

Humbercrest UC Council Approved Minutes

July 7, 2026, 7:00 pm

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

Regrets:

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement - Rev. Diane

Inclusivity Checklist - Howard

Prayer - Libbie

Administrative Ministry of the Church - (5 min.)

Motion: Barb/Aileen

Carried

That Council approve the minutes of the May 26, 2026 meeting.

Motion: Dorothy/Charlie

Carried

That Council approve the Agenda as amended.

Correspondence:

Chair's Report - Howard - no report

Minister's Report - Rev. Diane

Vacation and Renewal: I was away on vacation from June 14–30. This time away has been refreshing and restorative, providing an opportunity for rest, reflection, and renewal. I return with renewed energy and gratitude for the ministry and community we share at Humbercrest United Church.

Intercultural Ministry Grant: I am pleased to report that Humbercrest United Church has been awarded an **Intercultural Diversity Micro Grant of \$1,000** through the Shining Waters Region. The grant will support intercultural ministry initiatives within our congregation and wider community, helping us deepen relationships across cultures and strengthen our commitment to inclusion, belonging, and justice.

Regional Intercultural Engagement: On June 20, 2026, I attended a regional gathering on intercultural engagement hosted by the Shining Waters Region at the Uganda Martyrs community. The gathering provided an opportunity to share experiences, learn from diverse ministry contexts, and

explore practical ways of strengthening intercultural relationships within our churches and communities.

Kigocho Planning: Planning for the next Kigocho gathering will take place on June 28, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This gathering continues to provide a meaningful space for cultural connection, worship, fellowship, and community building.

Emerging Opportunities for Intercultural Ministry

Through conversations within our community and region, several areas of potential ministry have emerged:

1. Youth Life Skills Boot Camp (Concept Proposal)

There is growing concern regarding the vulnerability of some young boys and youth to substance abuse, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and other forms of exploitation. As a next step, we are exploring ways Humbercrest might partner with existing community organizations, parents, and caregivers to support youth through mentorship, education, and relationship-building. As part of the ongoing development of Humbercrest's intercultural ministry, I would like Council to consider exploring the possibility of an

2. Intercultural Youth Life Skills Boot Camp for teenagers, potentially in August.

The vision is to create an intergenerational and intercultural program that brings together youth, parents, grandparents, elders, and community mentors to share practical life skills, cultural wisdom, and Christian values. The program would focus on equipping young people with skills for everyday life while fostering belonging, resilience, and mutual respect across cultures.

Potential areas of learning include:

- Practical life skills such as cooking, household responsibilities, budgeting, and time management.
- Character formation, including respect, responsibility, teamwork, and healthy decision-making.
- Career exploration through conversations with professionals from diverse backgrounds.
- Intercultural learning through shared stories, traditions, food, music, and faith experiences.

- Family and mentorship conversations that strengthen relationships between youth, parents, and elders.

3. "A Bowl of Soup" – immigrants Support Initiative: We are also considering a newcomer-focused initiative tentatively called **A Bowl of Soup**. This would create welcoming spaces where newcomers can gather for conversation, support, and community connection. Particular attention would be given to the mental health challenges associated with immigration, family separation, social isolation, and adapting to life in Canada. Through shared meals and storytelling, participants would be encouraged to build relationships, access resources, and experience a sense of belonging.

These ideas are still in the exploratory stage, and I respectfully seek Council's support to continue discerning their potential. I look forward to engaging the Council in prayerful conversation as we consider how Humbercrest might respond to these emerging needs within our community and, with your approval, further develop these initiatives into practical ministries.

Follow-Up and New Business (30 min.)

1. Disciplined Prioritization Update (recurring) - Rev. Diane

- Howard is preparing a tracking system to show progress in the 4 priority areas, to be discussed with Rev. Diane. Ex. Children's Ministry, Action is Blessing of the Backpacks, Sept. 7
- Worship - use the committee and leaders we already have in place (Devotion Team Co-Chairs)
- the idea is not to do more, but to focus more effectively on alignment with priorities
- Pastoral Care - Visitation will communicate who they are connecting to, with Rev. Diane
- Community Engagement - no separate champion at present

2. To discuss next steps regarding Rev. Diane's successful grant application.

- Diane has met with Mama's Boys (#1)
- suggest liaising with Finding Missing Black Boys
- Moms and mentors from the Kenyan community are interested in mentoring their youth (#2)
- do we have the capacity to offer the Immigrant Support Initiative? (#3)
- need a team to organize - Howard, Vince and Rev. Diane (Linda as able)
- Council thanked Rev Diane for taking the initiative in these areas

Motion: Howard/Libbie

Carried

That Council accept the \$1000 Regional grant under our priority of Community Partnership and Engagement.

3. Wedding & Funeral Policies: - Dorothy/Vince

Motion: Dorothy/Libbie

Carried

That Council approve the final updated Funeral Policy as circulated July 3.

Updated 2026 Final

Humbercrest United Church Funeral, Memorial and Celebration of Life Guide for Families

1. Context and Purpose

Preparing for a funeral or a celebration of life for someone we love is never easy. In the midst of loss, we may experience a wide range of emotions. During this time, the support of a caring community gathering can be deeply meaningful as we grieve and plan a service that honours the life of the person who has died. It is a time to seek comfort, strength and courage, and to be reminded that we do not walk this journey alone.

