

Features

Red Wing Church Celebrates 10 Years of RIC Status

By Judy Will

On Sunday, January 31, St. Paul's of Red Wing celebrated its tenth anniversary as an Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation.

Started in 1984 by Lutherans Concerned North America (LCNA), the RIC roster now exceeds 450 settings, including congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries and organizations that welcome lesbian and gay believers. There are thirty-four RIC congregations in Minnesota, including People of Hope of Rochester and the St. Olaf congregation in Northfield. At the 2009 Synod Assembly, the Southeastern Minnesota Synod voted to become an RIC synod, joining 25 synods nationwide.

Under the leadership of Revs. Bill and Marian Eisenmann, the congregation's pastors at the time, St. Paul's sponsored a series of adult forums based on ELCA study materials. In early 2000, the congregational council voted to apply for RIC status and on March 9, 2000, Rev. Anita Hill and Janelle Bussert of LCNA presented the church council with an official RIC certificate.

St. Paul's has traditionally been an active participant in Red Wing's annual Diversity Festival. Rev. Kristen Schlauderaff of St. Paul's has been active in the larger community with Hispanic outreach and the annual crop walk. The congregation strives to live out its welcoming statement which reads:

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church welcomes all people to fully participate in the life and ministry of our congregation regardless of gender, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age, physical capabilities, economic or social standing.



Get it Online

- More information about LCNA & RIC - www.lcna.org

Share Your Story

Is something exciting going on in your congregation? Let us know! Contact Katie Livingood at livingood@semnsynod.org, 507-280-9457, or 800-426-6376 in Minnesota.

Feeding Body and Soul through a Garden Ministry

From <http://bit.ly/bltBfK> on the ELCA website



An award-winning video produced by Advent Lutheran Church, Madison, Wis., reminds us that planting seeds together can be a remarkable act of discipleship.

Advent showcased its garden ministry in a video it submitted for the 2009 ELCA video contest, winning a high-definition video camera as runner up in the congregational category.

The collaborative project of the Rev. Jeff Wild and several members of Advent interpreted the video contest theme (and tagline of the ELCA) - "God's work. Our hands." - by focusing on the hands of a wide range of members, including children, adults and seniors.

These hands planted and gathered fruits, vegetables and flowers grown on the congregation's nearly quarter-acre garden.

The video also included the voices of children from Advent and a nearby community center singing an original piece written especially for the garden ministry.

"Once we had that theme and guiding creative idea, making and editing the video was really easy," said Amy Floan, videographer and member of Advent.

The video also tied in the passage, "When I was hungry you fed me," and featured members sharing fresh produce with others.

Floan said. "The video shows how having a garden ministry is possible and a pretty easy thing other churches can do."

Of the video, Pastor Wild said, "It was a great pleasure to share this ministry with others." He said the congregation has yet to decide how it will use the prize.

Pastor Wild says he hopes the idea of congregational gardening catches on. "It's not just about the vegetables," he said. "It's also about nurturing faith and fostering relationships. Those faith connections are abundant through gardening."



Get it Online

- This story part of *Stories of Faith in Action*, online at www.ELCA.org/stories
- More about "God's work. Our hands." at <http://bit.ly/cGLM8o> on the ELCA website.