

Church Volleyball Rules and Guidelines *(Revised 2024)*

Name of League: St Mary's County - Church Volleyball League

Goal of League: Provide Christian Fellowship & Witness and Competitive Fun

League Fees:

Fee: \$150 per team

Due Date: Before First Official Game of the Season

Check Instructions:

Check Payable To: Leonardtown Baptist Church

Memo Line: Volleyball - Church Name

Mailing Instructions:

Attn: Diane Shellhammer
Leonardtown Baptist Church
23520 Hollywood Rd
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Three Divisions: A, B, & C

- **A Division: The Advanced League:** This division is for teams and players who have played volleyball for some time and are looking for the highest level of competition our league has to offer. An official referee from another church team is encouraged but is not required to be used to call fouls/faults as per league rules. All volleyball technique and knowledge of league rules should be known at this point in order to establish the highest level of competition the league can provide. The goal of this division is to allow teams who are highly skilled in volleyball to maintain that skill level through competition with other fellow churches within the league.
- **B Division: The Intermediate League:** This division is for teams and players who are looking for a more competitive night of volleyball in fellowship with other churches. An official referee from another church team may be used if agreed by both coaches. In the absence of a referee, players will call fouls/faults as per our league rules. Proper volleyball technique and knowledge of league rules should be emphasized to help establish a fair and competitive match between both teams. The goal of this division is for teams to play a competitive game and increase their volleyball skill level with a vision of one day moving up to A division once their church is ready for a highest level of competition our league can offer.
- **C Division: The Beginners League:** This division is for newer teams and players learning the game of volleyball and/or for those looking for a fun night out of exercise and fellowship with other churches. There will not be an official ref and teams will self-referee as the game is played. The goal of this division is for players to begin to learn proper volleyball technique and league rules with a vision of one day moving up to B division when their church is ready for a more competitive challenge.

Location of Games:

- Games will be held at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, Leonardtown Baptist Church (LBC), and Patuxent Presbyterian Church (Pax Pres).

Time of Games:

- Cornerstone Presbyterian: Mondays at 6, 7, 8, and 9 p.m.
- Leonardtown Baptist: Mondays and Tuesdays at 6, 7, 8 and 9 p.m.
- Patuxent Presbyterian: Tuesdays at 6, 7, 8, and 9 p.m.

Directions to Locations:

- Cornerstone Presbyterian Church is located about 0.7 miles down Town Creek Road on the left side at 23101 Town Creek Road, Lexington Park MD 20653. Town Creek Road is located across from the Walmart/Checkers light located on Rt. 235. <http://www.cornerstonepca.org>
- Leonardtown Baptist Church is located on Rt 245 between Rt 235 Hollywood and Rt 5 in Leonardtown at 23520 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown MD 20650. <http://leonardtownbaptist.org>
- Patuxent Presbyterian Church is located at the corner of Kingston Creek Rd and Rt.4 about 0.8 miles south of the TJ (Solomons) Bridge at 23421 Kingston Creek Road, California MD 20619. It is on the left side heading towards the bridge. <http://www.paxpres.org>

Game Schedule/Standings/Ref Duties: The league schedule is at located at <http://churchvolleyball.org/> as well as team standings and each team's ref duties.

Preseason Practice: Practices will be held at all churches and coaches will be notified via email prior to start of the season to sign up for practice. Sign up will be on a first come basis and try to accommodate everyone as allowable.

Regular Season Games: The regular season runs for six months (October – March). Each team will play one 3 game match once a week unless scheduling says otherwise.

Playoffs: The top 4 teams in all three divisions will play a best of 3 games single elimination match amongst their own division. Playoff dates will be determined at a later date in the season.

Rules Disclaimer: The below church league rules take precedent over all official volleyball rules in order to provide a safer environment and allow some leniency for a more enjoyable time in Christian fellowship and witness.

1. Division/Roster Rules:

IMPORTANT: Any player under the age of 18 must submit a signed **RELEASE, WAIVER, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT** form, located at the end of these Rules and Guidelines, to the League Commissioner (hereafter, The Commish) prior to playing.