A funeral or memorial service is a time of gathering, reflection and remembrance. Together, we give thanks for a life lived, even as we grieve. Many people find meaning in shared rituals, stories and quiet moments, which can help us hold both sorrow and gratitude, and sustain us as we face loss.

Humbercrest is an open and inclusive community that welcomes people of all backgrounds, beliefs, identities, and traditions. Services may be spiritual, secular or a blend of both, reflecting the values, beliefs and wishes of the person who has died and those who gather to remember them. Our sanctuary offers a warm and historic setting for a funeral or celebration of life, and our reception spaces are ideal for family gatherings. We uphold the dignity of every person. We ask that all who use our space value and respect this spirit of inclusivity.

The Worship Ministry of Humbercrest United Church has developed this guide to assist you in planning a service that reflects dignity for the deceased and compassion for those who mourn, in keeping with the United Church of Canada practices within the Greater Toronto Area. This guide includes elements of pastoral care, practical administrative logistics, facility use and honoraria to make your experience meaningful.

2. Principles

1. To create a meaningful and respectful gathering that honours the life of the person who has died and provides space for reflection, remembrance and gratitude, and to create space for moments of connection, meaning and quiet presence.
 2. To support families, friends and all who gather with compassion, flexibility, and respect for diverse needs, traditions and beliefs.
 3. To embody a spirit of openness, inclusion and care in both language and practice, welcoming people of all backgrounds and life experiences.
 4. To ensure transparency and consistency in suggested fees, while striving to remain accessible to all.
-

3. Eligibility

Funeral and memorial services may be provided for members and adherents of the congregation, individuals with a pastoral or historical connection to the church, and members of the wider community (subject to availability and minister approval). Priority scheduling will be given to members and adherents.

4. Role of the Minister

The Minister will meet with the family to help to plan the service. They will provide pastoral care before the service and, where possible, afterward, and will lead the service itself. Services may be held at the church, funeral home, and/or interment site.

In keeping with the practices of the United Church of Canada, the Minister ensures that the service is respectful, meaningful and appropriate for a gathering in this community, while honouring the life of the person who has died. The Minister retains responsibility and decision-making for the content and flow of the service. However, within this framework, there is much flexibility and personal touches are welcome to reflect traditions, identities, beliefs and desire for inclusivity.

The Minister will invite the family to share stories and information about their loved one's life. You may be asked to consider music (sacred or secular), readings such as scripture, poetry or other meaningful texts, and whether family or friends would like to offer a eulogy or tribute. Practical details such as live-streaming/recording, visitations, approaches to the casket, arrangements at the interment site will be discussed with the family/funeral home as needed and in consultation with the Church Administrator.

Printed bulletins may be arranged through the church or funeral home (see Appendix for example of content)

If the family wishes to involve another Minister or Celebrant, this can be discussed with the current Minister. If greeters are requested at the entrance to the church this can be arranged by the Church.

There is no specific fee for the Minister although participants may wish to consider an honoraria. A range of honorariums for Ministers of \$800 - \$1,200 is reflective of common amounts across United Church congregations in the Toronto area. All amounts are suggested and may need to reflect scope and context.

5. Music

Music often plays an important role in a funeral or memorial service. Selections should be meaningful to those gathered and appropriate to the tone of the service, while respecting the reflective and communal nature of the space.

The church's Music Director is engaged via the Minister. Sacred or secular selections, recorded music, and solos are all appropriate and may be included in consultation with the Minister and Music Director. The Music Director is available to assist in this regard, as needed. If they are unavailable for the service, they can suggest an alternative option. The Music Director will also contact a soloist or the church choir, if requested. Guest musicians are welcome but require approval in discussion with the Minister. Permission is required to use the organ or the Steinway piano.

The ranges of honoraria below are reflective of common ranges across United Church congregations in the Toronto area. All amounts are suggested and may need to reflect scope and context.

- Organist/Pianist Honorarium: \$250 – \$400
- Soloist/Instrumentalist Honorarium: \$100 – \$400

6. Use of Church Facilities

The Church Administrator is responsible for booking and coordination. Available spaces for use may include the sanctuary (funeral or memorial service), a hall for a reception (e.g. Heritage Hall, Friendship Room) and a kitchen if required. The family will work with the Church Administrator to discuss availability and custodial care for the day (opening, closing, cleaning, etc.).

If the family is considering a reception, there are numerous options, logistics of which can be discussed with the Church Administrator.

All use is subject to availability and staff coordination. Fees will be discussed based on catering expenses. Custodial fee covers custodial services at the reception.

7. Facility Fees

- Sanctuary Rental: \$500 – \$750
- Reception Hall (not including food/refreshment): \$250 – \$500
- Custodial/Setup/Cleaning Fee/Garbage Removal: \$150 – \$300
- Bulletins/printing: \$75 - \$150

8. Pastoral Discretion and Accessibility

No funeral will be declined due to financial hardship. The Minister, in consultation with the Church Council or designated authority, may reduce or waive fees, adjust honoraria, or offer alternative arrangements.

This approach reflects the United Church's commitment to justice, compassion, and accessibility, ensuring a pastoral approach rather than a transactional engagement.

9. Payment

The church will provide a single consolidated invoice for facility fees only. Honorariums should be arranged directly with the individuals

Payment is typically requested prior to or on the day of the service. HST will be applied where required (e.g., facility rentals, depending on church practice and CRA requirement).

