

Highland Mennonite Brethren Church

Policy Manual

Crisis Communication Policy

Purpose

Within the larger context of Highland Mennonite Brethren Church (HMBC)'s response to a crisis, it is our goal to communicate consistently and concisely with our congregants and community.

Scope

The Crisis Communication Team (CCT) - made up of the Leadership Team Executive (LTE) and Administrative Assistant - holds the responsibility of formulating what is communicated in a crisis. This includes written and verbal statements for both internal (congregants) and external (community/media) communications.

Guidelines

The Crisis Communication Team meets annually to discuss and formulate best responses to various scenarios. *“Communicating in a Crisis – Practical strategies to protect your ministry”* is a helpful 2010 resource from ChurchSafety.com that is filed with this policy: https://www.hmbc.ca/hp_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Crisis-Communication-Policy-Appendix-Communicating-In-A-Crisis-Download-from-Church-Law-Tax-Store.pdf.

In the event of a crisis, the CCT

- excludes from the team any member who is named in the event;
- meets as soon as possible to formulate a communication strategy;
- seeks advice from lawyers, insurance providers, local authorities, emergency responders, and others as needed;
- appoints either a team member or another individual who is articulate, emotionally controlled, spiritually mature, not easily swayed, and able to stay focused under pressure to act as spokesperson on behalf of HMBC;
- grants interviews only when the spokesperson has been appointed and a statement of response has been formulated;
- is proactive in communicating with congregants and the community/media.

In the event of a crisis, congregants are asked

- to direct any inquiries regarding the event to the CCT or its appointed spokesperson;
- not to post anything regarding the event on social media.