

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF PARISH BUSES ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Purpose:

The bus ministry of St. George's Episcopal Church will provide safe, dependable group transportation to enhance the programs and ministries of the parish.

Operating Policy:

1. **Definitions:** The use of "should" in this policy means "highly recommended." The use of "shall" means "required without exception."
2. **Eligibility:** Buses will be made available for use by St. George's Episcopal Church first by the Room in the Inn program; second, for providing transportation for senior parishioners living in local retirement communities to and from worship services and other Church wide events; and last, by various other groups for outings. Buses will NOT be used by groups outside of St. George's or for family purposes. No hitchhikers permitted.
3. **Number of Passengers:** The maximum number of passengers SHALL NOT exceed the 14 capacity of the bus design, including the driver.
4. **Scheduling Procedures:** All proposed uses of the bus shall be requested through the communications coordinator via the submission of a Bus Reservation Form at least one week in advance. The staff member will review the request with the parish administrative officer and it will be approved or denied based on these guidelines, availability and priority as stated in item #1 above.
5. **Point of Origin:** The bus will leave from and return to the church parking lot. The bus will be parked in the designated parking area.
6. **Trip Supervision:** It is the responsibility of the group using the bus to provide proper adult supervision. The driver does not qualify as adult supervision. A church staff member must accompany all overnight trips.
7. **Passenger Conduct:** All users of the church bus are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies Christian principles.
 - a. Illegal drugs, non-prescribed controlled substances, alcohol, firearms, or tobacco (including any smokeless kind) are NOT allowed on the bus by passengers or driver.
 - b. All passengers are to remain seated with seat belts buckled while the bus is in motion.
 - c. No drinking of any beverages other than water in a spill proof container shall be allowed on the bus.
 - d. No offensive music or offensive language is allowed on the bus.
 - e. No articles are to be thrown from the bus, nor shall arms or heads be outside of the vehicle when it is moving.

The use of the bus may be denied to passengers whose conduct becomes detrimental to the general safety of the group. Trip sponsors and adult supervisors shall have sole responsibility for passenger conduct.

8. **Bus Cleanliness:** Each group is responsible for cleaning the bus, including picking up all refuse and cleaning spills from the seats, floor, and corners and ledges. Return seats (pushed together, arm rests up) and seat belts to stowage position (on top of seats). Clean and close all windows.
9. **Trip Records:** The driver is responsible for completing the Pre-Trip Inspection Form (must be done everyday if multiple day trip), Bus Log and Trip Report, and Post Trip Inspection and returning them with any comments to the church office during regular business hours before and following the trip.
10. **Safety Equipment:** The Church staff shall ensure that a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, and necessary items are maintained in all vehicles. Each driver is responsible for equipment and supplies appropriate for the season and trip planned (e.g. warm blankets, emergency food, water, maps, jumper cables, etc.).
11. **Cell Phone Availability:** For every trip, at least one functioning cell phone must be taken for emergency use only. Record the telephone number on the Bus Reservation Form, which stays in the Church office. However, driver shall not, other than for emergency use, answer or talk on cell phones, or use cell phones for reviewing or sending text or e-mail messages, while operating the bus.
12. **Driver Requirements:** The bus shall be driven ONLY by approved drivers at ALL times. The Church office shall maintain a list of approved drivers for the church bus, renewing it annually, with a copy to the church insurance agency, and a copy on the bus. To be approved, a driver must be a member of St. George's, at least 25 years of age and have proof of insurance, and a Class D License. All drivers must provide a copy of their current license, date of birth, insurance card, MVR (motor vehicle report which can be obtained for \$5 at the Drivers Service Center on Centennial Boulevard) and attest that they have had no DUI'S (driving under the influence) within the past five years, no reckless driving in the last five years, and no more than two moving violations in the previous two years.
13. **Driver Availability:** It shall be the responsibility of the group requesting use of the bus to secure its own driver from that approved list. Drivers may be added as they meet the requirements in #10 above. No one driver shall drive more than eight hours in any 16-hour period and all trips over 200 miles one-way shall require at least two approved drivers.
14. **Trip Responsibility:** The driver of the church bus will have sole responsibility and authority in matters pertaining to the bus operation, maintenance and safety. The driver is responsible for complying with this policy, obeying all traffic laws (including posted speed limits), completing post-trip actions and returning the key, log & trip report to the Church office. The driver shall assume all responsibility for any traffic citations received while operating the bus. If the bus is being used to transport passengers to any activity, function, or gathering where alcoholic beverages are offered or available, the driver shall not consume any alcohol either before or during the activity, function, or gathering.
15. **Training and Responsibility:** The Church staff shall insure that all drivers are properly trained in the operation of the bus and that they are supplied with all pertinent information and instructions. Accordingly, prospective drivers will drive the bus for a familiarization road test with a staff member.
16. **Pick Up and Drop Off:** When transporting passengers, extreme care must be taken during passenger loading and unloading. Pick up and drop off passengers on the same side of the street as

their destination. If a child must cross the street, provide an adult escort. Plan transportation routes in advance to ensure this is done. Doors shall be locked when in motion.

17. **Mechanical breakdown:** Make sure hazard lights are flashing and emergency triangles are placed behind bus. When using triangles, place them 100 and 200 feet to the rear of the vehicle. Keep passengers in the vehicle at all times unless fire or other dangers pose problems. Call for assistance from Ford Motor Company Roadside Assistance (800-241-3673). For alternative transportation in Nashville, call Nashville Cab Company (615-242-7070) and request one or two seven passenger minivans (depending on size of group) to return travelers to St. George's.
18. **Accidents:** Written accident instructions are available in a convenient package and will be carried on the bus at all times. Information includes when to call police (may call 911, if an emergency, or 862-8600 for non-emergency policy assistance); how to report accidents; obtaining witness contacts; photographing scenes of accident with camera provided on board; notification of organization and families; and notification of our insurance company (615-346-0330; leave message if after hours). Also, see "Church Spokesperson," above.
19. **Church Spokesman:** In any accident or emergency situation involving the church bus, St. George's shall be represented at the scene by only one individual in any ensuing discussion with authorities, insurance representatives, etc. The driver will be the spokesperson on the scene for the church in any such situation but shall make no statements of liability, fault, amount of insurance coverage, etc. at the scene of the accident.
20. **Towing:** No towing of any nature shall be allowed at any time and nothing shall be loaded on the van roof.
21. **Costs:** Fixed costs of operating the bus such as insurance, licensing, and maintenance will be charged to the budget for Church administration. Gasoline consumed by any group shall be replenished by the driver prior to returning the vehicle and the costs will be reimbursed from the group's budget.