- 1.1 Each team should maintain a team roster.
 - 1.1.1 Coaches are held responsible for making sure all players are eligible to play on their team before game play starts on that night.
- 1.2 Division B & C age range is from middle school age and up.
- 1.3 Division A age range is from high school age and up.
- 1.4 A player CANNOT play on multiple teams within the same division.
- 1.5 A player cannot switch teams in middle of the current season without prior approval of the Commish.
- 1.6 A player can only play up or down one Division during the season, meaning:
 - 1.6.1 A player in the A division can also play in the B division.
 - 1.6.2 A player in the C division can also play in the B division.
 - 1.6.3 A player in the B division can also play in either the A division or the C division, but NOT both divisions.
 - 1.6.4 A player in the A division cannot play in the C division.
 - 1.6.5 A player in the C division cannot play in the A division.
 - 1.6.6 When competing in the playoffs, B division teams can have a maximum of 2 players that are also competing in A division playoffs.
- 1.7 New players not already in the league can be added during the regular season but are not permitted to be added towards the end of the season in order to stack a team trying to secure a playoff spot. Any team additions after Jan 31 must be approved by the Commish.
 - 1.7.1 Coaches will held to the honor system on new players in order to sustain equal competition amongst all teams.
- 1.8 If a player is found to be illegally playing on multiple teams in the same division, or has been added to a team in order to stack a team for the playoffs, then those teams will forfeit the games the illegal player participated in on the night the violation is identified.
 - 1.8.1 **EXCEPTION:** A team may have a player from the same church play as a substitute three (3) times during the season to mitigate team personnel shortages based on emergencies or scheduling conflicts. Higher division substitutes are expected to adjust play appropriately to the division they are substituting into. Other exceptions may be approved by the Commish on a case-by-case basis.
 - 1.8.2 Coaches will keep a written record of participation rule exceptions and be held to the honor system on occurrence in order to sustain equal competition amongst all league teams.
- 1.9 If a player is found to be illegally playing in both A and C divisions, the offending team will forfeit all games the illegal player participated in on the night the violation occurred.
 - 1.9.1 **EXCEPTION:** A PARENT/Sibling playing on an A division team may participate with an immediate family member playing on a C division team from the same church. It is understood that the A division player will adjust

his/her level of play commensurate with established criteria of C division play as defined in division descriptions on page 1 of this document.

- 1.9.2 Coaches will monitor this exception and be held to the honor system on team players in order to sustain equal competition amongst all league teams.
- 1.10 6 players or more constitutes a full team roster and a minimum of 4 players are required to play without forfeit. If a team is unable to fill the minimum requirements (4) to play they forfeit each game, one at a time according to the following guidelines:
 - 1.10.1 If a team does not have the required minimum of 4 players after 10 minutes of scheduled play, then the first game is forfeited.
 - 1.10.2 If a team does not have the required minimum of 4 players after 20 minutes of scheduled play, then the second game is forfeited.
 - 1.10.3 If a team does not have the required minimum of 4 players after 30 minutes of scheduled play, then the third game is forfeited.
 - 1.10.4 If a forfeit occurs, both teams are encouraged to play each game as a fellowship time in a fun and competitive manner.
- 1.11 The first game should start within 5 minutes after the one hour time slot has begun (i.e. 6p.m. – 7p.m.) if both teams have the legal number of (4) players present.
- 1.12 The first game can delay start until 10 minutes after the one-hour time slot has begun ONLY if one or both teams does not have the legal number of player present (3 or less).
 - 1.12.1 At the 10 minute mark, forfeit procedures begin. See Division/Roster rules 1.10 listed above for additional forfeit procedures.
- 1.13 All matches MUST stop by the end of their assigned hour of play. (One hour per 3 game match).
 - 1.13.1 A referee/coaches cell phone or clock on the wall of the court can be used as official time in order to be consistent among games and should be agreed upon by coaches prior to the start of play.
 - 1.13.2 The final teams playing each night must also adhere to the one hour of play in fairness to the other teams playing earlier.
 - 1.13.3 **EXCEPTION:** The one-hour match play is suspended during playoff matches.
- 1.14 After the completion of the 3rd game, both teams should leave the court and pray clear of the playing area so that the next teams may enter the court quickly for their allotted warm up time and one-hour time slot.

2. Game Play Rules:

- 2.1 A maximum of 6 players on the court at a time, with a continuous rotating of additional players from one side or both sides throughout the game.
- 2.2 All players for a team must play every game with the exception of swapping out to take care of children, injury, or other emergency situation. This prevents teams from stacking their lineup with only the best players each game.
- 2.3 Teams will switch sides after each game has finished.
- 2.4 Teams will volley for serve for 1st game.
 - 2.4.1 Use the center front line to toss the ball and begin the volley.

