

**Policy Statement Regarding the Christian Community and Mission of**  
**The Church of the Nazarene**

[LOCAL CHURCH] is a member of the denomination of the Church of the Nazarene. As such, it is in full harmony with the doctrine and polity of the Church of the Nazarene. All references herein to “Church” refer to both [LOCAL CHURCH] and the denomination, unless specifically or by context a different application is intended.

**I. Key Characteristics of the Church of the Nazarene’s Christian Community and Mission.**

The Church of the Nazarene (the “Church”) is a community of faith that exists to exercise and express the Christian beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene.

A. The Church of the Nazarene’s Christian Beliefs.

The Church is a community of faith based on the Church of the Nazarene’s Christian beliefs, which include the following.

1. *Articles of Faith.* The Church of the Nazarene has adopted Articles of Faith set forth in the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene.

2. *Christian Mission and Values.* The Church has adopted the following **mission** to which all activities of the Church are directed:

“To make Christlike disciples in the nations.”

In carrying out this mission, the Church activities are conducted in accordance with the following Biblical **values**:

*We Are a Christian People:* As members of the Church Universal, we join with all true believers in proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in embracing the historic Trinitarian creedal statements of Christian faith. We value our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage and believe it to be a way of understanding the faith that is true to Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

*We Are a Holiness People:* God, who is holy, calls us to a life of holiness. We believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to do in us a second work of grace, called by various terms including "entire sanctification" and "baptism with the Holy Spirit"-cleansing us from all sin; renewing us in the image of God: empowering us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves; and producing in us the

character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christlikeness.

**We Are a Missional People:** We are a sent people, responding to the call of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to go into all the world, witnessing to the Lordship of Christ and participating with God in the building of the Church and the extension of His kingdom (2 Corinthians 6:1). Our mission (a) begins in worship, (b) ministers to the world in evangelism and compassion, (c) encourages believers toward Christian maturity through discipleship, and (d) prepares women and men for Christian service through Christian higher education.

**B. Representatives and Other Participants**

The Church community is represented by all of the Church's officers, directors, employees, licensed workers and volunteer leaders, each of whom serves the Church's mission and is an integral part of the community (each such person is described for purposes of this Statement only as a "Church representative"). The other community participants, including Church of the Nazarene local church members and volunteers, contribute to the Church's Christian community, but they do not represent the Church unless they are also employees or leaders or have been designated as such by the appropriate ecclesiastical authority.

**C. Christian Exercise and Expression.**

1. *As a Community.* **Church believes that God desires people to live out their faith in community with other believers, and that accordingly Church's Christian community is itself an exercise and expression of its Christian beliefs.** The Church of the Nazarene believes that the local church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ and that the local church finds broader meaning and outreach in fulfilling its biblical responsibilities within the life and witness of the denomination. In addition, those who participate in the life of the Church of the Nazarene, including the Church representatives, are following the biblical command to live out their faith in community with other believers. Accordingly, the Church is itself an exercise and expression of the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs.

2. *Through its Mission Based Activities.* The Church of the Nazarene believes that all Church activities, including the duties of every Church member and employee, should be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. Therefore, in every activity the Church as a community exercises and expresses the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs.

**II. Christian Community Standards for Ministry Activities.**

**A. General Standards.**

The Church shall engage in activities and use its facilities solely to exercise and express the Christian beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene and to further the mission of the Church. In furtherance of this mission, the Church may provide services or goods to, and may allow use of its facilities by, other groups and persons who are not members of the Church of the Nazarene. But no Church activity, nor any use of Church facilities by another group or person, may be conducted or permitted if the Church determines that such activity or use expresses a message of support by the Church for any view contrary to the Christian beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene.

B. Current Trends.

In response to current cultural and legal trends, the Church has determined to articulate more specifically its Christian beliefs and associated community standards on the following subjects.

1. *Gender Identity.* The Church subscribes to the Christian belief that God creates human beings in His image as two distinct genders, male and female, and that the intended gender of an individual is determined by such individual's biological sex at birth. The Church shall apply this belief regarding gender identity in all policies and programs in the Church Christian community. If an individual's biological sex at birth is not certain, then the Church shall discern the gender by which the Church will identify the individual through a process of prayerful dialogue with such individual.

2. *Marriage.* The Church subscribes to the Christian belief that God has instituted marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one women. The Church shall recognize only such marriages for all policies and programs in the Church Christian community. In addition, all uses of Church facilities for marriage related activities shall comply with the Marriage and Wedding Policy.

3. *Sexual Conduct.* The Church subscribes to the Christian belief that husbands and wives are called to exclusive sexual fidelity and that unmarried singles are called to abstain from sexual relations.

