

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness

Lamentations 3:22-23

BECOMING AN AFFIRMING CONGREGATION WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE FOR QUISPAMIS UNITED CHURCH

An affirming ministry strives to be fully inclusive of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and other marginalized groups. For Quispamsis United Church, your Affirming Committee has been working hard to discern what it means to be publicly welcoming and inclusive. While we have always been a welcoming congregation, affirming goes much deeper and is public, intentional, and explicit in the commitment to diversity and inclusion.

As we work toward becoming “Affirming”, this is what it could look like for QUC:

- Ongoing education and story sharing sessions
- Showcasing books in our Library that support diversity and inclusion
- Placement of rainbow symbol visible outside of church and inside the sanctuary
- Teaching of affirming music and incorporating affirming messages and language in our services
- Ongoing review of our policies and practices to reflect our intentions
- Ongoing communication with the community, schools, youth and/or community centers
- Visibility of being affirming on our website, print materials, advertisements, signs, etc.
- Commitment to ongoing support for outreach/social justice and promoting reconciliation and healing and action for change
- Affirming Committee to become a standard committee promoting awareness

We will worship, pray, support, serve, seek, celebrate, learn, work, play and grow, **just like we always have**. What you may notice, however, are the **public, intentional and explicit** statements of welcome, inclusion, and justice-seeking for all people who have been marginalized and whose sexual orientation and gender identities have been historically excluded within the church and in society.

No longer can we sit back and be satisfied with the “status quo”. We need to live into a vision of justice and inclusion for **all** God’s people while respecting each other’s diversity of opinion.

As a church family, we will continue to grow and change as we gain further understanding and seek new ways to act for the healing and wholeness of **all** creation.