

FOR DISCUSSION - Implementing the Affirming Ministry plan of action

From Executive Secretary David Allen

I want to provide an up-date on what I've started to do about implementing the Affirming Ministry plan of action, and to pose some questions for the Executive to consider.

Website: Susie Henderson is working on getting a clearly identified section on the website that will include resources, news, links to Affirming Ministries, FAQs, etc. The site will also include links to the YouTube videos of the annual meeting presentations. Susie is checking with all the presenters to see if they have any concerns. If yes, Susie will modify what appears online. This material should be online by the end of June.

Signage: Rose Cambourne will be replacing all Conference signs to indicate that we are an Affirming Ministry. Letterhead and business cards will be updated. This should be done by the end of August.

Banners: We are investigating the creation of banners that show that Toronto Conference is an Affirming Ministry. These banners could be made available for local Pride events throughout the Conference, or for other occasions when we would want the participants to know that we are affirming.

Accessibility survey: At the annual meeting we heard about accessibility issues, so I have authorized a survey of all church properties within the Conference to get a sense of who is accessible, and who is not. Susie Henderson is involved in the initial design, but there will be no additional staff time required. The work will be done on a contract basis. The information will go to the Conference's web minder. The survey will include information on whether a congregation is affirming, has wheelchair access, gender neutral washrooms, assisted hearing devices, elevators/lifts, visible signs and symbols, etc. The draft survey will be ready in mid-June for testing and the work will be done and posted on the Conference's website by the end of August. We're aiming to have a search feature that will allow people to filter locations according to geography and type of accessibility in which they have an interest.

Policy review: At this June Executive meeting we'll talk about two policies (mission statement and embracing diversity) in light of being an Affirming Ministry. Going forward, we'll want to discuss questions we might ask about the various policies.

Questions:

1. Does the Executive want to do this work as a whole group, or set up a task group to oversee the implementation?
2. What questions might we ask when reviewing policies?