

Humbercrest UC Council
Approved Minutes
March 24, 2026 7:00 pm via Zoom

Attendees: Aileen, Barb, Dorothy, Howard, Linda, Marg, Vince, Rev. Diane

Regrets: Charlie, Libbie

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement - Rev. Diane

Inclusivity Checklist - Linda

Prayer - Howard

Administrative Ministry of the Church

Motion: Linda/Dorothy Carried

That Council approve the minutes of the Feb. 24, 2026 meeting.

Motion: Aileen/Marg Carried

That the Agenda be approved as circulated.

Chair's Report - Howard

Many thanks to Linda and Rev. Diane for a well-run Annual Meeting of the congregation on March 8th. Many, many thanks to Linda for her incredible leadership over the past six years as Council Chair. I am delighted that Linda will stay on Council as Secretary (for one year) so we can continue to benefit from her wisdom and expertise.

A big welcome to the new members of Council – Libbie and Vince. We are thrilled you have joined Council and look forward to working with you.

I thought it would be helpful to include a link to the [HUC Constitution](#)

The Church Council information is contained in pages 6-10 of the constitution. I draw your attention to the Mandate in particular so that we can reflect periodically on how well we are fulfilling our mandate.

B. THE CHURCH COUNCIL

1. GOVERNANCE MANDATE

(a) The governing body of Humbercrest United Church shall be the Church Council, and all activities of the Church will be carried out by, or organized through, the Church Council and its committees.

(b) As the Court of the Pastoral Charge, the Church Council shall be generally responsible for exercising leadership in the care and oversight of the spiritual life and interests of the Pastoral Charge.

(c) Responsibilities appropriate for the Church Council meeting shall include:

(i) the general responsibility for the spiritual interests of the Pastoral Charge;

- (ii) the discipline of members;
- (iii) the receipt and transmission of proposals and appeals;
- (iv) the ordering of formal hearings;
- (v) liaison with the Presbytery;
- (vi) reporting at least annually to the Pastoral Charge;
- (vii) giving directives to the Board of Trustees; and,
- (viii) matters of pastoral relations when appropriately directed by the Pastoral Charge.

Minister's Report - Rev. Diane

Administrative ministry is not always the most visible part of church life, but it quietly supports everything we do. When things are well coordinated, people feel at ease, worship flows, and ministry becomes more life-giving rather than stressful.

Over the past month, much of the focus has been on coordinating pastoral care, strengthening and participating in our mission outreach - walk, and supporting the Annual Meeting. One of the most meaningful parts of this has been engaging the congregation more intentionally last Sunday, not just in attending, but in thinking together about who we are and what we are being called to prioritize as a church.

There has been good collaboration with the office, with Greg in music, and with those supporting worship. I have also had helpful meetings with our Devotions leaders, and those conversations are beginning to shape a more shared and thoughtful approach to how we plan worship and special services. It's encouraging to see that sense of working together grow.

Week by week, a lot happens behind the scenes, bulletins are prepared, roles are coordinated, services are shaped, and I want to especially acknowledge Chris, who has been central in holding many of these pieces together. This work is also supported by others who give their time and attention faithfully. There is a strong spirit of willingness in this congregation, and that is something we should not take for granted.

Our building continues to be active and welcoming, and that is a real gift. We are seeing the church being used in ways that reflect its role as a community space. As this grows, it also calls us to be more aware and intentional in how we coordinate and prepare, so that the experience remains smooth for everyone involved.

What stands out to me is this: we have a committed and caring community. People are willing. People show up. And there is a genuine desire to see the church do well. Our task now is to support that commitment with clearer structures, so that the work becomes lighter and more sustainable for everyone.

FYI- There has been some concern about people unsubscribing from our general mailing list, which may indicate that not all communication is connecting with everyone in the same way. As a possible response, we could consider creating a separate, opt-in mailing list for those who are interested in receiving more regular content focused on

faith and spiritual formation, such as daily reflections or weekly devotional materials. This would allow us to better match communication with interest, while reducing overload on the main congregational list.

For the coming month, the focus will be simple and intentional. Acting on the priorities discussed. More to be presented in **Follow-Up and New Business where Howard and I will be giving us Congregation feedback on Disciplined Prioritization – Next Steps**. I also want to briefly highlight a few ongoing developments.

