

AFFIRMING MINISTRY
RAINBOW MINUTE
OCTOBER 2024

This is our first Rainbow Minute. As your Affirming Ministry Resource Team we plan to use this to let you know what is happening in the CSRC. At times it will contain articles that will open minds and hearts to what it means to be an Affirming Region and hopefully start a conversation within your own Community of Faith and amongst your family and friends. As your Affirming Ministry Resource Team we are here to educate and support you whether you are an Affirming C.O.F., thinking about being Affirming or not there yet.

Affirming Ministries in the CSRC

Emmanuel UC – Sault Ste. Marie
St. Andrew's UC – North Bay
St. Andrew's UC – Sault Ste. Marie
St. John's UC – Marathon
St. Paul's UC – Thunder Bay
St. Peter's UC – Sudbury
Trinity UC - Capreol
Westminster UC – Thunder Bay

There are 8 Affirming Ministries within the Region right now. However, there are some C.O.F. who are discerning about becoming Affirming and a couple are who just about ready to vote.

When the Canadian Shield Regional Council became Affirming one of our goals as the Affirming Ministry Resource Team was to have at least 5 Communities of Faith either become Affirming or starting the Affirming process by 2025.

We are happy to say that we have achieved that goal due to the hard work of each of these Communities of Faith...Thank You.

Over the last few years there has been a rise in hate crimes against the 2SLGBTQ+ community especially our Trans members. It is not only happening around the world but here in our own country and sadly within our own communities. It has been difficult time for those who are 2SLGBTQ+ but there is hope. I saw it in the eyes of the youth who walked in Manitoulin Pride, the tears shed at a Pride Flag raising in Sundridge and when Trinity United in Capreol celebrated becoming an Affirming Community of Faith. Tears of joy and eyes lit up from knowing we are Loved. Throughout the region many Affirming C.O.F. have been Public, Intentional and Explicit about what it means to Affirming. <https://united-church.ca/stories/public-intentional-explicit-inclusion>

Please check out things that are happening in your part of the Region and if your church is planning something let us know.

Important dates of significance for 2SLGBTQ+ in October

- 2SLGBTQ History month
- Oct. 8 International Lesbian Day
- Oct. 11 National Coming Out Day
- 3rd Wednesday of October International Pronoun Day
- 3rd Thursday in October Spirit Day

- October 26th Intersex Day
- Last full week of October Asexual Awareness Week

If you would like to learn about how to become more welcoming to people of all gender identities go to <https://united-church.ca/blogs/round-table/gender-identity-church>

Thank you for taking the time to read this Rainbow Minute
 Peter Haddow (He/Him)
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*Contact the CSRC Affirming Ministry Resource Team for more information.

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Canadian Shield Regional Council Affirming Statement

As an Affirming community, the Canadian Shield Regional Council welcomes, includes, and supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, and two-spirit (LGBTQ+) people in all aspects of the life, work, worship and governance of the church. We believe that all people are children of God; that persons of all ages, races, abilities, theologies, gender identities, and sexual orientations are part of our increasingly diverse culture; and we include all persons into the full life and ministry of the church. We aspire for members of the LGBTQ+ community to find the churches and governing bodies in our Regional Council to be safe places to worship and

share gifts. An increasing number of our churches proudly march in Pride Parades each year behind banners proclaiming who we are. Many of our members are also present at community events in support of the LGBTQ+ community.

The Canadian Shield Regional Council is fully supportive of Affirm United as we strive to continue to be supportive and accepting of all with whom we are in relationship. Please visit their website www.affirmunited.ca to learn more.

Our Regional Council acknowledges that God’s love is wider and more inclusive than we can imagine, let alone live out, and we commit ourselves to sharing that news with others who may have heard a quite different message about what it means to be church. Because voices of condemnation, exclusion, and hatred are loud and persistent within the church and in society, we declare that it is important to be a public witness and to be a role model for other ministries. As a Regional Council, we will work persistently, and encourage our communities of faith, to be safe, accessible, inclusive, and affirming.