

St. Paul's Affirming Continuing Plan of Action

This document is the St. Paul's continuing plan of action for our first year as an affirming church which will start in November 2020 if the vote goes as planned. This plan will be reviewed and redone yearly at the end of the calendar year leading into the new year. This plan is an overview and a commitment to fulfil the duties laid out by the affirming committee. It is not the only work that will be done by the committee and congregation but an overview and promise to continue working to fulfil vision statement and the work of an affirming church..

As we move into being an affirming church our vision statement continues to guide all of our work and our commitment to continuing to learn and redefine what it means to be affirming:

We are seeking to be a safe and inclusive faith community for people of all gender identities, sexual orientations, marital status, family configuration, abilities, ages, races, ethnicities, faiths, and socio-economic circumstances, who will be encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of the life and work of our ministry, thereby enriching us all.

(Approved at the Annual General Meeting on March 1, 2020)

Continuing Plan of Action

- This plan of action will be implemented by the St. Paul's Affirming Committee with the help of the St. Paul's congregation. The Affirming Committee will be held accountable by the church council, the St. Paul's congregation, the leadership of St. Paul's and Affirm United.
- Have visible signs that we are affirming and publicly welcoming of Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ people in all aspects of the work and life of St. Paul's.
 - Rainbow flag hanging outside the church.
 - Rainbow candle with or as the Christ Candle.
 - Plaque with the vision statement at the main entrance, gym entrance, and sanctuary entrance.
- Continue to be explicit that we are an Affirming Ministry on our website, social media, newsletter, and bulletins.
 - Change the online church logo to include the affirming logo or rainbow.
 - Quarterly report about affirm on the newsletter: news from the committee, relevant issues the congregation should know, and media and resources for education.
 - Use local media, social media and United Church networks to announce and promote affirming related events.
- Celebrate our second annual PIE Day (March) and third annual Pride Month Service (June) in accordance with Covid-19 restrictions.

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- Events might be moved to online in the case of extended church closure.
- Consider inclusive rental agreements for all internal and external renters.
- Increase participation and strengthen partnerships with community organizations engaging in social justice and human rights work for LGBTQIA+ and Two-Spirit people.
 - For example PSN (positive spaces network), PFLAG
 - Participate in Halton Pride and look into walking with the United Church in the Toronto Pride Parade.
- Work with the ministers and congregation to support anti-racism work.
- Financially support at least one church member and one minister to attend the Annual Affirm United/S' affirmer Ensemble Conference/AGM.
- Annually celebrate the anniversary of becoming an Affirming Ministry.
- Intentionally seek out and create opportunities for the committee and congregation to continue learning about the Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ community, history and current issues or human rights violations.
 - Continue working with the PSN and ROCK and potentially send more people to their Building Positive Spaces training.
 - Work to bring more two-spirit and LGBTQIA+ related books and media to the library.
 - Share podcasts, movies, and other media that congregation members can use on their own time to educate themselves.
- Share an annual report detailing the work and progress of the affirming work with the St. Paul's congregation.