

Affirming Committee Annual Report 2025/2026

The Affirming Committee has been busy throughout the year. Here are some of the highlights.

In June we were invited to attend the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony at Peel Police Headquarters. This was followed by a guest speaker and a fundraising lunch. It provide is with opportunity to connect with the officers who are involved in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion unit.

In July we were present at the Peel Pride event which took place in the parking lot at Burnhamthorpe Public Library. This was a great event with entertainment, presentations and information sharing.

In September we attended an event organized by Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters, a local group for both indigenous and non-indigenous members. This was a time of listening and learning and appreciating art and ceremony. On the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation we attended an event organized by Kairos at the site of the Campfire indigenous art installation where an elder spoke about her life experiences.

In October and again in April we were invited to attend the RainbowSauga Alliance Mix and Mingle evening. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and network with that group and also other allies. The relationship continues to develop.

November saw us hosting the first of two workshops focussing on our theme of Truth and Reconciliation 10 years on – where are we? A member of Eagle Spirits of the Great Waters and an elder from Six Nations shared history and personal experience to help us understand the past and how we can move forward. We attended a showing of a movie *Reel Injuns* at Islington United Church which gave an account of how indigenous people and their stories have been depicted in the movie industry. Jesse Wente, a First Nations broadcaster and journalist, was the speaker at the event.

We again hosted a group from East Mississauga Community Health Centre for their Christmas dinner at Applewood. The committee provided dinner and hosted the group who were very appreciative of the safe space to celebrate.

In March we hosted PIE Sunday when we sold pieces of pie to raise money which was donated to Rainbow Railroad Canada.

On May 10th Applewood celebrated our 12th anniversary of becoming Affirming. The Very Reverend Carmen Lansdowne was our guest speaker. We continue to hear that the work we do is very much appreciated in the wider community.

We were invited to be a part of West End Affirm, a group comprised of churches I the West End of Toronto. That group organized a film festival which some of our members attended. As a result of a cluster of churches meeting in Mississauga, the Affirming

congregations have now met together to support each other and possibly collaborate on some events. As a result of this our energies will be directed to the Mississauga group.

During the year we highlight news articles in the AppleLog to help us stay informed about what is happening in our community, across Canada, and around the world. We also highlight the special days of remembrance and celebration each month. We have shared information with our congregation about various workshops and/or issues, including the ongoing wars on both Gaza and Ukraine.

Thank you to the committee for all the hard work they have done this year. The members are: Sophie Cook, Christina Miller, Peggy Grozelle and Brian McIntosh.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Moore and Joan Marshall
Co-chairs