10. Donations to the Church

As part of a caring and supportive community, some family and friends may wish to make a donation to the Church to express gratitude and in memory of the deceased. If the family chooses to invite memorial donations, cards and envelopes can be made available during visitation and the service.¹

Importantly, donations are always voluntary and distinct from fees, ensuring that there is no expectation or misunderstanding of “paying for ministry”. Humbercrest is committed to being accessible to all, regardless of financial means. Official tax receipts will be issued in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency regulations.

Suggested wording for obituary notices can be provided by the church office upon request.

¹ [*for internal use only*] In memoriam donations are documented and coded by the regular Counters with noting for tax receipting. Counters also inform Church Trustees, who ensure the donation is directed to the correct fund and letter of appreciation sent to the donor.

11. Other Considerations

Accessibility. The building includes an elevator and accessible washroom. Please advise us of any special requirements.

Inclusivity. Humbercrest is an affirming and safe space, as we live in solidarity with many peoples (e.g. LGBTQ+, Indigenous). You may see flags or symbols to honour these peoples, please do not alter these expressions of support.

Recording or Livestreaming. Humbercrest is able to record or livestream a funeral service if desired. Please discuss with the Minister and Church Administrator.

Parking Arrangements: Parking is limited to street parking on neighbourhood streets

Flowers and Memorials: Flowers and memorials can be placed in the church shortly before the service and removed following the service. The family is welcome to leave arrangements for the sanctuary. Appropriate memorial items are also welcomed, please alert the Minister and Church Administrator.

12. Approval

This guide will be reviewed periodically to reflect and respond to changes in practices and norms, congregational capacity, inflationary costs and guidance of the United Church of Canada.

Approved by Church Council on July 7, 2026.

Appendix:

Sample Order of Service (United Church Funeral/Memorial)

A flexible template; all elements may be adapted in consultation with the Minister.

Funeral or Memorial Service for [Full Name]

Prelude Music offered as people gather

Words of Welcome and Acknowledgment of Territory

- Welcome to family and friends
- Land acknowledgment (as appropriate in United Church practice)

Opening Sentences or Scripture
(e.g., John 14:1–3, Psalm 23)

Opening Prayer or Reflection, Lighting of Candles

Music (e.g. hymn or other secular piece)

Remembering [Name]

- Words of remembrance (family or friends)
- Possible readings (poetry, scripture, or meaningful texts)

Scripture Readings or Other Readings

- Hebrew Bible / Old Testament
- Psalm (read or sung)
- New Testament (Epistle or Gospel)

Reflection / Homily

Given by the Minister

Music

- Solo, anthem, congregational hymn or secular selection

Prayers of the People or Shared Words of Caring and Hope

- Thanksgiving for the life of the deceased, prayers for family and community, The Lord's Prayer (optional, as appropriate)
Or if a more secular service, Thanksgiving for life of the deceased / reflections / shared intentions for the family

Commendation and Farewell

- Words of commendation
- Blessing

Closing Hymn

Benediction

Postlude

Music as people depart

Optional Elements

- Candle lighting or other ritual
 - Photo/video tribute (subject to facility capability and approval)
 - Graveside committal (may occur separately)
-

Motion: Vince/Charlie

Carried

That Council approve the final updated Wedding Policy as circulated July 3.
Many thanks to Cheryl and Greg for their input re both these policies.

Original 2018, Updated 2026 Final

Humbercrest United Church Wedding Guide for Couples

1. Context and Purpose

Congratulations! We are delighted that you are considering Humbercrest United Church for your wedding.

Preparing for a wedding is both joyful and meaningful. It is a time of celebration, anticipation and love as two people prepare to make commitments to one another in the presence of family, friends and community. A wedding service marks an important moment in life and creates lasting memories for the couple and all who gather to witness and support their union. Whether rooted in spiritual faith traditions, a more secular approach, or a blend of both, the service is intended to reflect the values, beliefs and hopes of the couple. Through words, music, ritual and shared presence, the community gathers to celebrate the commitment.

Humbercrest is an open, inclusive and affirming community that welcomes people of all backgrounds, beliefs, identities and traditions. We celebrate the dignity and worth of every person and are honoured to support couples in creating a wedding ceremony that reflects their relationship, values and vision for the future. Our sanctuary offers a warm and historic setting for weddings, and our reception spaces may also be available for gatherings and celebrations. We ask that all who use our space value and respect this spirit of inclusivity.

The Worship Ministry of Humbercrest United Church has developed this guide to assist couples in planning a wedding service that reflects love, dignity, joy and authenticity, in keeping with the practices of the United Church of Canada within the Greater Toronto Area. This guide includes elements of ministerial support, practical administrative logistics, facility use and honoraria to help make your planning experience welcoming and clear.

2. Principles

1. To create a meaningful wedding celebration that honours the couple's commitment and reflects their values, hopes and relationship.
2. To support couples, families and guests with flexibility, respect and joyfulness of diverse traditions, identities and beliefs.

3. To embody a spirit of openness, inclusion and care in words and actions, welcoming people of all backgrounds and life experiences, consistent with the United Church of Canada
4. To ensure transparency and consistency in fees and honoraria, while striving to remain accessible to all.

3. Eligibility

Wedding services may be provided for members and adherents of the congregation, individuals with a pastoral or historical connection to the church, and members of the wider community (subject to availability and minister approval). Priority scheduling will be given to members and adherents.

Couples seeking marriage at Humbercrest must meet all applicable legal requirements for marriage in the Province of Ontario, including obtaining a valid marriage licence.

