

# Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team

An RIC congregation is a congregation that has an intentional welcome to members of the LGBTQIA+ community

In recent years the Greater Milwaukee Synod Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team (RIC-MT) has been working to increase their ministry to the Greater Milwaukee Synod. At last year's assembly the body approved a resolution that gave us direction to provide this ministry. We are grateful for the voice of that Assembly in support for this important ministry.

Our first step in this process was to have a Congregational Summit in October 2018. This summit allowed us to bring together people from RIC congregations as well as congregations interested in becoming part of the RIC ministry. We came away from that discussion with some ideas for providing continued support to our RIC congregations.

In the 2018 resolution we were also charged with the mission to provide training in issues related to LGBTQIA+ congregations and members of our communities. We were asked to provide training to Synod Council and to Interim pastors in their work helping congregations in the call process. I am excited to say that we have contracted with Austen Hartke to assist us in this endeavor. Mr. Hartke will be with us on September 23-24 of 2019 to provide training to pastors, synod staff and interim pastors as well as youth directors and general congregants.

Our RIC-MT also has a ministry of visibility to the greater community. We provide a booth at Milwaukee PrideFest as well as presence in the Pride Parade in early June every year. Over the last couple of years, we have been able to help provide a collective presence of our ministries to the community. We work to connect people with the closest congregations to them. We invited anyone who may want to join us to walk with us on June 9, 2019.

We currently have 28 congregations and special ministries who identify as RIC congregations. We also have 5 congregations that are currently at one point in the process or another. If your congregation is interested in becoming a part of the RIC process, please feel free to contact me and I will be more than happy to help in any way I can. Plans are in the works to provide a Building and Inclusive Congregation training at some point in 2020.

The work of this ministry team would not be possible without the help of the long list of people who work with this team. I wish I were able to thank each one by name, but their presence in our goal to bring a welcome to members of the LGBTQIA+ community to our congregations is a vital and important part of our witness.

May God's blessing be with you all.

Peace,  
Pastor Bill Beyer (he, him, his)  
RIC-MT Convener  
Grace Lutheran, Thiensville, WI