

PIE for Pride: a guide for churches

This draft is from May 2026. It's the result of three years of annual Preparing for Pride workshops hosted online by Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils of the United Church of Canada, all of which are Affirming. All the ideas here are from the community, offered from the lived experiences of church ministries and people. We hope these spark even more ideas from you. One day we'll make this document look rainbow and pretty, but for now, the words are more important than the design.

PIE is Public, Intentional, and Explicit: the standards by which we live out our Affirming commitments. June is national Pride Month, a great chance for all of our ministries and people to consider how to be and serve PIE alongside the communities we serve.

June is also Indigenous Peoples' month. It's an important time to centre Two Spirit and Indigiqueer people, taking into account that they will be busy, and some may not feel comfortable working with churches. If another month works better, make that commitment. And show up to in person and online events that centre Two Spirit people and content.

Before the Pride festival: your community conversations

Long before we get to June and the summer months, think about how your faith community can support Pride, or help Pride happen if it's new to your community. No idea is too small. Pride can be one person and their supporters; one student or teacher who needs support. **Every Pride festival or parade that exists today started small.** Small is beautiful, so make your plans with confidence.

Watch the music video The Village by Wrabel, together, as you plan, because it shows us the need for Pride: https://youtu.be/tilsrO-3gcQ?si=HPcUTU3k_TaBqcod

(Version with a trans chorus: <https://youtu.be/6LF83Kur69g?si=jkN3KkJzV3OTa-RE>)

All of the ideas that follow assume that you've done your work in your faith community: that you've had the often hard conversations that must precede any Public, Intentional, and Explicit commitment. Maybe everyone in your church agrees. Maybe you don't have full consensus. Maybe people are fearful or need to learn more about Pride and the reasons for its existence. Maybe you have to support your wider community as United Church individuals, not as the formal community of faith. That's ok (if difficult). Every journey starts somewhere.

Identify possible community partners

Take time to map these out. Most Pride festivals are largely secular, and many Two Spirit and LGBTQIA people have good reasons to mistrust the church. Learn what the needs and opportunities are in your community. Start early, so you can plan conversations and careful listening. Schools, school clubs, libraries, supportive businesses, your village, band council, or municipality: the possibilities are wide. Keep

national organizations in mind too: PFLAG, Egale, Skipping Stone, and provincial and territorial groups. Our allies are everywhere, so think through these connections carefully.

Before the Pride festival: your building/ space and your faith community

Hang Pride Flags in church during Pride month, or permanently.

Outside your building: be creative with your official sign or lawn signs, flags, paint, and more. Put your flags out of easy reach.

Planting Pride: Allyship 101 partnering with local Pride group and greenhouse; use your flower beds, and/or collaborate to plant in a park.

Install “Hate has No Home Here” signs on property.

Pronouns on nametags- doing some education around this.

Focusing on other areas of inclusion: ASL, braille, accessibility (see the resource section further down.)

Offer a "time for connection" every Sunday, which can alternate between an Affirming Minute, a Minute for Mission, and an Environmental minute.

Keep going- what else can you do?

Events and presence

Diversity Service and Pride Potluck open to wider community

June Bible Study focused on 2SLGBTQIA+ and communities of faith

Safe Space Training

Film viewing and discussion (a few ideas are listed further down).

Painting Pride: art project with educational component (speaker, leaflets, etc). Paint your steps. Paint a crosswalk.

Put up **painted inclusive Pride doors**- and doors that speak to other important commitments, like Red Dress Day, Orange Shirt Day, Black History Month, World Refugee Day, and much more. God’s doors are open to all.

Use your property to plant rainbow flower beds.

Pride Picnic lunch on front lawn of church or elsewhere– open to all.

Pride Vesper Service on a weekday evening so the community can come. Have a potluck or free dinner before.

Saturday or early evening “Stories on the Steps”: read 2SLGBTQIA+ storybooks on steps for 30 minutes, stickers to hand out, post announcements and recording on church, Pflag and Pride Facebook pages.

Family Movie Night with popcorn, involve local 2SLGBTQIA+ groups, crossover with Pride Week/Month activities.

Host a family-friendly Drag Show and fundraiser

Host student brunch during exam time (Pride month)- and a Christmas dinner, an Easter dinner, a

Host a speaker from the community- build relationships!

Provide a table at the Pride fair (or other spaces) that offers vases that people can paint. Distribute plants- maybe your local greenhouse will be willing to donate.

Strategies for Pride Festival/ parade participation

If your community doesn't have this (yet), think about what you can offer, and how you can help a Pride festival get going.

If your community doesn't (yet) have a parade, and you want a chance to march in one, join a church contingent at a larger festival. Your Regional Council can help put you in touch.

However you participate, **be clear who you are!** Use your ministry's full name. Think through short, clear words of love and support that help counter the hate and exclusion many have experienced from churches.

Think through **handouts** at the parade, festival, or marketplace, especially if your community of faith has done the work needed to fully welcome everyone. If so, include service times, contact information, and more in a handout. Include Affirming scripture! Make sure rainbows are prominent, as there is a history of phobic people or groups handing out “clobber texts” (scripture with phobic interpretations, or calls for “conversion” “therapy”).

Parade: a combination of a big, colourful Affirm banner and small signs on long bamboo poles is best. Put your church's name on the small sign, using clear and colourful high-contrast lettering. This helps spectators see the name above the crowd. Think through a simple float, including options that let people with limited mobility participate. Use bikes. Use quads!

Is there a community festival? Set up a booth! Serve pink lemonade. Do a fundraising by donation bakery. Offer a Glitter Blessing. Have people and a space available if anyone wants/ needs to talk about their previous experiences with Christianity.

Glitter blessings are very moving, and need careful planning because they can feel threatening or frightening to people who have been targeted by the church. Put up a sign, have some trained volunteers, and give people lots of space and time to decide whether they want your volunteers to anoint their head or hand with glitter in gel, and offer words of blessing. Here are some resources:

[Faith@Pride](#)

[Unitarian Glitter Blessing](#)

Let the wider church know

Did you know that every Regional Council in the United Church is now Affirming? Help out their ministry, the national church (General Council), and Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble by sharing your experiences. Post on social media and tag them with #UCCan. Send photos and a write up to your Regional office. We want to share your good work and learn from it. We can only celebrate what we know about, so don't be shy.

As of May 2026, here are some key social media accounts to connect with and post to:

[Northern Spirit Affirming Facebook group](#); [Prairie to Pine Affirming Facebook group](#); [Affirm United's English Facebook group](#); [Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble Facebook page](#); [Affirming Connections Facebook page](#).

Resources

[United Church worship resources for Pride](#)

[Affirm United/ S'affirmer Ensemble](#)

[Affirming Connections](#)

[National Affirming PIE Day](#) (14 March every year- and any other day!!)

Affirming Inclusion is a list of ideas in short form to help ministries assess how inclusive their building and their day-to-day practices are. [Here is the PDF version](#)

Written by the Living Skies Affirming Committee, it's intended a starting point for communities of faith who are Affirming-curious; those who consider themselves welcoming but would like to go a little further; as a reminder to long-time Affirming ministries that there is always more to being inclusive; and as a support for individuals who want to be more inclusive in their daily life and work.

Resources for the church at Pride

[A Church LGBTQ+ Pride Guide](#)

[Genderbread Person](#)

Videos

[1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture](#)

Dawn, Her Dad, and the Tractor (Canadian)

[Two Spirits, One Voice](#) (short, Canadian)

Mama Bears

Will and Harper (on Netflix)

Song: [We are a Rainbow- David Kai \(YouTube\)](#)