) Celebrations, such as holiday gatherings or special events;
- (2) Fellowship gatherings when Westminster provides a convenient and/or accessible location in order to increase participation and encourage mixing.
- (3) Receptions, such as pre or post-program gatherings, officer recognitions, welcoming or saying farewell to staff; and
- (4) Westminster sponsored receptions and meals conducted as part of funerals and weddings.

c. Types Of Alcoholic Beverages Allowed

At all Westminster events, only beer and/or wine will be allowed.

6. Policies For Privately Sponsored Events

In addition to the General Policies, the following policies apply to privately sponsored events.

a. Attendees

The private sponsor will decide who will attend its event.

b. Occasions

Alcoholic beverage service should only occur as part of a private event that has another principal purpose. Examples include:


- (1) Celebrations such as achievement recognitions, birthdays, and other special events;
- (2) Private receptions and meals conducted as part of funerals or weddings; and
- (3) Receptions as part of conferences or other activities.

c. Types Of Alcoholic Beverages Allowed

The private sponsor will decide what types of alcoholic beverages to serve at its event.

7. Effective Date

This Policy will go into effect on November 1, 2017. Any subsequent amendments will go into effect immediately after their adoption by the Session.

Adopted by the Session: _____  _____, 2017

Amended by the Session: _____  _____, 2019