

## **HOLY MANNERS \***

### **Our Commitment to the Creation of Safe Space \*\***

We come to this space knowing that God loves us as we are and yearns for us to be in closer relationship with all of God's beloved.

In our behavior, our words, and our attitudes we promise to relate to one another with:

- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Open mindedness
- ❖ Courage
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ And we promise to treat ourselves and others with kindness.

Keeping God at the centre, we will:

- ❖ Listen empathetically to others with our whole selves: our physical senses, intuition, imagination, and intellect
- ❖ Remain open to new information and ideas
- ❖ Speak for ourselves in the spirit of truth and gentleness, avoiding unhelpful judgments, generalizations, and stereotypes
- ❖ Allow others to speak without interruption
- ❖ Be respectful of the perspectives of others even if they differ from our own
- ❖ Encourage others to share their perspectives without fear of reprisal
- ❖ Pause before speaking to ponder what others are saying and what we feel
- ❖ Affirm the deep wisdom of silence
- ❖ Be sensitive to differences in the way we each communicate and learn
- ❖ Keep confidentiality
- ❖ Commit to holding one another to account when we do not keep our Holy Manners
- ❖ Respect process and honour the decisions made by the body
- ❖ Lean into God's transformative love.

- Approved June 27, 2018 at the Unified Board Meeting for Highland Hills Pastoral Charge.

\* The phrase "holy manners" comes from *Behavioural Covenants in Congregations* by Gil Rendle. Former United Church Moderator Marion Parry made extensive use of the term during her time as moderator. There are a number of versions of "holy manners". This version has been adapted from the one used by Hamilton Conference.

\*\* Adapted from *Our Commitment as God's Diverse Church*, by the Rev. Michael Blair and the Rev. Steve Willey, Toronto, 2008.