The Greater Milwaukee Synod Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Ministry Team continues its work as a part of the international group, ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation.

Since 1974, ReconcilingWorks (formerly Lutherans Concerned/North America) has ministered to thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and heterosexual persons seeking to affirm both their faith and sexuality. An independent, Lutheran, membership-supported organization, ReconcilingWorks is committed to strengthen all of God’s people for authentic, visible, faithful lives and to work for systemic change within the church and world. ReconcilingWorks embodies, inspires, advocates and organizes for the acceptance and full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities within the Lutheran communion and its ecumenical and global partners.

At the 1991 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly, voting members declared the synod to be Reconciled in Christ, affirming that “gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth that comes from being loved and forgiven children of God.” In June 2006 several synod leaders, lay and ordained met in preparation for opposing the ban on civil unions and gay marriage in Wisconsin. In November 2006 we became Reconciling in Christ ministry team, a committee recognized by the Greater Milwaukee Synod.

Since then our main focus was working toward passing a churchwide resolution supporting committed same-gender relationships and allowing for the rostered service of ministers in such relationships. The resolution was passed at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Today, we continue a forward momentum toward full inclusion within the church; however, our work is far from done.

There are currently 19 congregations in the Greater Milwaukee Synod that are registered through ReconcilingWorks as RIC Congregations. Since 2009, we have heard comments such as, ‘Why do we need to become an RIC congregation?’ The reality is that there are many LGBT children of God who still feel rejected by the church. We know there are ELCA congregations who do not feel called to become RIC. That is why it is important for congregations who believe they are called to become RIC congregations to contact us. We can be a resource to help you work through a discernment process so LGBT people know they will be welcomed when they come to your church. If you are interested in exploring/discerning whether your congregation is RIC, please contact us – MaryBeth Hoffman: mb.hoffman@yahoo.com or Pr. Diane Olson: pastorandpup@gmail.com.

More information about ReconcilingWorks can be found on their website, reconcilingworks.org.

Respectfully submitted by: MaryBeth Hoffman