

Anniversary Comments

My name is Mary Wilke- Adair. I been invited here this evening to share with you my small part in our church history. In preparing for this presentation, I realized it has been 30 years since I was on the church staff, which I think definitely qualifies me as history.

In 1989, it was a rather bold and radical idea to add a nurse to the church staff. Iowa Lutheran Hospital was piloting a Parish Nurse/Minister of Health program. Pastors Rehfeldt and Litzner became aware of the program, and after a special congregational meeting, Windsor Heights Lutheran decided to participate.

Six weeks later, after two interviews, and many prayers, the call came that I had been chosen as the Minister of Health candidate. I clearly remember hanging up the phone and “shouting with joy”.

As groundwork for the new program, a MOH Advisory Committee was formed. Marilyn Warling was chairperson, and Doc Wooters, Nancy Gregory, Marcy Osborne, and Dave Furneaux were the initial committee members. They were a dedicated and supportive team and were truly instrumental in helping form a ministry that lasted for over 20 years in this congregation.

Most of my time was to be spent assisting the pastors. I visited the home-bound members regularly, making sure their health and safety needs were being met. I made follow-up visits after

hospitalizations, nursing home visits, and many referrals to health agencies. We initiated the blood drives, blood pressure screenings, formed the care and nurture committee, and began celebrating a Healing Liturgy once a year during Lenten Season. Also, many health education classes, like parenting, needs of aging parents, grief support groups, and Christian Caregiving were offered.

The intent and hope was always to give witness that the church is not just a place of worship, but a community where support and healing is available.

In 1994, I resigned my position and my husband Warren and I moved to Hot Springs Village, Arkansas. Fortunately for me, I became the Minister of Health for Christ Lutheran Church there and continued in that role until 1998, when Warren and I returned to the Des Moines Area and Windsor Heights Lutheran. I continued nursing at Mercy Hospital until retiring in 2011. My husband Warren died that year also. Two years ago, I married Wayne Adair.

Although many years have passed, the memory of my days on the staff here are still very vivid and considered one of my greatest blessings. I feel privileged to have served this congregation.

Thank you.