- 2.4.2** The ball must cross the net at least 3 times for the volley to count.
 - 2.4.3** The team that wins the volley begins serving Game 1.
- 2.5** The losing team of each game begins the serve for each following game.
- 2.6** The server can be anywhere behind the back line.
 - 2.6.1** At LBC, stepping over the line with one foot is NOT a fault as long the server keeps the other foot behind the serving line.
 - 2.6.2** At PP, stepping ON the service line with one foot during a serve is NOT a fault as long as the server keeps the other foot behind the serving line.
 - 2.6.3** At CP, stepping completely OVER or ON the service line with either foot during the serve is a fault.
 - 2.6.4** If the ball is thrown upward for a serve and subsequently comes back down without being served, it is a fault.
- 2.7** LBC has low ceilings at both ends of the court.
 - 2.7.1** Due to this lower ceiling, the server is allowed one retry per game if hitting the lower ceiling of their own side during their serve.
 - 2.7.1.1** That is, one retry, per person, per game.
 - 2.7.2** If the defender, upon receiving a serve hits the ball into their own low ceiling, play continues as normal with NO replays.
- 2.8** The ball is allowed to touch the net on a serve as long as it goes over.
- 2.9** Legal amount of hits/plays on attacker's side of the net:
 - 2.9.1** The attacker's side is allowed 3 hits. The ball must be returned over the net on the third hit.
 - 2.9.2** Players on the attacking side must alternate hits amongst its players.
 - 2.9.3** Therefore a player cannot hit the ball twice in a row, unless a true block occurs.
 - 2.9.4** A true block is a legal touch of the ball with arms and hands passively, fully extended above the player's head. This touch does not count against the 3 hits the attacking team uses to return the ball over the net.
 - 2.9.5** A fourth hit that does not include a true block, is considered a fault and a side out occurs.
- 2.10** Blocking or spiking of serves is NOT allowed.
 - 2.10.1** Front row players can hit the ball back into the opponent's side of the court on a serve if the front row player's feet do not leave the floor and the hit is not a block or spike of the serve.
 - 2.10.2** If front row player's feet leave the floor on the serve to hit the ball, the ball may not travel across the net to the opponent's side and must remain on the receiving team's side of the net or else it is a fault.
- 2.11** Hitting the ceiling:
 - 2.11.1** During play, when the offensive team hits the ball into the any part of the ceiling and it lands on the defenders side of the net, it is a dead ball fault and the defending team is awarded a point.
 - 2.11.2** At LBC, hitting the opposing team's blue wall section is a fault.
 - 2.11.3** During play, when the offensive team hits the ball into any part of the ceiling or blue wall section on their own side, they can continue play as normal.
- 2.12** All other walls, ceilings outside of the court line, and basketball backboards are out of bounds.

- 2.13** If a team hits the ball into the fair/foul antennae on top of the net, the ball is considered out of play.
- 2.14** As long as half the ball (i.e. middle circumference) touches the line, the ball is still considered “in”.
- 2.15** Players cannot touch the net during play with any part of their body except a player’s hair or clothing.
- 2.16** Blocking:
- 2.16.1** Any underhand hit or set CAN be blocked by the opponent reaching into the attacker’s side of the net, provided the following:
- 2.16.1.1** The attacker has hit the ball in such a manner that the ball would clearly cross the net, or fall near the net, if not touched by a player, and no member of the attacking team is in a position to make a play on the ball.
- 2.16.1.1.1** By definition, if this was the third hit by the attacking team, then it may be blocked as no member of the attacking team can legally make a play on the ball.
- 2.16.1.1.2** “Roofing” or “stealing” a set is not permitted. A set or pass, played on the attacker’s first or second hit, that could potentially be hit by the attacking team, cannot be blocked until it breaks the plane of the net.
- 2.16.2** Any overhand hit CAN be blocked by the opponent reaching beyond the net as long as:
- 2.16.2.1** A true overhand hit is attempted and a setting attempt is not in motion.
- 2.16.2.2** The blocker does not interfere with the attacker before or during the execution of an overhand attacking hit.
- 2.16.2.3** Back row players are not permitted to block at the net.
- 2.16.2.4** Blocking a serve is not permitted.
- 2.16.3** A “true” block does not count as a hit. The team that blocks the ball gets the full complement of three hits on their side of the net after the “true” block before the ball must be returned to their opponent’s side of the net.
- 2.16.3.1** A blocker may also legally re-hit their first blocked hit as an allowable immediate first hit.
- 2.16.3.2** Two hits in a row by the same player IS ONLY legal on “true” blocks at the net.
- 2.17** Spiking:
- 2.17.1** A player spiking the ball may follow through over the net, so long as initial contact with the ball took place on the attacker’s side of the net.
- 2.17.2** Back row players can spike:
- 2.17.2.1** Back row players cannot cross the 10ft line and touch the front row floor before spiking.
- 2.17.2.2** The back row must begin their “jump spike” from behind the 10ft line and complete the spike before their feet touch back down in the front row.
- 2.18** Player crossing the centerline and touching the floor of opponent’s side during play:
- 2.18.1** If only a portion or a part of the body crosses under the net and that portion or part is touching the middle line, play can continue with no fault.
- 2.18.2** If the entire part of the body crosses on the opponent’s side, it is a foul.

