

Researcher, Iridesce: The Living Apology Project

Opening/Closing Date: February 18 to March 10, 2019

With a commitment to the full affirmation of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people, The United Church of Canada is seeking one individual to undertake a) focused research and information gathering about the United Church's history associated with the 1988 decision, and b) collect theological resources around LGBTQIA2S+ welcome, both then and now. We are committed to becoming an anti-racist and intercultural church, to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, and to engaging in anti-oppression work that seeks to honour diverse identities.

This is a fee-for-service contract role for a period of time to be negotiated, with deliverables to be received no later than October 31, 2019. The Researcher will work with staff in the Church in Mission Unit, consulting with the Project Coordinator of Iridesce: The Living Apology Project, and Affirm United/S'affirmer Ensemble, as well as consulting with the General Council Office Archivist.

Description

The Researcher will carry out research to gather and document as full and complete a picture as possible about LGBTQIA2S+ history and theology within The United Church.

This History Gathering aspect of the project seeks to discover more about how the church responded to the crises lived out in church communities both just prior to and after the 1988 decision (1980-1998). The researcher will search through the UCC Archives for letters, research proposals, and other support documents related to these issues. They will research what other denominations in Canada and elsewhere have done regarding apologies to LGBTQIA2S+ people.

The Researcher will collect Theological Resources created that are related to the 1988 decision, as well as around collective healing, story sharing, and diversity. They will collate the work that has already been done within the church, check with seminaries to see if any Master's theses or Doctoral studies have been written (or are in the process of being written) on these issues, and connect with newcomer communities who are already working on or wondering how to have these conversations. They will seek to provide clarity around the theological arguments used re sexual orientation and gender identity, and address the theology of scripture related to LGBTQIA2S+.

This research will help the church to respond to the stories collected throughout Iridesce: The Living Apology Project, and will support the church's commitment to becoming fully affirming.

The researcher will:

- Conduct history gathering, addressing perception and reality around supports available during The Issue Years (1980-1998). Key questions to research include:

- How did we as church respond to the crises after 1988? Research proposals, support documents, etc.
- How did our Global Partners respond to the 1988 decision and what impact did it have for them?
- What are other denominations in Canada, and elsewhere, doing re: apologies to LGBTQ2+ people?

Collect Theological Resources connected with:

- the work around 1988
- collective healing and story-sharing
- a theology of diversity
- why be affirming? what was our theology around LGBTQ2+ welcome then and now
- a theology of apology/forgiveness/grace
- why discern wisdom together
- identify where there may be gaps in theological resources (what is missing or needed?)
- collate the work that has already been done within the church (check with seminaries and newcomer communities)
- Provide clarity around the theological arguments used re sexual orientation and gender identity
- Address the theology of scripture related to LGBTQ2S+.

Qualifications

Reasonable accommodation will be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The professional researcher must be familiar with the history of the 1988 decision, the work of Affirm United. Candidates who are also familiar with Iridesce: The Living Apology Project are preferred. They must be fully committed to the full affirmation of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people. They must have a solid understanding of the structure and relationships of The United Church of Canada in its many contexts. They must have excellent research skills, written communication skills, along with good computer skills including Word, Excel.

Compensation

The hourly rate is \$35, with the contract period to be negotiated. As an independent contractor, they will supply their own business tools.

To Apply

Interested applicants are invited to submit their resume directly to Jordan Sullivan at jsullivan@united-church.ca, no later than **midnight on Sunday, March 10**.