

Equity and Diversity Committee Annual Report (July 2024 – June 2025)

Priorities

In fall 2024, we set these priorities for the upcoming year:

- Keep doing, improve, expand:
 - communication- email list, Facebook page, Regional website
 - Supporting Affirming processes
 - communication with Affirm United
- Things to start work on:
 - Looking at how we can support Equity and Diversity within the life of the Region
 - Creating a calendar of days related to Equity and Diversity, for our information, and to share
- Begin branching out into:
 - Intercultural diversity
 - Unconscious bias
 - Accessibility

Communication

- continued with our Facebook group, Prairie to Pine Affirming Ministries and People, for sharing news, events, and resources
- working on updating the email listing with Julie has as some email addresses are outdated

Connecting

- explored how we can be supportive to congregations, clergy, and committees within our Region
- continued to connect with Affirm United, but also also attending events and making connections with other groups such as Affirming Connections, Queer Interfaith Coalition, Western Intercultural Network, Disability and Accessibility Network, Rainbow Resource Centre
- made some arrangements for people to attend the Apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ Peoples at GC45
- Julie Graham, our Staff Support, is also staff for Living Skies and Northern Spirit Regions, so we began looking into connecting with this “Tri-Region area” more, to have more people to connect with. This year we
 - hosted a EDCC together
 - had a Tri-Region committee meeting
 - have discussed sharing another event or a team building retreat

Equity and Diversity Community Connections (EDCC):

We have continued hosting Zoom meetings to encourage communication and collaboration among churches and interested parties on equity and diversity issues.

- **The Affirming Process—The good, the bad, and the ugly”** (Oct. 30, 2024):
 - Committee members, and 11 participants from the Prairie to Pine (P2P) region attended this Zoom session, those who had gone through the Affirming Process shared their experiences, and answered questions for those who hadn’t
 - One comment: “Thanks very much for putting this together. Although I was a little dismayed by all the comments about "how long this can take" I am still enthusiastic!”
- **PIE Day Prep Meeting** (Feb. 5, 2025):
 - Committee members, and 8 participants from the Prairie to Pine (P2P) region attended this Zoom session in preparation for PIE Day events
- **Community Planning for Pride** (May 13, 2025):
 - This was our first time having a gathering along with the Affirming friendly folks from Living Skies and Northern Spirit Regions, and we had a much better turn out with 29 participants!

Looking ahead

- We are hosting an online workshop on Shifting from Unconscious Bias to Conscious Inclusion, on Monday, November 17 at 7:30 CST
 - One of the most pervasive barriers to inclusion in any organization is unconscious bias. Uncovering the ways that unconscious bias influences people can lead to more welcoming, inclusive and productive environments
 - This is meant to be an introductory workshop, will be very accessible to people who don’t know much about bias
 - We would like congregations to have at least one member of their Board and/or M&P committee attend
 - may be especially useful for search committees and churches going through transitions
 - We encourage everyone to attend!!!

Submitted by

The Equity and Diversity Committee
Prairie to Pine Regional Council