4. Role of the Minister

The Minister will meet with the couple to discuss their hopes and plans for the wedding service. The Minister will officiate the wedding ceremony and, where appropriate, may also participate in or attend the rehearsal.

In keeping with the practices of the United Church of Canada, the Minister ensures that the ceremony is respectful and meaningful for a gathering in this community, while honouring the individuality of the couple. The Minister retains responsibility and decision-making for the content and flow of the service. However, within this framework, there is considerable flexibility, and personal touches are encouraged to reflect traditions, identities, beliefs and the couple's desire for inclusivity.

The Minister will invite the couple to share aspects of their love story, values and hopes for marriage. Couples may be asked to consider music (sacred or secular), readings such as scripture, poetry or other meaningful texts, vows, symbolic rituals and the involvement of family or friends in the ceremony.

Alternatively, couples may choose to engage their own Officiant, Elder, or Celebrant. In such cases, that person must contact the Humbercrest United Church Minister and/or the church administrator in advance to review facility expectations, rehearsal arrangements, and any requirements related to the use of church space. All guest officiants are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values of Humbercrest United Church as an inclusive and affirming community.

Practical details such as rehearsal timing, live-streaming, recording, photography, videography, processional arrangements and accessibility considerations will be

discussed with the couple and in consultation with the Church Administrator and/or Wedding Facilitator.

Printed bulletins or programs may be arranged through the church or independently by the couple (see Appendix for example content).

There is no specific fee for the Minister although participants may wish to consider an honoraria. A range of honorariums for Ministers of \$800 - \$1,200 is reflective of common amounts across United Church congregations in the Toronto area. All amounts are suggested and may need to reflect scope and context.

5. Music

Music plays an important role in a wedding ceremony. Sacred or secular selections, recorded music and solo performances are all appropriate. Selections should be meaningful to the couple, while respecting the communal and celebratory nature of the space.

Couples may bring their own music or arrange for the church's Music Director for planning or for accompaniment. If unavailable, they can suggest an alternative option. Upon request, the Music Director may also coordinate soloists, instrumentalists or the church choir. Recorded music may require you to hire speakers suitable for the space.

The Steinway piano and organ are special antique instruments with beautiful sound. Guest musicians are welcome to use them with permission.

The ranges of honoraria below are reflective of common ranges across United Church congregations in the Toronto area. All amounts are suggested and may need to reflect scope and context.

- Organist/Pianist Honorarium: \$250 – \$400
- Soloist/Instrumentalist Honorarium: \$100 – \$400

6. Use of Church Facilities

The Church Administrator is responsible for scheduling and coordination of the spaces. Available spaces for use may include the sanctuary (wedding ceremony), a hall for receptions or gatherings (e.g. Heritage Hall, Friendship Room), and kitchen facilities if required. The Administrator also schedules custodial care for the day ((opening, closing, cleaning, etc.) related to the event.

Once the booking is confirmed (at signing of Agreement and deposit receipt), the couple will work with a church-appointed Wedding Facilitator to assist with logistics and

coordinate access, set up, rehearsal, etc. This individual is a volunteer, not intended to perform any physical work associated with the event; the Facilitator's role is supportive, supervisory and administrative.

All use is subject to availability and staff coordination. Fees will be discussed based on space and time requirements. You are requested to stay within the church zones outlined in your agreement. Alcohol is permitted with a liquor license prior to the wedding.

7. Facility Fees

- Sanctuary Rental: \$1,000 – \$1,500
- Wedding Rehearsal Coordination: Included
- Reception Hall (not including food/refreshment): \$400 – \$800
- Custodial/Setup/Cleaning Fee/Garbage Removal: \$150 – \$300
- Bulletins/printing: \$75 – \$150

8. Pastoral Discretion and Accessibility

A wedding inquiry will not be declined solely due to financial hardship. The Minister, in consultation with the Church Council or designated authority, may reduce or waive fees, adjust honoraria, or explore alternative arrangements where appropriate.

This approach reflects the United Church's commitment to justice, compassion and accessibility, ensuring a pastoral rather than a transactional relationship.

9. Payment

The church will provide a single consolidated invoice for facility fees only. Honorariums should be arranged directly with the individuals.

A deposit may be requested at the time of booking, with final payment typically due prior to or on the day of the wedding. HST will be applied where required (e.g. facility rentals, depending on CRA requirements).

10. Donations to the Church

As part of a caring community, some couples or families may wish to make a donation to the Church in gratitude for the ministry and support provided through the wedding process.

Importantly, donations are always voluntary and distinct from fees, ensuring there is no expectation or misunderstanding of “paying for ministry.” Humbercrest is committed to being accessible to all, regardless of financial means.

Official tax receipts will be issued for donations in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency regulations.

11. Other Considerations

Accessibility. The building includes an elevator and accessible washroom. Please advise us of any special requirements.

Inclusivity. Humbercrest is an affirming and safe space, as we live in solidarity with many peoples (e.g. LGBTQ+, Indigenous). You may see flags or symbols to honour these peoples, please do not alter these expressions of support.

Recording or Livestreaming. Humbercrest can record or livestream wedding services if desired. Please discuss arrangements with the Minister and Church Administrator.

Photography/Videography. Photography/videography are welcome, provided they are conducted respectfully and do not disrupt the ceremony. Specific guidelines may be discussed with the Minister or other Officiant (e.g. often the officiant requests no flash).

