

AFFIRMING RESOURCE TEAM

As I am writing this report, I am looking out my window at the snow blowing around. Every so often my window becomes partially covered and it changes my view. It is a far contrast from yesterday. Yesterday it was sunny and I was heading to a rural country church to do pulpit supply thinking “What a beautiful day.” Today is still a “Great” day its just changes how I am moving forward.

To me that’s the way it has been for most of us this year. As the Affirming Ministry Resource Team, we set our goals and objectives of what we would like to accomplish but the weather changes and we need to set a new course.

Over the last year there has been a rise in policy changes in regards to 2SLGBTQ+ rights. Especially in regards to trans members of our communities in other parts of the world and sadly in various areas in our own country.

This made us wonder how to we support Ministers and Student Ministers in Affirming Churches as well as those of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities who lead ministry in churches that are not Affirming in the CSRC. We realized there was a need for them to gather in a safe place to have the opportunity to talk. So, in December we had a zoom table gathering that was led by a facilitator. The feedback from this event was good. This laid the groundwork for possible other gatherings facilitated by those who attended, if needed.

In some communities across Canada and even in our own region there has been push back on raising the progressive pride flag during Pride. In fact, in some cases Pride has been cancelled. As an Affirming Resource Team as well as Affirming communities of faith, it is more important now more than ever to be P.I.E. (Public, Intentional, Explicit Inclusion).

In order to promote why Pride is important, especially in rural Ontario, we held a Zoom gathering and invited AJ Adams to be our guest speaker. This was open to both CSRC and Shining Waters, churches who were affirming, those who were not, as well 2SLGBTQ+ and Allies. It was the most attended online event that the Affirming Ministry Resource Team has put on. Obviously from the turn out the subject was very relevant. AJ Adams was amazing. The video is available on the CSRC Affirming Ministry webpage (<https://canadianshielddrc.ca/justice-issues/affirming-ministry/>).

Even with the current climate changes in the world around us there is hope for a brighter tomorrow. Over the last year there have been more interest in communities of faith in the CSRC in becoming affirming. At least the conversation is out there and that is great.

We are grateful for the support of the CSRC, Affirm United, as well as Affirming Connections. More importantly we are grateful to the Affirming Communities of Faith across the region for all the work they do and the lives they change in doing so.

I want to thank all the members of the Affirming Ministry Resource Team in which I am just a small part of as their team lead. They are the ones who make this work so enjoyable and meaningful.

Your CSRC Affirming Ministry Resource Team is:

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Special thanks to Shawn Redden who filled in for Rob when he was on sabbatical.

Thank you.

Peter Haddow, Team Lead

Affirming Resource Team