

## AFFIRMING RESOURCE TEAM

The theme for this year's CSRC AGM is "Upon this Rock". It reminded me of a saying I read a while back it goes "If our house is built upon a rock with the brick and mortar of good works, it will withstand the storms".

How appropriate that our Inaugural Regional Council meeting May 2019 happened to be in Sault Ste Marie. Each of us at that time were given a rock to bring back to our Communities of Faith. This year we are back in the Soo standing on the same rock where CSRC began.

I can't help remembering back to when it all started. When the Affirming Ministry Resource Team, first met we talked about the things we would like to do. We made up our goals and objectives and presented them to the CSRC...then there was Covid.

Yet as most of you know that when the waters get rough something wonderful happens to the rock. Over time the waters tend to smooth the rock. All those rough edges go away. We have survived the rough waters.

Once Communities of Faith were able to meet in person there has been more conversations about Affirming. We have seen a steady increase in those who have been attending our Affirming Town Hall meetings. In fact, a recent Zoom meeting had the most participants ever. We are very grateful to all those who attend our Town Hall Meetings and encourage others to join in our conversations. It is through open and honest discussions that barriers are broken down.

We are happy to announce that there are Communities of Faith in our Region that have started the discernment process to become Affirming. There is also one Community of Faith that will be getting their Affirming Designation at the end of May 2024.

Although we have made great strides recently in region there is more work to do. Recently there has been an increase of transphobia as well as protests against the 2SLGBTQ+ community domestically and globally.

We have had several discussions about the increase of "hate" emails etc. with other Affirming Regions, Communities of Faith and Affirming Leaders across Canada. The goal of these meetings is to help set up non-confrontational strategies to help deal with this. I can't help but think "WWJD"... What would Jesus do? During these times when the sand feels like it is shifting it is so important that members of the 2SLGBTQ+ and Allies can find a safe place. That is why becoming an Affirming is so important.

The CSRC Affirming Ministry Resource Team is collaborating with our counterparts in Shining Waters to exchange ideas and resources to better serve everyone. We can help you start the conversation in your own Community of Faith.

The Affirming Ministry Resource Team is here for you.

Peter Haddow – Team Lead

Caitlin Smithers

Charles Bolduc

Harry Stewart  
Marilyn Schatzler  
Ryan Fea  
Susan Marrier  
Susan Peverley  
Whitney Bruno

Rob Smith – Regional Resource  
Celio De Andrade – Administrative Support

Thank you