

# Open Hearts Resource A

## Action Plan Ideas



---

### Table of Contents

1. Affirming Practice Examples
  2. Celebrating Special Days & Events
  3. Community, Culture & Artistic Expression
  4. Inclusion, Care & Congregational Life
  5. Inclusive Language & Worship Practices
  6. Justice, Outreach & Advocacy
  7. Learning & Growth
  8. Signs of Celebration
  9. Visible Signs of Welcome
  10. Visibility & Communication
  11. Welcoming & Informing Newcomers
- 

### 1. Affirming Practice Examples

- Create visible symbols of inclusion (e.g., rainbow displays, quilts, flags, crosswalks)
  - Host and support LGBTQIA+ leadership, including ministry candidates
  - Establish:
    - Anti-racism and reconciliation groups
    - Youth leadership awards
    - Ministries for 2SLGBTQIA+ seniors
  - Develop building-use agreements reflecting Affirming values
  - Sponsor 2SLGBTQIA+ refugees
  - Hire or appoint an Affirming Coordinator
  - Offer:
    - Affirming worship services
    - Alternative or community-led worship spaces
- 

### 2. Celebrating Special Days & Events

- Mark key dates such as:
  - Pride celebrations
  - Affirming Ministry anniversary
  - Ecumenical Welcoming Sunday
  - International Women's Day (March 8)

- PIE Day (March 14)
  - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21)
  - Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20)
  - World AIDS Day (December 1)
- Organize worship, workshops, meals, and public participation around these events

### **3. Community, Culture & Artistic Expression**

- Display community art (e.g., AIDS Memorial Quilt)
  - Invite diverse cultural performers and groups
  - Host conversations on race, faith, and queerness
  - Organize inclusive social events:
    - Queer Prom
    - Drag events with education components
    - Community potlucks
  - Participate in Pride parades and public witness
- 

### **4. Inclusion, Care & Congregational Life**

- Adopt inclusive marriage and sacramental policies
  - Provide gender-neutral washrooms
  - Ensure diverse representation in:
    - Leadership
    - Worship participation
    - Educational materials
  - Include all ages and abilities in decision-making and ministry
  - Address justice issues through prayers, announcements, and action
  - Engage in community outreach and support initiatives
- 

### **5. Inclusive Language & Worship Practices**

- Use inclusive, affirming language in all settings
- Reflect diversity in:
  - Gender identity and expression
  - Sexual orientation
  - Culture, age, and ability
- Incorporate:
  - Diverse family structures in worship roles
  - Two-Spirit teachings and perspectives
  - Music and hymns by 2SLGBTQIA+ creators
- Develop liturgies for:
  - Family milestones and transitions
  - Coming-out celebrations
  - Community recognition events

## **6. Justice, Outreach & Advocacy**

- Support initiatives such as:
    - Safe and inclusive schools
    - Anti-racism and housing justice
    - HIV/AIDS care and awareness
  - Provide space for community groups and youth gatherings
  - Participate in:
    - Pride and public demonstrations
    - Human rights campaigns
    - Environmental justice efforts
  - Organize advocacy actions (e.g., letter-writing campaigns)
- 

## **7. Learning & Growth**

- Offer educational opportunities for all ages
  - Provide access to books, media, and online resources
  - Host workshops and discussion groups on identity and justice
  - Encourage participation in conferences and training events
  - Orient newcomers to what it means to be Affirming
- 

## **8. Signs of Celebration**

- Celebrate milestones such as:
    - Baptisms and weddings in 2SLGBTQIA+ families
    - Affirming anniversaries
  - Use inclusive symbols in worship (candles, banners, music)
  - Highlight diverse cultural and musical expressions
- 

## **9. Visible Signs of Welcome**

- Display:
  - Affirm United (AUSE) logo
  - Pride flags and inclusive symbols
  - Affirming Vision Statement
- Include explicit welcome messages in communications
- Use accessibility and inclusion signage
- Encourage visible participation (buttons, ribbons, stoles)

## **10. Visibility & Communication**

- Maintain clear, visible Affirming identity in physical and digital spaces
- Communicate regularly through:
  - Bulletins
  - Newsletters
  - Displays and information tables
- Ensure messaging explains and reinforces Affirming commitments

---

## **11. Welcoming & Informing Newcomers**

- Provide clear explanations of Affirming identity and commitments
- Share resources and materials with new members
- Create accessible and welcoming entry points into the community