

Questions and Answers on Saskatchewan Conference Becoming an Affirming Ministry

Questions	Answers for		
	Conference	Presbytery	Congregation
When will this vision be implemented?	Conference will start immediately. It will be a journey and process to meet every need. We are an imperfect people and there will be steps forwards and times when it will appear Conference is not moving fast enough.	Presbytery does not have to implement this vision. Presbytery, when it feels the time is right, may enter into a process to discern if it should become an affirming ministry.	Congregations do not have to implement this vision. Congregations, when they feel the time is right, may enter into a process to discern if they should become an affirming ministry.
Will educational materials be made available?	Affirm United's web site http://www.affirmunited.ca/englishindex.htm "Open Hearts" document provides material for learning about Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT). The DVD "For the Bible Tells Me So" gives glimpses into what it means to families for a family member to be GLBT. Conference office has a copy for borrowing. The Saskatchewan Conference web site at http://www.sk.united-church.ca/ has other materials available such as Viewing Policies Through the Lens of from Inclusiveness". As well the intercultural ministries, education and faith formation networks have been asked to see if additional material is needed		
Will worship and meeting space have to be accessible to all?	Conference will continue to work to ensure meetings and worship is accessible. It will explore how other barriers can be mitigated.	Each presbytery and congregation will determine the level of accessibility while ensuring building and fire codes are met.	
Will there be additional costs?	Conference will pay an annual fee of \$100 to Affirm United to support its educational activities. This and other costs will be managed within Conference's current budgets.	Costs will be dependent on how much each Presbytery and Congregation chooses to pursue being an affirming ministry.	
Will marriage policies have to allow same gender marriage?	Conference supports same gender marriage. Conference does not have a marriage policy.	Presbyteries do not have marriage policies.	Each congregation determines its own marriage policy. No change.
How does this effect hiring practices?	Existing United Church Polices for staffing are to be followed. There is no change. All qualified people may apply.	Existing United Church policies for staffing are to be followed. There is no change.	Existing United Church policies for staffing are to be followed. There is no change.
What do we tell people about the Conference becoming an Affirming	Jesus reached out to all people. We follow his teachings. No one is turned away. There are many in today's societies who face greater challenges in participating in ministry. By naming those who have faced such challenges, we make clear that they are part of the Ministry of the United Church.		

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