Privacy Policy of High Country United Church

High Country United Church is committed to respecting the privacy of the people who worship with us, participate in our programmes, volunteer, donate and connect with our community.

This policy explains how we collect, use, protect and share personal information through our website and our church and community activities.

1. **Information We Collect**
   We collect personal information only when it is reasonably necessary for our activities.

   Depending on how you interact with us, this may include:
   - Contact information, such as your name, email address, telephone number and mailing address.
   - Information you provide through website contact forms, programme registrations, event enquiries or other communications.
   - Information relating to donations, receipts and charitable giving, where applicable.
   - Volunteer information needed to coordinate activities and responsibilities.
   - Photographs, videos or testimonials, where appropriate permission has been obtained.
   - Information collected through website analytics or similar technologies, where these are in use.

   You may choose not to provide certain information. However, this may limit our ability to respond to an enquiry or provide a requested service.

2. **How We Use Personal Information**
   We may use personal information to:
   - Respond to questions and enquiries.
   - Register participants and coordinate programmes, events and activities.
   - Communicate church news, programme updates and community information.
   - Process and acknowledge donations and provide charitable receipts where applicable.
   - Coordinate volunteers and church activities.
   - Maintain and improve our website and services.
   - Meet applicable legal, accounting and administrative obligations.

   We do not sell personal information or rent personal contact lists to other organisations.

3. Donations and Third-Party Services

Some services accessed through our website, including online donations, may be provided by third-party organisations such as CanadaHelps (accepting online donations), MailerLite (our e-letter program), and TicketScene (accepting online registrations).

When you use a third-party service, your information may be collected and processed under that organisation's own privacy policy and terms. We encourage you to review those policies before submitting personal information.

We may also use external services for website hosting, email communications, online forms, analytics and social media. Information shared with these services is subject to the applicable service arrangements and privacy practices.

4. Website Cookies and Analytics

Our website or its service providers may use cookies and similar technologies to support website functionality, understand website traffic and improve the visitor experience. The information collected may include details about your browser, device, pages visited and interactions with the website.

You can adjust cookie settings through your browser. Disabling certain cookies may affect some website features. Where applicable, third-party analytics and embedded services may collect information according to their own privacy policies.

5. Confidentiality and Pastoral Care

We recognise the importance of privacy, trust and discretion in pastoral care, prayer requests and personal conversations. Information shared with our minister or church representatives will be treated with care and discretion. However, confidentiality may have limits where disclosure is authorised or required by law, or where there is a serious safety concern. We ask staff and volunteers who handle personal information to respect the privacy of the people we serve.

6. Photographs, Videos and Stories

We may share photographs, videos or stories to communicate our worship, programmes and community activities. We will seek appropriate permission before publishing identifiable images or personal stories where permission is required or appropriate, with particular care taken when children are involved. If you have a concern about an image or story published by the church, please contact us to discuss it.

7. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

High Country United Church may use artificial intelligence tools to assist with administrative work, research, writing, communications and programme development. We aim to use these tools responsibly, with human review and attention to accuracy, privacy and confidentiality.

Personal, sensitive or confidential information, including information shared through pastoral care, will not be entered into public AI tools unless appropriate authorization and safeguards are in place. AI-generated material will be reviewed before it is used or published. AI is intended to support our work, not replace human relationships, pastoral care or responsible decision-making.

8. How We Protect Information

We take reasonable steps to protect personal information against loss, unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration or misuse. Access to personal information is limited to those who need it for legitimate church or community purposes. We also encourage the responsible handling of information by staff and volunteers. No method of electronic storage or transmission is completely secure, and we cannot guarantee absolute security.

9. How Long We Keep Information

We retain personal information only for as long as reasonably necessary for the purpose for which it was collected, or as required for legal, accounting, charitable or other legitimate recordkeeping purposes. When information is no longer needed, we aim to dispose of it securely or remove identifying details where appropriate.

10. Your Choices and Requests

You may contact us to:

- Ask what personal information we hold about you.
- Request access to your information or correction of inaccurate details.
- Withdraw consent for certain uses of your information, where applicable.
- Ask to stop receiving non-essential communications.
- Raise a concern about how your information has been handled.

Some information may need to be retained for legal, accounting or other legitimate purposes. We will explain any applicable limitations when responding to a request.

11. External Links

Our website may link to other websites, including community organisations, service providers and social media platforms. We are not responsible for the

privacy practices or content of those external websites. Please review their policies when visiting them.

12. **Changes to This Policy**
    We may update this policy as our activities, website services or privacy practices change. The latest version will be published on our website, with the effective date updated accordingly.

13. **Contact Us**
    If you have questions about this Privacy Policy or how High Country United Church handles personal information, please contact the church office through the contact information provided on our website.

    High Country United Church
    346255 Side Road 15 WHS
    Mono, Ontario, Canada L9W 6R9
    Website: https://www.highcountryunited.ca
    Phone: 519-941-0972
    Email: highcountryunited@gmail.com

We welcome questions and will make reasonable efforts to respond to privacy concerns promptly.