

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

Policy on Use of Church Property for Demonstrations

Approved by the Advisory Board and the Board of Management on 15 November 2011

Purpose

From time to time the Church of the Redeemer (the “Church”) receives requests from groups within and outside the Church to use the Church property, including the inside space and the available outside space, (the “Church Property”) for events/demonstrations that advocate for particular social/political positions (“Demonstrations”). The purpose of this policy is to prescribe the parameters within which such Demonstrations will be permitted.

Policy Considerations

Recognizing that civil disobedience, including what could be considered political demonstrations, formed a critical component of the prophetic tradition and Jesus’ own ministry, the Church affirms that Demonstrations are a valid component of a strategy designed to bring about social/political/economic change.

At the same time, the Church recognizes that there are likely a range and diversity of views among the Church membership over particular political issues that may be sources of conflict, and it is important to be sensitive to these issues/disagreements.

The Church also recognizes that there are many practical issues around permitting Demonstrations on Church Property, including issues around the safety of the demonstrators and the public (particularly the limited space outside and the proximity to a busy intersection), insurance coverage, the potential for negative publicity, the inability to control Demonstrations (and the response to a Demonstration by the public), and the limitations on the ability of the Church to engage in political activities and still maintain its charitable status.¹

Parameters

Given the foregoing policy considerations, the Church establishes the following parameters around the use of the Church Property for Demonstrations:

- Only requests from groups within the Church will be considered.

¹ See Canada Revenue Agency’s policy statement on political activities (particularly sections 6.2 and 14.3): http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cps/cps-022-eng.html#P107_9478. Generally, as long as the activity is non-partisan and a charity doesn't spend more than 10% of its budget on political activity, there should not be a problem.

- Such requests must be made in writing to the Rector in time to be considered at a meeting of the Joint Boards (generally the third Tuesday of the month).
- The request must:

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- Describe the nature of the organization on whose behalf the request is being made.
 - Describe the nature and purpose of the Demonstration. ○ Describe the envisioned scope of the Demonstration.
 - Describe any potential risks associated with the Demonstration and outline the precautions the organization is taking to ensure the safety of the demonstrators and the public or nearby bystanders.
 - Describe any insurance coverage the organization has.
 - Indicate the willingness of the organization to sign a full release in favour of the Church in consideration for the Church permitting it to use the Church Property for a Demonstration.
- The decision whether or not to permit the Demonstration will be based on the considerations outlined under the “Policy Considerations” and may be subject to any conditions the Joint Board decides to impose, including a requirement to pay the normal rent charged for use of the Church Property.
 - The decision to permit a Demonstration must be approved by the Rector and a minimum of a 75% vote of the Joint Board.

