# GRU Groups: A Quick Guide

**PLEASE NOTE:** *At this time (October 2021) only WHITTON HALL can be reserved for use; the kitchen is closed, and no food or beverage may be consumed at indoor meetings. This overrides certain pre-pandemic protocols below and will be revisited periodically by the board.*

Groups at GRU need to follow all polices and procedures in place. This is a quick guide to some of them, but you should also familiarize yourself with GRU’s Safe Steps: Safe Congregation Policy and GRU’s [Guidelines, Policies and Procedures](https://www.grandriverunitarian.ca/governance) document. [GRU By-laws](https://www.grandriverunitarian.ca/governance) are also available if needed.

## Reserving Space

The building is available to be used but reservations must be made ahead of time. This can be done through our Office Manager, Kristen Wilson at manager@grandriverunitarian.ca (please do not use Kristen’s personal contact info for GRU business). Our Insurance requires that only members in good standing may reserve space in the building, and a member must be present throughout the meeting.  To make a reservation:

* Indicate the date, time, and the expected size of your group.
* You may request a specific room, though there are often multiple events happening.
* Our heating system is programmed according to the bookings

GRU also has a Zoom account which can be booked for meetings and events.

## Space Access and Security

Security is of great importance and access is gained through the entry code on the Whitton Hall door. Please do not share this code.  Once you have convened, we urge you to lock the door.  All known thefts from the building have occurred while the building is occupied, and the main hall or foyers left unattended with the doors unlocked.

In closing up, please ensure that the lights, equipment, and appliances have been turned off and the building is secure when you leave.  Please check all windows and all doors, including the emergency exits in the teen room and the stairwell to be sure they are firmly closed.

## Technology and Sound

If you need sound for an event, you much arrange for this ahead of time. There is a portable speaker available but it must be requested in advance. The sound team is not always available to provide a volunteer and they are the only ones authorized to use the sound equipment in the sanctuary.

Limited use of AV equipment is available.  You must provide your own laptop.   The copier is available for GRU events and groups most days except Fridays.  Ask Kristen for the appropriate user code.

## Budget and Expenses

Committees have a budget from which they can cover approved expenses. Expense must be approved in advance by committee chairs.  Please check in before you spend!  The procedure is posted on the bulletin board above the copier. The Expense Form can be found at the front of the mail files directly outside the office

## Food and Drink

The Kitchen may be used to make tea, coffee, and serve snacks.  You are responsible for washing any dishes used.  Instructions are posted above the sink.  For large events, you may ask Kristen about using our commercial dishwasher.  Note that we are a nut-free facility.

Mail Files are available outside the office where you may leave notes or materials for staff or leaders.  Commonly used FORMS are filed in the front. Basic office supplies are kept in the drawer under the files.

## Advertising and Announcements

Verbal announcements are very limited, and must be submitted in writing **in person** to the Sunday service leader or Rev. Jess on Sunday morning before service.

Ads may be shared through the weekly announcements, which are printed on Sundays and emailed on Mondays.   Submissions are due every THURSDAY by 5:00 p.m.  Please share the exact wording in your email, note, or text attachment and abide by the long-standing announcement policy (keep it short and GRU-specific).  No pdf, please!

Many of our members use Facebook, so we suggest posting ads to GRU groups.

Bulletin Board are available for your use.  Please check with Kristen if you want to schedule a whole board for a full display. When posting material on Bulletin Boards, please be neat and not let the flyer overhang the borders. When posting material on walls, please DO NOT USE tape; a supply of adhesive putty for your use is located in the Quest Desk drawer.

## GRU Board

The GRU Board holds a Leadership Council meeting every fall to which all are welcome. This is an opportunity for the Board to update those in leadership and also to hear from the groups. Please reach out the Board at any time. The Board will also ask Committees for their budget request in the Fall as they are developing the budget for the next fiscal year. Note that the church fiscal year runs for the calendar year (January to December), not the church year (September to August). The Budget is approved at the Annual General Meeting held in February. Annual reports from all groups are due in early January to be including in the Annual Report of the Congregation.

## Questions?

Please don’t hesitate to ask.

A building use tour through Kristen, Rev. Jess, or other church leaders to walk you through the basics.

The GRU Board maintains policies and procedures to both comply with our legal obligations and to keep everyone safe. If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to reach out to any Board member.