Flowers and Decorations. Flowers and decorations may be placed in the church shortly before the ceremony and removed afterward unless otherwise arranged. The couple is welcome to leave floral arrangements for the sanctuary following the wedding if desired.

Decorations must not damage church property or interfere with safety and accessibility requirements. Candles or other open flames require prior approval.

Parking Arrangements. Street parking is available on neighbouring streets, but it is limited.

Wedding Rehearsal. A rehearsal is often scheduled in advance of the wedding date to review the order of service, processions and logistics with participants. Please indicate your intent to the Minister and Church Administrator.

Confetti or Rice. Please do not use inside the building.

Air Conditioning. The church does not have A/C. Ceiling fans are available during warmer months, and bottled water for musicians and officiants is recommended.

12. Approval

This guide will be reviewed periodically to reflect and respond to changes in practices and norms, congregational capacity, inflationary costs and any guidance of the United Church of Canada.

Approved by Church Council on July 7, 2026.

Appendix:

Sample Order of Service (United Church Wedding)

A flexible template; elements may be adapted in consultation with the Minister.

Wedding for [Full Names]

Prelude music as people gather

Entrance of Wedding Party

Words of Welcome and Acknowledgment of Territory

Opening Words / Scripture (e.g. 1 Corinthians 13, Ruth 1:16–17, selected poetry or meaningful readings)

Opening Prayer

Music (solo, instrumental) if desired

Declaration of Intent

- Questions to the couple regarding their commitment and intention to marry
- Possible readings (poetry, scripture, or meaningful texts)

Reflection / Homily

Given by the Minister

Exchange of Vows and Rings

Pronouncement of Marriage

- Kiss, lighting of unity candle or other symbolic ritual (optional)
- Blessing of the couple, family and community and/or shared words of hope and encouragement

Signing the Register

- Music (solo, instrumental)
- Blessing

Presentation of the Couple

Benediction

Postlude

Music as people depart

Optional Elements

- As requested by the couple

4. Electronic Sign Update and Content Guidelines – Howard on behalf of Cheryl

Motion: Libbie/Vince

Carried

That Council approve the recommendations for content guidelines/boundaries and accountabilities for content posting as amended. See below.

(Specified that accountability/support for the Church Administrator is to Council through M & P and that the Communications Support Rep (Vince) will be back up to the Church Administrator in this task.). Thank you Chris and Vince.

New Outdoor Sign Update - Howard

Objectives Today:

1. Update for awareness on status of sign installation and 'go live' timeline, and decision on use of old sign
2. Input and decision on content guidelines/goalposts/boundaries and accountabilities for content posting

4 QUESTIONS for COUNCIL:

Does Council wish to approve the relocation of the old sign?

What input do you have to the proposed guideline?

Do you agree with the proposal to 'learn by doing' for the first few months, using the guideline as the framework that Council will review and evolve, based on HUC and community feedback?

Do you agree with proposal to have single point of accountability for content as **Church Administrator, with back up Communications Support Rep?**
Accountable to Council through M & P?

1. Installation Update

The City of Toronto and the Heritage District have approved of the new sign and we have received the Permit (saved on HUC shared drive). Fantastic news; we can now proceed.

The installation phase includes several key steps: staking the footprint (end June), constructing the sign (mid-July), installing the footings and electrical connection (mid-July), taking down current sign and shrubs (end July), installing new sign (end July), training on tech (early August), 'go live' (mid-Aug), landscaping (end Aug). Safety on site will be paramount and has been organized by the contractor.

It will likely be possible to relocate the old sign, if Council wishes, in the vicinity of the East Door as a semi-permanent directory for our user groups. It carries a bit of nostalgia, and with some minor refurbishing, it could be a meaningful and useful part of programming and initiatives.

2. Guidelines for Sign Content Development and Management

Humbercrest's new digital sign is a public-facing communication tool intended to welcome the community, promote participation in our church life, and reflect the mission, values and priorities of the church. A draft guideline – attached below - is intended to provide a general framework, supported by good judgment and accountability, while recognizing that the church will "learn by doing" and adjust the approach over time.

The guideline is built around several key principles:

- Content is intended as a community-facing communication tool

- Content will support the church's mission, ministries, events, user group highlights and community engagement
- Content will be welcoming, inclusive, positive, timely, and meaningful
- Messages will be readable and understandable within a few seconds.
- Judgment will be used to prioritize the most important and relevant messages each week

In the past, our existing sign has had some excellent messages that make people pause and think, even with the limits of a manual sign. With the new electronic sign, we will have more flexibility and more opportunity to vary the content, with messages that often give people something positive to think about, in contrast to daily news that can feel negative or discouraging. As an initial operating model, the sign will generally display 6–8 messages with a display time of approximately 8–12 seconds per slide (a useful externally benchmarked standard) – ie. 1-1.5 minutes for a full rotation of content.

The Church Administrator, Chris Higgins, is proposed to manage the sign content (and is excited to do so!) using the guideline attached to support sound decision-making while allowing sufficient discretion to operate effectively, with **back up provided by Communications Support Rep**, Vince Ciarlo.

Council is asked to adopt the 'learn by doing' mindset, regularly review the guideline effectiveness over the first few months and adjust practices based on feedback, as everyone gains experience with an exciting, new digital communication tool.

