

Harmony United Church Communications Policy

Version Oct 8/25 Approved at November 28/25 Council meeting

Harmony's committees and project or event groups are encouraged to keep the following principles in mind when sharing information via:

- traditional press (newspapers, radio, TV)
- our website or the weekly newsletter, which recipients must subscribe to
- social media (e.g., our Facebook page)
- in-person announcements at church services or other events
- posted items on our church bulletin boards

1. Our actions and communications align with these two statements:

Mission Statement

At Harmony United Church, we strive to follow the Way of Christ through thoughtful worship and compassionate community, as we seek peace and justice for all creation.

Affirming Ministry Statement of Faith

Harmony United Church is an Affirming Ministry. As a community of faith, we publicly, explicitly and intentionally share our commitment to inclusion and social justice for all people. We celebrate the richness that diversity brings to our community. All are welcome no matter your gender identity or sexual orientation, whether you are old or young, whether you are rich or poor, whatever your ethnicity, whether you're Indigenous, settler or immigrant, whatever your ability, whatever your spiritual beliefs. All are encouraged to share in all aspects of our spiritual life including membership, leadership, celebration of marriage and life passages. ALL ARE WELCOME at Harmony United Church

2. As Harmony United Church members and adherents, we **protect the privacy and confidentiality** of our community's participants. For example, we do not post Council minutes on our website to reduce risks of spam or phishing emails. We ensure we have verbal consent from participants before sharing their names in public communications.
3. We communicate on behalf of the collective rather than from one individual's perspective.
4. We communicate respectfully. For example, we share factual descriptions, not negative labels or insults. When writing to an elected official, we might say: *This policy violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, not *Your policy writers are donkeys*.

What does this policy mean for each of us?

Council does not request prior approval of information announcements that organizers or participants make about our typical community events or projects, but we do request getting **advance notice** if your group is submitting opinions or other messages to external media.

We also request that anyone wanting items posted on the church bulletin board submit those items to our Office Coordinator.

Email harmonyunited.office@gmail.com, and our Office Coordinator will forward the item in question to a Council member.

Examples of how the policy is applied::

- You're organizing a FUNdraising event for Harmony United Church. You want to communicate some or all of the *W5 (who, what, where, when, why)* and *how* on a community billboard, on lawn signs, or on our Facebook page. In this instance, no advance notice to Council is requested.
- Your committee or group is writing a letter to the editor, to an elected official (municipal, provincial, federal) conveying an opinion on an issue and potential alternative actions or solutions.
In this instance, Council requests advance notice (via email).
- As an individual, you're sharing information or opinions on your own social media pages or via letters to the editor of a newspaper etc.
No involvement of Council is required.