

Toms Brook United Methodist Church **Acceptable Use of Technology Policy**

Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

The term, technology, covers a wide range of processes used for communicating information within our society. Computers form one element of this broad term but it also includes video resources, CD-ROM materials, pictures, newspaper and magazine articles and computer related presentations of those materials. Logging onto the Internet, for example, through a **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** account identifies you as a **TBUMC** representative. In all settings, you bear responsibility for representing the church in an appropriate manner in your communications, reflecting the church's commitment to integrity, honesty, and respect for the dignity of others.

Technology Philosophy Statement:

Technology, in all its forms, is a tool and not an end in itself. As a resource that we utilize to attain our end goal, the implementation of technologies helps us:

- To integrate our knowledge;
- To develop creative approaches to various life situations; and
- To become ultimately more responsible for our own lives.

An increased awareness of and implementation of technology, particularly with respect to computers, helps us to develop stronger self-esteem and a greater ability to respond to the situations we face in our lives.

Purpose of Technology Access

Toms Brook United Methodist Church is providing computer and technology access for all faculty and parishioners of the congregation. We believe that it offers our religious community valuable resources for learning and communicating with others. This technology has been established for a limited educational purpose to include classroom activities, career development, and limited high quality, self-discovery activities. It has not been established as a public access or a public forum and the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** has the right to place restrictions on the material you access or post.

We are aware that certain material available by computer (i.e. Web Pages on the Internet) is inaccurate, controversial and may be offensive. However, we firmly believe that the vast amount of information available and the interaction with other people made possible through such resources as via the Internet far outweigh the risk.

Computer access at the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** is a privilege for parishioners and not a right. We expect students to use the computers in a responsible manner and to be considerate of all other users. Any inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of that privilege and may result in further disciplinary action (including financial reparation for the repair of the network and/or other related equipment).

In order to be allowed computer access at the church, all parishioners must have signed a copy of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy on file with the Technology Coordinator. Students and parishioners signing this policy indicate compliance with and an understanding of all terms and conditions of the policy.

Acceptable Use Guidelines

Any person utilizing a computer at the church shall observe the following minimum standards of conduct:

- General Church Expectations
 - All use of technology must be in support of the Philosophy and Mission of the Church.
 - A person using a computer or other technology of the Church is responsible for appropriate behavior when using the technology. General Church rules and policies apply to all technology use on the grounds of the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church**.
 - The purpose of technology at church is to support research and educational goals and objectives. Games and chat rooms do not support this philosophy and are not appropriate at the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church**.
 - Vandalism, which includes, but is not limited to, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy any data, hardware, or software will result in paying for repair costs of the computer or network.
 - The use of the name of the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** or any variation is restricted to uses approved the church administration. No person or group should use the name of the church in any online format without specific permission.
 - Nothing in this policy is intended to preclude the supervised use of the system while under the direction of a teacher, faculty member, or other approved user acting in conformity with church procedure.

- Software
 - All software purchased in the name of the Church requires approval in advance of purchase, to determine compatibility, and is to be installed by authorized personnel.
 - All software on network computers requires a valid license, registered in the name of the church and kept on file with the Technology Coordinator.
 - Due to copyright issues, no personal software, shareware or other material is to be installed on church computers without permission.

- External Media
 - To protect the integrity of the computer network, the Church reserves the right to place restrictions on which types of external media (i.e. flash drives, floppy disks, CDs, etc.) can be used on Church technology. If you are not sure whether your external media drive is approved for use in the Church please contact the Technology Coordinator.

In addressing the behavior of individuals, the following expectations apply:

- Personal Safety
 - You will not post contact information (e.g. address, phone number) about yourself or any other person.
 - You will not agree to meet with someone without the approval of your parents. Any contact of this nature or the receipt of any message you feel is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable should be reported to church authorities immediately.

- Illegal Activity
 - You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to this or any other computer system or go beyond your authorized access by entering another person's account information or accessing another person's files.
 - You will not represent yourself as another person by using their account, name or other information.

- You will not deliberately attempt to disrupt the network or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
- You will not use **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** technology to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of another person.
- System Security
 - You are responsible for your individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use it. Under no condition should you give your password to another person.
 - You will immediately notify a faculty member or an administrator if you have identified a possible security problem. Do not look for security problems; this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
 - You will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the church virus protection procedures when downloading software.
 - To ensure system security for outside access, you will not add external modems or other access devices or software to the network without the permission of the Technology Coordinator.
- Inappropriate Language
 - On any and all uses of the Internet, from applications to public or private messages, or material posted on web pages, you will not use obscene, profane, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.
 - You will not post information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 - You will not harass another person by a persistent action that distresses or annoys another. You must stop if asked if asked to do so.
- Respect for Privacy
 - You will not repost a message that was sent to you privately without the permission of the person who sent you the message.
 - You will not post private information about yourself or another person.
- Respecting Resource Limits
 - You will use the system for educational, religious development activities and limited, high-quality, self-discovery activities. There is no limit on use for education and religious development activities. The limit on self-discovery activities is determined by the appropriate supervisor and will be limited when others need to use the technology for educational activities.
 - Due to the danger of viruses and other issues, you will not download files. If the download is necessary, you must first seek the permission of the Technology Coordinator who solely determines whether files are to be downloaded and checked for viruses.
 - You will not post chain letters or engage in “spamming” (that is, sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people).
 - You will not download music onto the church’s network.
 - You will subscribe only to high-quality group mail lists that are relevant to your education and career development.

- Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement
 - You will not plagiarize words that you find on the Internet or other electronic media. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own.
 - You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, you should follow the expressed requirements. If you are unsure whether or not you can use a work, you should request permission from the copyright owner. Direct any questions regarding copyright to a teacher or faculty member.

- Inappropriate Access to Material
 - You will not use **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** technology to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography) or that advocates illegal acts or violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature).
 - If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell a teacher, administrator, or other church official responsible for maintenance of technology. This will protect you from a claim of intentional violation of this policy.
 - Your parents should instruct you if there are additional materials they believe would be inappropriate for you to access. The Church expects that you will follow your parents' instruction in this matter
 - **Anyone working in the sound booth during worship services and special programs will not use internet for personal activities.**

- Availability and Access
 - You should expect no privacy to the contents of your personal files that are saved on the Church's technology systems. Routine maintenance and monitoring of Church's technology may lead to discovery that you have violated this Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, church rules, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this policy, or the law.

- Appropriate Notice
 - The church will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through **Toms Brook United Methodist Church** technology or facilities. In the event of a claim that you have violated this policy, you will be given notice, either verbal or written, of the suspected violations and an opportunity to present an explanation to church authorities. As a result of the inappropriate use of technology, restrictions to the use of the Church's technology may be enforced on you.

- Printing Charges
 - The church reserves the right to charge for any printing conducted on or through the Church's printers.

Limitation of Liability

Although the Church seeks to ensure the integrity and proper functioning of its technological systems, the Church makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the Church's technology will be without error or defect. The Church will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The Church is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information attained through or stored on its technology. The Church will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of its technology.

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Individual Pledge

I, _____ have received a copy of and read the **Toms Brook United Methodist Church Acceptable Use of Technology Policy**. I pledge to follow the church's policy whenever using technology provided by the church.

Signature

Date