DRAFT GUIDELINE FOR EXTERIOR DIGITAL SIGN COMMUNICATIONS

OBJECTIVE OF THIS GUIDELINE

This guideline is intended to assist the Administrator(s) responsible for managing content on Humbercrest's exterior digital sign. The purpose is to ensure the sign is welcoming, informative, effective and aligned with the mission and values of the Humbercrest United Church community.

Recognizing that Humbercrest is new to digital sign communication, this guideline is intended as a starting framework. Council will evaluate effectiveness, gather feedback and adjust practices over time.

GOALS OF THE DIGITAL SIGN

The sign is a public communication tool and will:

- welcome members, visitors and the broader community, encouraging participation and connection
- promote awareness of worship services, programs and events by HUC and our user groups
- reflect the church mission, values and ministry
- provide timely and relevant information
- maintain a positive and professional public presence

The sign will not function as a complete bulletin board of all activities. Detailed communication through other channels such as website, newsletters, social media, email and printed materials will remain important.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In assessing appropriateness of content, the following principles will be considered:

- Relevance – is the message relevant to the congregation and the community?
- Connection – does it invite participation and connection with the wider community?
- Mission – does the message support the mission, ministry and values of inclusivity of Humbercrest and United Church of Canada?
- Tone and Accessibility – would someone unfamiliar with Humbercrest understand the message? Does it use language, a sense of humanity, inclusiveness and perhaps an occasional gentle bit of humour that connects with everyday life?
- Timeliness – is the information current and actionable?
- Simple – can the message be understood within a few seconds?

It is also important to describe what is NOT appropriate to set boundaries. As broad examples, anything that could be seen to be political, divisive or controversial issues unrelated to church ministry, language or content that lacks inclusivity, personal announcements, and commercial advertising for private businesses (outside of existing user groups) would not be appropriate. As we are in a learning phase, propose not to promote for other external organizations beyond our user groups and those we are directly engaged with on programs.

CONTENT PRIORITIES

There are four broad topic areas that can guide our decisions on what content will be shared and with a proposed weighting:

- 1. Invitation (HIGH priority and amount of content, ~40%):**
 - a. Purpose – community informed and welcomed
 - b. Example – welcome message, worship info, community outreach initiative, seasonal celebration, public invitation to participate
- 2. Events and Outreach Activities (MEDIUM priority and amount of content ~25%):**
 - a. Purpose – encourage participation
 - b. Examples – concerts, food drive, community meals, special cultural program, Truth and Reconciliation day, Affirm video series, social justice guest lecturer etc
- 3. Ministries and User Groups (MEDIUM priority and amount of content ~25%):**
 - a. Purpose – showcase breadth of opportunities to engage
 - b. Examples – user group major events, youth ministry, senior activity, volunteer opportunities
- 4. Inspirational Message (LOW priority and amount of content ~10%)**
 - a. Purpose – faith, hope and values
 - b. Examples – scripture, seasonal quote, encouraging message

DESIGN STANDARDS

Message. People typically view the sign while driving, walking, or cycling. Communicate quickly and clearly. One primary message per slide. Max 10-15 words. Max 3 lines. Use concise language.

Good:

“Community BBQ Sat, Jul 12, 4pm
Everyone Welcome”

Poor:

“Please join us for an annual BBQ where there will be food, games, music and activities for all ages.”

Readability. Large, clear fonts.

Colour. High contrast between text and background. Limit to 2-3 colours/slide. Simple backgrounds. Avoid neon.

Images/Graphics. Animation/graphics only if enhance message. No flashing graphics.

Timing and Rotation:

- 8-12 seconds/slide is a benchmarked standard, allowing time to read while maintaining attention
- Only 6-8 slides in rotation is ideal – a complete cycle lasts 1-1.5 minutes. 10 slides max (e.g. Christmas, major event). More than 10 messages compete with each other and content should be prioritized rather than extending the rotation.
- 8AM – 8PM only, sign brightness adjusted automatically for time of day

OPERATION STANDARDS

Content suggestions can be submitted by congregation members and user groups to the Administrator. The Administrator has final decision to approve, edit or reject requests for sign space, within the boundaries of this guideline. The Administrator is encouraged to ask for advice from Council and the Minister if advice is needed.

The Administrator will:

- Review content at least weekly
- Remove expired information promptly
- Craft new content and regularly refresh recurring content avoid staleness
- Apply judgment and prioritization based on the framework if content requests are oversubscribed, ie. “not this week” or “let’s choose another communication format”
- Monitor community and congregational feedback
- Keep a balanced mix of content categories
- Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of messaging
- Apply the ‘publishing test’ before publishing a slide:
 1. Can it be understood in five seconds?
 2. Is it relevant to the community around Humbercrest?
 3. Would a first-time visitor understand it?
 4. Does it support the church’s mission and reputation?

5. Is it among the most important messages currently competing for sign space?

No personal information will be communicated on the sign. Photographs of identifiable individuals requires written consent and all postings must be company with all privacy and copyright laws.

COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The church recognizes that effective use of the digital sign will develop through “learn by doing”

The Administrator is encouraged to experiment thoughtfully with message content (clarity, invitation, mission), learn from community response and recommend improvements to Council.