- There is a process underway to ensure that I am able to extend pastoral support to Runnymede Health Centre, which will strengthen our presence beyond the congregation.
- The Kenyan community event has been rescheduled from the 28th to the Easter weekend, allowing for better alignment and participation.
- Planning for the Gospel Extravaganza is also ongoing, with initial coordination taking shape.
- And in the area of children's ministry, we are continuing to see encouraging progress, with growing presence and involvement, and we will keep building this in a more intentional way.
- Resuming the sweet Hour of Prayer as a monthly activity and
- Supporting all the champions in the ministries/committees.
- Focusing more on the regular membership and those interested for further engagements beyond Sunday.

For Council, your continued support in encouraging clarity, shared responsibility, and realistic prioritization will make a real difference. It helps create an environment where ministry can grow without placing too much weight on a few people.

I want to close with this: the work we are all doing is really about care, care for people's time, care for the life of the church, and care for the ministry we share. As we continue to strengthen this, we are making space for deeper connection, stronger participation, and a more sustainable future together.

Diane

Council discussed supporting the creation of a subgroup of the Beacon email list that would include general community partners: those who are interested in knowing what is going on at Humbercrest UC week to week, but not necessarily interested in receiving daily devotion guides for example. A few have unsubscribed during Lent. There seems to be a relationship to the increased frequency of emails during Lent. Council suggests double checking members of this group with Care and Welcoming or others as needed.

Follow-Up and New Business

1. **Congregation feedback on Disciplined Prioritization – Next Steps** - Rev. Diane / Howard

Disciplined Prioritization – Summary

In our discussion, we identified both life-draining and life-giving areas in the life of the church.

Life-draining activities included tea time, the annual sale, and building and grounds responsibilities, particularly snow shovelling, which often divert attention and energy. At the same time, there was appreciation for the effort leaders make in organizing these activities, often drawing in non-regular participants and the wider community. There was also openness to exploring increased paid support for some of these tasks.

Life-giving areas were clearly affirmed. These include worship, especially with more music and creative expressions such as jazz services, midweek informal gatherings like the Sweet Hour of Prayer, mission outreach, children's ministry, and pastoral care. Co-sharing of ministries was highlighted as a strength, allowing for continuity and reducing gaps. There was also encouragement to seek partnerships, with groups like the book club, Scouts, and neighbouring churches, as part of sharing the work more sustainably.

A key part of the conversation was the **acceptance that we are working with a limited number of volunteers**, and that this reality calls for focus rather than expansion.

This led to a shared **guiding principle**: The goal is not to do more, but to do what is sustainable, shared, and faithful. Every ministry decision should strengthen, not compete with the priorities listed. The following were identified as the **anchor areas** that should guide all ministry decisions as **core priority areas** clearly listed:

- **Worship** (with emphasis on music and varied expressions)
- **Pastoral Care** (with shared responsibility)
- **Children's Ministry** (intentional development and support)
- **Mission & Community Engagement** (outreach and partnerships)

To support this, a **decision rule** was agreed upon: If an initiative does not strengthen one of these core areas, it will be paused or released. It was also noted that prioritization will happen in **phases**, allowing for gradual and realistic implementation rather than abrupt change.

In terms of immediate needs, there is a clear opportunity to strengthen children's ministry by identifying at least one additional volunteer to support Linda, who is currently championing this priority.

Importantly, there was a shared understanding that it is acceptable to let go of life-draining activities without guilt, in order to focus on what gives life to the congregation.

Finally, it was agreed that progress will be reviewed around mid-October or November, with feedback gathered to guide next steps.

Diane

Howard suggested and Council agreed to discuss one or two items from each of the four priority areas, beginning with Mission, Community and Engagement and Partnerships at the April meeting and at each subsequent month. A progress re-

port will be discussed at an informal congregational meeting in late October and then again at the 2027 Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

2. Spring Sale Update – Marg

- a few people that might normally be are not available this year - Marg will call people up with a focus on folks willing to help out with events on occasion
- Posters will have a QR code that connects back to the website for details
- May 2 (day of the Sale) the committee will provide a directory with where to find all departments at the Sale. On the back will be listed info about us, our user groups and renters. Looking for Housewares and Children's Dept. leads
- Marg has communicated with Vince re advertising on SM

3. Worship Planning Schedule – Vince/Dorothy

Motion: Dorothy/Barb Carried

That the Gospel Extravaganza proceeds after costs go to the Village of Love. (Kibera, Kenya).

