Green Congregations Case Study: First Presbyterian Church, Stillwater

Practices:
~ Parking Lot Retrofit
~ Raingardens
~ Pervious Pavers

Benefits:
~ Reduces runoff to the St. Croix River
~ Removes pollutants
~ Creates a safe, well-lit path for pedestrians in the parking lot
~ Provides attractive and welcoming landscaping
~ Educates members and the public about water pollution

Partners:
~ First Presbyterian Church
~ Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc. EOR
~ Middle Saint Croix Watershed Management Organization
~ Washington Conservation District
~ Metro Association of SWCDs
~ City of Oak Park Heights

Contractor:
~ T.A. Shifsky

Watershed:
~ Middle Saint Croix

Constructed:
~ Fall 2010

Project: First Presbyterian Church’s parking lot had been deteriorating for years. When it came time to repave they decided to design with clean water in mind. On their own initiative and with a small grant from the watershed, FPC fund-raised and created a parking lot with multiple raingardens and a pervious paver promenade to help reduce stormwater runoff and to beautify and enhance their church grounds.

Location:
Stillwater, MN
St. Croix River Basin

First Presbyterian Church
6201 Osgood Avenue North
Stillwater, MN 55082

A central and inviting promenade leading up to the doors of church is made of pervious pavers. Elm Trees line the walkway which will, as they mature, create a beautiful shaded canopy. Mature trees can intercept 1600 gallons of rainwater per year, keeping stormwater from carrying pollution into the St. Croix River.
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Project Cost:
~ $350,000* **

*First Presbyterian Church received a $1,000 grant from the Middle Saint Croix WMO for this project.
**Some of the cost included improved lighting for safety and electrical upgrades

Statistics:
~ Promenade - 245 ft long
~ Raingardens - 4,660 sf

~ The planting has a 897,000 sf drainage area of impervious surfaces (parking lot and hardscapes).

~ The project was designed to capture runoff from a 2.25-in rainfall.

To see a video of the plant installation, visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQL-Wtba9DE

The before photo - an expanse of impervious surface with no gardens or color, but plenty of stormwater runoff.

Education, visual aids and investment from members of the congregation was key to a successful project for FPC.

The raingardens are planted with native grasses and wildflowers with deep roots to soak in water. In addition, they provide habitat to birds, bees and butterflies.

Pervious pavers allow water to soak in-between the stones and infiltrate into the soil below as opposed to washing down a storm drain.

Volunteers helped to install and continue to care for the gardens; members “adopt” a raingarden to weed during the summer.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to celebrate the new raingardens.

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