These guidelines are intended to support good judgment rather than replace it. Dialogue is important. Where uncertainty exists, the Administrator may seek guidance from Council or the Minister. An annual review of these guidelines should be conducted by Council. Questions will naturally arise around

As inspiration, assuming the sign is up and running in mid-August, a suggested starting rotation might look something like:

Slide 1: church identify, service time, contact info (“permanent”, changed infrequently)

Slide 2 and 3: upcoming major events (blessing of the backpacks!, back to school bible study, etc), or a “help wanted” volunteer opportunity

Slide 4 and 5: ministries and user group highlights (sign up for Rainbow Songs, KEYS walk, opera concert, BIC Sun at 10:15)

Slide 6: inspiration quote of the week about hopeful new beginnings

5. New Heritage Hall Piano – Howard

Three Possible Care Plans for the donated Steinway in Heritage Hall

Background: In April, Chris was contacted by the executor of the estate of Eva Michalak regarding the potential for bequeathing a Steinway piano to Humbercrest. Eva was a former member of HUC and an active contributor to our music ministry. Chris shared this information with Marg Garrie and me. Marg because of her potential to have known Eva as a member of choir in addition to Marg’s role on the Rental Committee and B&G. Me as Chair of Council. I saw the potential to upgrade the quality of the piano sound in two halls (Heritage and East) while recognizing the music ministry contributions of two past members.

Outcome: In hindsight, I should have brought a decision to accept a piano to Council for discussion and approval. My decision criteria of no cost to HUC and minimal impact on Heritage Hall floor space & functionality did not consider the potential for higher ongoing maintenance and future repair costs versus the existing piano.

Timelines:

Early May

Three possible paths forward:

- 1) Basic care plan – annual tuning.
- 2) Velvet Glove care plan – purchase and installation of humidifier system plus semi-annual tuning.
- 3) Put the piano up for adoption.

Basic care plan

- Annual tuning in the range of \$160. Minimal if any incremental cost versus the piano that was moved to East Hall
- Quality of piano will degrade over 5-10 years.
- Piano will need to be replaced (free donation?) or repaired (\$10,000-\$15,000)

Velvet Glove Plan

- Purchase and installation of a Damp-chaser / Piano Life Saver system - \$1,463.35
- System includes humidifier, dehumidifier rods, control unit, water tank etc
- Annual costs of \$30-80 for water treatment pads and maintenance supplies
- Semi-annual tuning @ \$160 x 2 = \$320
- Vinyl custom piano cover to protect against liquids - \$800
- Major repair costs 10-20 years down the road – see appraisal report

Put the piano up for adoption

- Cost of moving out the piano and cost of moving in a replacement (free) piano
- Time involved in seeking a good home
- No control over future care of Steinway so how is that different from option 1: basic care plan

NB Regarding Option 3, usually, the recipient would pay for the cost of moving a piano to a new location. If well maintained an additional option to appraise and ask a house like Lowry's to sell it for us, might be a possibility.

Following discussion, Council agreed to:

-ask Trustees to fund upfront costs of the HH piano humidification system and proper protection and cover. Libbie to take to Trustees in September.

-ask Chris to create proper LARGE signage on the piano indicating that nothing should be set on it, that no one should move it, only HUC personnel, and that only authorized pianists should play it.

-consider physical barrier around it (pylons for instance) owing to user groups in Heritage Hall

-Aileen (M & P) will ask Greg whether he would add this piano to his responsibilities, along with the organ and sanctuary piano.

Rental use of the piano will be monitored and a decision made within two to three years regarding its suitability for the space and our capacity to care for it. We appreciate the donation from the Michalak family but are aware that its future upkeep may be beyond us, based on the Paul Hahn appraisal as circulated.

6. Gospel Extravaganza – Rev. Diane, Charlie

- On Sunday May 31st, Humbercrest United Church (“HUC”) hosted the Gospel Extravaganza, a musical performance intended to raise funds through ticket sales and donations for the Village of Love Canada – Kenya Program”
- HUC intended that net proceeds from the event would be forwarded to Village of Love Canada
- Village of Love Canada is a volunteer organization in Canada that raises funds for Kenya. On their website, they note they are not a registered charity but “As of January 1, 2026 Village of Love Canada’s charitable status is in affiliation with Runnymede United Church”.
- As a registered charity, HUC is expected to use its resources to meet its “charitable purpose” (there are certain minimum thresholds that must be met in reporting to the Canadian Revenue Agency “CRA”). In doing so, it is permitted to allocate resources to “non-qualified donees (“NQD”)” where they meet the charitable purpose even when they are not registered charities
- When a registered charity receives donations on behalf of another registered charity and forwards those amounts, CRA expects that the charity receiving the initial donation will issue the tax receipt. However, a registered charity should not automatically issue a tax receipt if the amount is to be funded directly to an NQD without further consideration
- When the donation is to be directed to a NQD there are requirements that should be met in order to be eligible for a tax receipt. The requirements include:
 - The NQD must use the funds in a manner that meets the charitable purpose of the donating organization
 - The use of the funds should be for the public benefit

- The donating organization should ensure the funds are used for their intended purpose
- Based on public information, Village of Love Canada would seem to meet the criteria from an HUC perspective. The affiliation with Runnymede United Church would support the requirement that the use of funds would be as expected
- In the case of the Gospel Extravaganza, donations were requested on behalf of the organization although no commitment was made for the issuance of tax receipts. Cash donations made at the time of the event, can be difficult to manage, given the need to track details and ensure the necessary information for a CRA compliant tax receipt is available (i.e. mailing address)
- In addition to donations made at the event, HUC has also received donations from individuals that have been directed to the Gospel Extravaganza
- A summary of the financial aspect of the event (based on information received to date) is as follows:

Gospel Extravaganza	Budget	Actual
Receipts		
Tickets		1,180
Donations – cash at door		200
Donations – cheque to HUC		2,000
Total		3,380
Expenses		
Performers	1,300	1,150
Supplies / food	250	405
Total	1,550	1,555
Net proceeds		1,825

Recommendation

- A cheque should be issued to Runnymede United Church to be directed to the “Village of Love – Kenya Program” for \$1,825.
- Tax receipts from Humbercrest United Church that are issued at year end should include the amounts received that were to be directed to the Gospel Extravaganza
- A policy should be developed by Council for guidance to approve future requests for donations where amounts are to be forwarded to “non-qualified donees”

Motion: Charlie/Libbie

Carried

To approve a donation of \$1825 to the Village of Love Canada - Kenya Program

7. Motion: Vince/Dorothy

Carried by e-vote May 22

To offer Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo an honorarium of \$300 and Eloise Morrison an honorarium of \$250 respectively as Guest Speakers May 24 and June 7.

7. 1. Summer Worship Hours - Rev. Diane, Confirmed, same time as usual, 10:30 a.m.

Stewardship of our Resources - Treasurer – Charlie (15 min.)

Motion: Charlie/Marg

Carried

To approve Treasurer’s report as circulated.

Our Shared Ministries (15 min.)

Community Team Report - Barb

May 3 - Marg Garrie and Barb hosted an impromptu, very casual Coffee and Tea Time amidst the “May Sale” final tidy up.

May 24 - A special Coffee and Tea Time to Celebrate Affirm Sunday, was hosted by the Affirm/Devotion Committee with the assistance of Congregational Life. We had the opportunity to visit with our special guest minister, the Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo. Many thanks to everyone who provided food, helped with set up and clean up.

Devotion Team Report – Vince

Eloise Morrison will be our Guest Speaker June 7. The Devotion Team will host a Tea and Coffee Time.

This Sunday the 31st is the last formal Choir presence in church until the Fall. Choir will resume rehearsals Sept. 10. in preparation to leading musically Sept. 13 in worship.

A soloist will lead during June. Marg Parsons will play for our services during August, Music Director Greg's holidays.

Facilities Team Report - Howard

OPEN PROJECTS LIST

- 1) Outdoor electronic sign – Permit likely to be issued June 9th.
- 2) Boiler system ionizer – BISS to get back with an installation date
- 3) AED training – Chris is exploring
- 4) Elevator door sticking and external woodwork in state of disrepair due to water damage – no progress
- 5) Roofing – winter storm repairs – a call has been put into Alex
- 6) 2013 Canon Printer replacement – proposal being revised
- 7) Lock – next steps request sent to Thom

OPEN PROJECTS DETAILS:

- 1) OUTDOOR SIGN: Variance approved May 3rd. Thirty day neighbourhood notice period initiated. Permit likely to be issued June 9th. Electrician tentatively lined up for mid-July with late July installation date.
- 2) IONIZER: Following a site visit April 13, BISS is proposing a lower cost option by attaching the ionizer to the outflow of the hot water tank. ~~≈\$5,800~~ \$3,672.50
- 3) AED training - TBD
- 4) Elevator door edge and door frame edge sanded to reduce by not eliminate sticking. More sanding required. If not effective then will have to remove and plane. Manpower and time constraint challenges
- 5) 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.

CLOSED PROJECTS

- 1) Purchase of more chairs for BIC. 20 vinyl stacking chairs of a different design were purchased on FB Marketplace @\$35 – (listed @ \$40)
- 2) AED replacement batteries purchased and delivered on Friday May 15

ODDS & SODS - May

- 1) Centre doors concrete step repair underway – delayed by rain
- 2) Gardens refreshed by Marg, Cheryl and Donna
- 3) KEYS Women's washroom toilet leak repaired with new seal and bolts
- 4) Wall replaster repair in KEYS Women's washroom phase 1 done at same time
- 5) Aging hot and cold water tap shutoff valves replaced in both washrooms below Narthex
- 6) Hot water tap in Ladies Washroom D functional again – new cartridge put in

Resources Team Report - Marg G.

Use of Halls - May 25 – 26 Recording Sanctuary

Spring Sale

We had a successful 55th Spring Sale after a 6-year lapse. The banked amount on Sale Day was just under \$7,000, \$2,000. more than the Fall Sale amended report.

At the end of May final amended report will be available. This will include the amount owed to different sections, a well as consignment /on-line sales.

The good news was that we had roughly 95 people donating their time and energy to this event with 59 people selling on the day of the Sale. Considering that this year we had several people who would normally help but not this year for various reasons we had had a great response. The unsold items were donated to Goodwill, Sharing Place, Roncesvalles United church, Fairlawn United Church and Lambton-Kingsway Jr. Public School.

The Sale recycles, provides good items for a reasonable price to our customers and provides a chance to renew old acquaintances and make new ones.

Thank you to all who participated.

Trustees - Libbie - No report.

Ministry and Personnel - Aileen - Aileen and all of Council congratulated Rev. Diane on finishing her admission requirements to the UCC (will be officially admitted at Regional Annual Mtg October 24 in Brampton. A Congregational Meeting will be held to provisionally call Rev. Diane to HUC. A covenanting service is anticipated Dec. 6.

Rev. Diane has also earned her Ph. D. And will return to Kenya in November to graduate.

Motion to Adjourn - 9:12 pm

Next meeting: September 22, 2026 in person