The Planning Team for the Extravaganza is Dorothy, Vince, Sean. Linda will be there the day of. Please give any feedback to the team to support the smooth running of this year's event.

Devotion Planning until the end of December was provided as circulated. Subject to change. Special Sundays and plans were highlighted by Dorothy and Vince.

Greg Walshaw's Coffee House Event April 19 has been named, "**PB & J Lyric Lounge: Pop, Blues and Jazz**".

Stewardship of our Resources - Treasurer – Howard on behalf of Charlie

Overall its still relatively early with no notable surprises. Some general comments include:

- Receipts tracking as expected although disappointingly no recital/recording activity at the end of February
- A couple of personnel costs are as expected but higher than last year as some of the current resources weren't in place at that time
- We did receive a large HST rebate in February (as expected) leading to the negative expense
- Mission givings are about where we would expect
- No unusual cheques of note

Motion: Dorothy/Aileen. Carried

To approve the Treasurer's financial statements as circulated.

Our Shared Ministries

Community Team - Barb

CARE, WELCOMING AND VISITATION COMMITTEE

March 10 - Sharon chaired a meeting to discuss/decide the recipients of Easter tulip plants and/or cards, encouragement or thinking of you cards.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

March 8 - Refreshments provided for our Annual Meeting.

March 15 - Coffee and Tea time was hosted by the Affirm Team. Brian brought pies to celebrate Pi Day!!

March 22 - Refreshments were provided for the "Pathway For Disciplined Prioritization" meeting following the service.

Devotion Team – Dorothy/Vince

Refer to #3 under New Business.

Facilities Team - Howard

OPEN PROJECTS LIST

- 1) Outdoor electronic sign – on track
- 2) Boiler system ionizer – planning stage
- 3) Roofing – winter storm repairs - spring
- 4) 2013 Canon Printer replacement – proposal being revised
- 5) Lock

OPEN PROJECTS DETAILS:

- 1) OUTDOOR SIGN: City of Toronto permitting and BP Heritage District approval are almost complete. Sign construction planned for ~~March~~ April. Installation for ~~early~~ late April.
- 2) IONIZER: Follow-up request for a formal quote made 20Feb ~\$5,800
- 3) ROOF REPAIRS: South gutters torn down by ice. Leaks in sanctuary & Minister's office closet, Marg met with roofers late January. Quote on repairs pending better weather
- 4) OFFICE PRINTER: Canon is revising proposal and I am seeking a second quote
- 5) LOCK: Thom exploring next steps on thumb latch fix.

ODDS & SODS

- 1) Accessibility washroom door closer was repaired
- 2) New shutoff valves and connector hoses were installed in Ladies Washroom D.
- 3) Drain on flat roof plugged with leaves led to floods in Rev. Diane's office closet twice – Feb and March.

CLOSED PROJECTS

- 1) Amplifier replacement part purchased and installed \$1,977.50 pd 28Jan26

2) KEYS request for a humidifier turned down. KEYS informed.

Resources - Marg G.

Uses of Halls

Mar. 7 Brassinators Concert – no charge

Mar. 8 Piano Recital -Sanctuary and reception

Mar.22 Celebration of Life rental Heritage Hall 1-8 pm

Mar.23 Celebration of Life Rental of Heritage Hall

Long Term rentals

We are starting our review of rental fees for one time rentals and our seasonal rentals for example Tai Chi. This review will also include possible ideas for improvements to enhance their programs or space.

There has been a request from West Toronto BIC for 21 – 30 more chairs + dollies. Howard is exploring used ones as the black vinyl chairs are now \$75. each. Also, a request that the east hall be clear and ready for use when they arrive. KEYS has been asked to stack all their tables and put excess furniture in the kitchen every Friday.

Trustees - Libbie No Report

M and P - Aileen

A note about Rev. Diane's vacation time – Diane is planning on taking her remaining 19 days of vacation in June and/or potentially carrying a week or two over until July or August, 2026 (specific dates will be shared in the near future). We are making this allowance for this year as Rev. Diane becomes familiar with the UCC pastoral year (July 1 to June 30) for vacation timing.

Diane will be using a big part of her 2026 to 2027 vacation time, which begins on July 1, 2026, to go home to Kenya for the graduation ceremony of her PhD program in late October/early November 2026.

Adjournment - 8:24 pm.

Next meeting: April 28, 2026 in person, 7 pm