

Regarding the RIC process at Gloria Dei- here's a sketchy timeline describing our process

The original discussion started here in 1996, when 3 lesbian couples asked to have blessing ceremonies at Gloria Dei. They were denied, but the congregation began a long-term discussion about what their request meant for us.

We had several discussions, small group studies, large adult forums, etc. in 96-97.

In May, 1999, the congregation voted on a welcoming statement that said we welcomed all people regardless of sexual orientation.

Throughout the next year, we discussed the implications of our welcoming statement, and had several large and small group conversations regarding RIC specifically. We included a few workshops regarding, "How to discuss RIC with my children."

The congregation voted to become RIC in May, 2000.

In February 2002, one of the original 3 couples came to a congregational meeting and asked us to reopen the discussion of blessings.

We planned a series of events for the following school year to discuss the matter –

- September, '02 – Three Adult Forums using the Implications Wheel (see other e-mail) to discuss ramifications and implications of a Blessings vote.
- November, '02 – An Adult Forum led by Pastor Susan explaining what is meant by marriage, and by blessing. What the definitions and "powers vested in a pastor" were, how a service of blessing works, etc.
- January – March, '03 -- 4 different small groups met to discuss the proposal at various times and places
- February, 2003 -- Adult Forum – Panel discussion; Timothy & Patrick, and their families share their stories. (Gay couple and their parents, including one of their fathers who is a former ELCA bishop from Southwest MN?)
- March, '03 – Bishop Peter Rogness met with the council to help us with our final edits to the resolution. The council unanimously supported the resolution and proposed it to the congregation.
- March, '03 -- Bishop Rogness addresses the Adult Forum and discusses the council's resolution in light of sacramental practices.

May, '03 – Congregational meeting; very widely attended (around 300 people). Vote occurred without discussion, using private ballots. Resolution passed, roughly 80% - 20%.