- 2.18.3 If contact is made with another player by an accidental kick during a spike, it is still a foul.
- 2.18.4 If two people jump for a spike or block at the same time and come down on each other's feet or ankle, then it is up to the discretion of the referee to determine if a foul occurs or not.
- 2.18.5 Any safety infraction under the net will result in a foul.
- 2.19 Carrying the ball:
 - 2.19.1 Palming the ball resulting in a sudden, sharp change in ball direction is typically the result of a carry and will be called a fault.
 - 2.19.2 Blatant carries are not allowed in any division.
 - 2.19.3 Coaches should instruct players in how to not carry the ball.
- 2.20 A passed ball hitting each hand at a different time or two parts of the same player's body is a double-hit and is considered a fault.
- 2.21 Balls can be returned with any part of the body according to the current USA Official rules.
 - 2.21.1 Getting the foot under the ball for a return is permissible, but kicking the ball is not.
 - 2.21.2 Any blatant kick, including a hackie-sack-style kick is considered a foul.
- 2.22 Rally scoring/winning a game:
 - 2.22.1 Every served ball counts as a point no matter which team serves it.
 - 2.22.2 Each game set is played to 25 points or more.
 - 2.22.3 The first team to 25 points wins, unless the opponent is still within one point.
 - 2.22.4 Therefore a team must win by two points. (ie. 26 to 24).
 - 2.22.5 The third game of play cannot end in a tie.
 - 2.22.6 The third game MUST play ONE MORE point to break the tie and decide a winner if match time is expired.
 - 2.22.6.1 This is the only time a team can win by one point.
 - 2.22.7 All playoff sets will be played to 25 points or more for a win.
- 2.23 **Good sportsmanship and no foul language are expected. Warnings may be given by coaches or referees.**
 - 2.23.1 **1st offense a player receives a warning**
 - 2.23.2 **2nd offense of the night the player leaves the court for the night.**
 - 2.23.3 The Team Coach of a player receiving a 2nd offense shall notify the Commish for reinstatement of the player.
- 2.24 Please do not spike or kick the ball intentionally into the ceiling, wall, or towards a person in order to prevent injury and damage to the facility. This may constitute a warning or leaving of the court based on the above offense consequences.
- 2.25 All 3 games count for season points. Teams will receive an email from the league and will use the link within that email to report points. The results are then posted on the web site to determine league standings.
- 2.26 The facilitator for this season will be Tyler Robinson. You can contact him at LbcSportsMinistry@gmail.com. if you have any questions or concerns.

3. Facility Rules:

- 3.1. Please use non-marking sports shoes on multipurpose floors. You will be asked to take them off if they mark the floor. (Note: Sports shoes that have black soles

and contain carbon – running shoes - are the typical culprits. The tan or colored gum rubber-soled shoes are best for indoor floors, as they are non-marking and have excellent traction. [See www.Zappos.com or www.Shoes.com for great selection of volleyball specific sports shoes in your size, next day shipping is free and free shipping for returns.]