4. *Abortion.* The Church of the Nazarene subscribes to the Christian belief that all individuals are known by God from before the foundation of the world and that human life begins at conception. The Church accordingly believes that no procedures should be performed for the primary objective of terminating a pregnancy and taking the life of an unborn child (such procedures are referred to herein as abortions) except in extraordinary circumstances where other Biblical, moral principles prevail, such as where it is medically necessary to preserve the life of the mother. The Church of the Nazarene's beliefs further prohibit paying for or otherwise facilitating such procedures.

As dictated by these beliefs, the Church as an organization shall not fund abortions in any manner, including through a health care benefit plan that covers prescription drugs that induce

abortions, except in the foregoing extraordinary circumstances unless in a particular situation (i) any such drug is prescribed and used solely for a non-abortive therapeutic treatment of a covered medical condition or for an abortion in the foregoing extraordinary circumstances and (ii) coverage is approved by the duly appointed Benefits Committee. In addition, the Church shall not participate through its health care benefit plan in a program that uses the plan as a means for providing drugs used to induce abortion, except in the foregoing extraordinary circumstances. Any requirement to facilitate abortions by participating in such a program, and any penalty for failing to participate in such a program, would directly and substantially burden and undermine the Church's exercise and expression of its Christian beliefs.

5. *Religious Activities.* The Church engages solely in activities that further its Christian mission. All such activities can and should be vehicles for spiritual growth. Therefore, the Church considers all of its activities to be a form of religious worship.

The Church distinguishes between exclusive religious activities and integrated religious activities. Exclusive religious activities include devotional worship services such as chapel services conducted by the Church, and distinctly theological or pastoral education.

Integrated religious activities include activities similar to those conducted by nonreligious organizations for the benefit of society. The Church conducts such activities in furtherance of and in accordance with its Christian beliefs.

The Church shall not agree to any limitations on its integrated religious activities. The Church may agree not to conduct exclusively religious activities in certain facilities or programs.

#### C. Implementation.

To the extent the pastor determines it to be necessary or advisable to further the Church's mission or to cultivate the Church's Christian community, he or she may establish additional standards based on Holy Scripture and the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs for the activities and programs conducted within the community or for Church representatives or other community participants.

The determination as to whether any particular activity or use of Church facilities is not permitted under this Policy requires spiritual discernment applied to each particular circumstance and shall be made in the sole discretion of the spiritual leaders of the Church designated by the governance authority. With respect to uses by other groups or persons, the Church may consider without limitation both the content of the proposed activities and whether the group or person is generally perceived by the public as advocating views contrary to the Christian beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene.

### **III. Community Standards for Church of the Nazarene representatives.**

#### A. Roles and Expectations.

In response to God's calling on their lives, Church representatives exercise and express the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs by working together to advance the Church's Christian mission. Church representatives are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading and/or representing the Church's Christian community as an expression and exercise of the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs. Accordingly, each Church representative shall be expected to (i) model the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs for others, (ii) perform all of their duties as a service to God and (iii) comply with the following obligations:

1. *Christian Beliefs.* Each Church representative shall affirm their agreement with the Church of the Nazarene's statement of faith and other Christian beliefs and shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs inconsistent with these beliefs.

2. *Christian Conduct Standards.* Church representatives shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) endeavor to conduct themselves in a manner that affirms Biblical standards of conduct in accordance with the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs.

3. *Distinctly Christian Activities.* Each Church representative shall be ready, willing and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as worship or prayer services.

B. Noncompliance by Representatives.

If any Church representative does not comply with the obligations set forth above, such representative shall have an obligation to disclose such noncompliance to the Church. The Church may determine whether such representative intends or is likely to continue in such noncompliance. If so, then the Church may dismiss such representative from his or her position on the basis that such representative's noncompliance is inconsistent with and undermines the expression and exercise of the Church Christian community. Such action shall be taken in accordance with any applicable procedures in the Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration and Appeal.

C. Mission-Based Exceptions.

In situations where the Church of the Nazarene's Ministry Organization mission can best be advanced by employing an individual who cannot comply with one or more of the foregoing obligations, the individual designated by the Church governance authority shall have the discretion to authorize an exception to this Policy and approve such individual's employment. However, such exceptions may not be granted unless it is first determined that such exception will not materially impair the distinctive Christian-expression and exercise of the Church. Any individual granted an exception shall be required to acknowledge that he or she understands and agrees to support the Church's mission and values

D. Volunteers and Contract Workers.

Volunteers and contract workers are not considered to be representatives of the Church's Christian community unless they are serving in leadership positions. Nevertheless, when such persons serve with the Church, they shall be required to acknowledge that they understand and agree to support the Church's mission and values. The Church may give preference for such service to volunteers and contract workers who share the Church of the Nazarene's Christian beliefs.