

3. Church Board

3.1: Serving of Alcohol in BCUC

1. Responsibility Centre: Church Board

2. Rationale or Purpose

The question, 'Should the use of alcoholic beverages be permitted on Bells Corners United Church's (BCUC's) premises?' was raised at Church Council in 2007.

A clear national policy on the subject has been adopted by The United Church of Canada: "The United Church's General Council will not determine the use of alcohol in local congregations -- that remains a decision of the local church" (General Council Decision of August, 2003). Consequently, the decision must be taken by a congregation's court – in BCUC's case, the Church Board.

Church Council conducted a congregational survey in March 2008, to ascertain the views of the congregation's adult members and adherents on the question. Sixty-three (63) per cent of the survey respondents were in favour of permitting alcoholic beverages to be offered at social and fund raising events held on BCUC's premises.

Council presented a preliminary position on the question at the congregational meeting of 25 May, 2008 and received congregants' comments on that position. The results of that meeting were reflected in the Church Council decision taken in June, 2008, permitting the use of alcohol on BCUC premises, subject to certain conditions, for a two-year trial period. The decision was re-evaluated at the May, 2010 Council meeting and it was determined that, due to the limited number of occasions when alcohol was served, a further 2-year trial should be undertaken. The issue was reviewed again in depth in 2014 - 15. This policy is based on those decisions.

3. Policy Statement

The use of alcoholic beverages on the premises of BCUC is permitted, subject to the conditions outlined in the following sections of this policy.

The serving of alcoholic beverages will be limited to social or fund raising events sponsored directly by one or more of BCUC's committees or groups, and to social events sponsored directly by individual BCUC members or adherents.

Its use is intended to "enhance" social interaction of an event; it is not intended to be the focal point or primary purpose of the event. For example, the serving of 1 or 2 glasses of wine at a dinner is quite different from staging a "pub-night" at the church.

4. Scope

This policy applies to the use of any and all alcoholic beverages on the premises of Bells Corners United Church.

5. Procedures

The serving of alcohol at any event is:

- restricted to wine and beer
- only within the building
- accompanied at the event by food and non-alcoholic beverages;
- announced in advance of the event, e.g., in the advertising or invitation to the event.

The sponsors of events where alcoholic beverages are to be offered must:

- submit an application) to the office, requesting Church Board approval to serve alcoholic beverages at the event. Responding to the application may take up to 6 weeks, depending on the date of the next Board meeting. In considering such a request, the Board will consider such factors as: would the serving of alcohol at such an event:
 - adversely affect BCUC's image or reputation
 - interfere with other church programs (e.g., nursery school, serve only to enhance the event, not be a direct method of raising funds (e.g., wine at a dinner or dinner dance, but not a pub night).
 - Serve only to enhance an event, not be a direct method of raising funds (e.g., wine at a dinner or dinner dance, but not a pub night).
- comply with the provisions of the Liquor Control Act of Ontario, and all other Province of Ontario regulations concerning the consumption of alcohol;
- return the rooms used for the event to their proper clean state; and retain a custodian (either paid or volunteer) to remain on duty for the duration of the event.
- ensure fire marshal occupancy codes are met;
- adhere to any other requirements of the church regarding the use of the property (rental fees, etc.).

If the Sponsor is a member or adherent of the Church, i.e., not a committee of the Church, the sponsor shall:

- purchase a liability insurance policy for the event which provides a minimum of \$2 million Commercial General Liability and Host Liquor Liability coverage and names BCUC as co-insured; and provide the Church Office with a certificate of insurance issued by the insurer prior to the event.
- be responsible for any event-related damage to BCUC's premises or contents and any liability for any loss or accident that is sustained by the event sponsor or those attending the event
- Pay a refundable clean-up fee of \$50 for groups under 50 people and \$100 for groups over 50 people."

- be 21 years or older (Minors can attend events as provided by LCBO regulations.);
- be present at the event throughout its duration.

6. Roles/Responsibilities

- Responsibility for the review and maintenance of this policy rests with the Church Board, in consultation with Property Management Committee, Events Coordinator, and the Trustees.
- The Church Office:
 - provides sponsors wishing to use alcohol at an event with a copy of this policy and its associated procedures;
 - makes the booking, subject to Board approval of the event;
 - forwards the request to the Board for consideration at its next meeting; and,
 - immediately informs the Event Coordinator or a member of the Board Executive if the sponsor fails to provide the required liquor license and documentation of insurance prior to the event.

7. Definitions

- Alcohol - those beverages subject to the Liquor Control Act.

8. References

- General Council Decision of August, 2003

9. Approval authority: Church Board

10. Reviewed: Church Board: June 17, 2015

Approved: Church Board: June 17, 2015

Replaces: October 2008