- 3.2. DO NOT Warm-up in the lobby outside the fellowship hall at Pax Pres or LBC due to the risk of discharging the sprinkler system or damaging ceilings and other objects.
- 3.3. Warm-ups inside the hall should remain at or below the "smooth" stone wall (approx 3 ft high) in order to protect the exit signs, fire alarm pulls, and soundproofing panels from damage.
- 3.4. Never kick the balls as the bladder in these balls will shift when it is kicked and it will leak air thereafter.
- 3.5. The playground at Pax Pres supports the church pre-school and is NOT for use by the volleyball league.
- 3.6. If you are the last teams to play that night, please help take down the net and poles.
- 3.7. Store the balls securely in provided locking mesh bag after the games so the balls are not used and abused by others.
- 3.8. Net height should be kept at 7 feet 11 & 5/8 inches from floor at all church sites.
- 3.9. Professional volleyballs will be used meeting USA Official specs. Tachikara SV-5WS Sensi-Tech (soft touch.) USA Volleyball Rules state: "It's color may be a uniform light color, or a combination of colors. Synthetic leather material and color combinations of balls used in International Official competitions should comply with FIVB standards. Its circumference is 25.6" to 26.4" and its weight is 9-10oz. Inside pressure shall be 4.26 to 4.61 psi.

RELEASE, WAIVER, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

IT IS THE INTENTION OF (_____) BY THIS AGREEMENT
(Parent or Guardian of Minor)

TO EXEMPT AND RELIEVE LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH AND ITS OFFICERS,
AGENTS, SERVANTS, OR EMPLOYEES FROM LIABILITY FOR PERSONAL INJURY,
PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR WRONGFUL DEATH OF

(_____)
(Name of Minor/Minors)

CAUSED BY ANY ACT OF NEGLIGENCE OF LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH AND
ITS OFFICERS, AGENTS, SERVANTS, OR EMPLOYEES.

For and in consideration of permitting (_____)
(Name of Minor/Minors)

to observe, or use any facility or equipment of LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH, or engage in
and/or receive instruction in any activity or activity incidental thereto **SOME OF WHICH MAY
INVOLVE**

DANGERS AND RISK OF BODILY INJURY at: LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH in the city
of LEONARDTOWN, County of ST. MARY'S, and State of MARYLAND, beginning on the day of
SEPTEMBER 13, 2011, the undersigned parent and/or guardian of:

(_____):
(Name of Minor/Minors)

hereby voluntarily and absolutely releases, discharges, waives, and relinquishes any and all loss or
damages or actions or causes of action for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death
occurring to:

(_____) as a result of
(Name of Minor/Minors)

(_____) observing or using facilities or equipment of
(Name of Minor/ Minors)

LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH, or engaging in or receiving instructions in any activities
SOME OF WHICH MAY INVOLVE DANGERS AND RISK OF BODILY INJURY or in activities
incidental thereto wherever or however the same may occur, and for whatever period said activities
or instructions may continue.

The undersigned parent or guardian of (_____)
(Name of Minor/Minors)

for him/herself, his/her heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns agrees that in the event any claim for
personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death shall be prosecuted against LEONARDTOWN

BAPTIST CHURCH or its officers, agents, servants, or employees, the undersigned parent or guardian **will indemnify and hold harmless LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH and its officers, agents, servants, or employees** from any and all claims or causes of

action by (_____) or
(Name of Minor/Minors)

by any other person or entity, by whomever or wherever made or presented, and **under no circumstances will the undersigned parent or guardian of**

(_____) present
(Name of Minor/Minors)

any claim against LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH and said persons for personal injuries, property damage, wrongful death, or otherwise, caused by any act of negligence by LEONARDTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH and said persons.

The undersigned parent or guardian represent that he/she has read this Release, has requested and has been provided with, or has requested and declined advisement on the potential dangers/risks of engaging in the observation, activities, or instruction offered, **assumes all risks associated with such dangers and risks**, and is fully aware of and understands the terms and the legal consequences of the signing of this Release. The undersigned parent or legal guardian intends his or her signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law and if any portion of the Release is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

DATED: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR (NAME OF MINOR):

THIS RELEASE WAS RESEARCHED AND DRAFTED BY THE LAW FIRM OF:

MCKAY BYRNE & GRAHAM
3250 WILSHIRE BLVD STE 603
LOS ANGELES CA 90010-1578
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