

ReconcilingWorks

LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



LOVE IS TRANSFORMATIONAL

Serving in the role of executive director with ReconcilingWorks is a deep joy and delight. It is a privilege to serve alongside our gifted staff, board of directors, and volunteers. Representative from all three of these groups were able to attend the ECLA Churchwide Assembly. Over the course of the week we gathered people for morning prayers, hosted a reception, and to be a part of our counter-protest against Westboro Baptist.

The Westboro counter-protest was a very meaningful action we were able to lead. Program Coordinator, Deacon David Behling, Rev. Mack Patrick, Deacon Liz Colver, and I stood out in the Phoenix heat for two hours holding signs, handing out buttons, and welcoming folks. We had a large group of folks join us ranging from bishops, rostered leaders, lay leaders, and even local folks who were walking by. When a young adult voting member learned about Westboro being there they jumped into action and created a fundraiser supporting ReconcilingWorks. They encouraged people to give \$1 for every minute of the protest. Through their organizing and your generosity we raised \$9,382!

We are in a time in the life of the church and our culture that requires us all to be creative in the ways we work and support the church. A heartfelt THANK YOU to Vivian for sharing their creativity!

-Aubrey Thonvold (they/she), Executive Director

Today is a great day to ensure ReconcilingWorks is able to continue the holy ministry of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy of LGBTQIA+ people in the Lutheran church.



How to Give

Make a gift online:
reconcilingworks.org/donate/

Mail in your gift:
 ReconcilingWorks
 P.O. Box 8070
 St. Paul, MN 55108

Donor Advised Fund:
 If you have an ADF you can request distributions be made to ReconcilingWorks.

Employer Match:
 If your employer offers an employee match this is a great way to give.

Helpful Information:
 ReconcilingWorks IRS Tax designation: Tax exempt under IRS tax code 501 (c)(3)
 IRS Tax ID: 84-3273216
 Address: P.O. Box 8070
 St. Paul, MN 55108
 Organization type: Human Rights, Social Justice, Advocacy, Educational, Religious

RECONCILINGWORKS REFLECTIONS OF CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY



ReconcilingWorks has a long history of being present at ELCA Churchwide Assemblies. For decades we have been a presence, support, and leader in the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Here are some reflections from our time in Phoenix from our board members Deacon Liz Colver, Rev. Mack Patrick, and staff Deacon David Behling.



Pastor Mack Patrick, Board Member of ReconcilingWorks leading morning prayer.

"IN THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENED..."

The church showed up in many ways as the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly gathered in Phoenix, AZ. From the intentional creation of inclusive bathrooms to the opportunities to experience various cultures through lived experiences, strides were made in embodying the authentic Gospel. On day one, the energy was palpable as the number who joined our counter-protest continued to grow, reinforcing the need and desire for the presence of ReconcilingWorks not only at the churchwide level but across the various levels of our church. As the assembly continued to deliberate and vote on both the next Presiding Bishop and Secretary, themes arose that showed

glimpses of what the future church can and should look like to stay relevant in an ever-changing world. The historic election and acknowledgement that the top three elected members of the ELCA are BIPOC individuals is something to celebrate. It is also a recognition that while history was made, the work is only beginning, and it is our time to hold ourselves and those we elect accountable as we work to make God's love real. Being in the room where it happened caused many days of big emotions as I wrestled with the excitement for what was happening and the weariness of watching our church do historic things, and at the same time, cause intentional and unintentional harm to marginalized communities.

As we continue to live into the actions taken at Churchwide Assembly, my prayers for the church are to continue to explore ways to live authentically as we are called. My prayers for the church are to be bold in our witness to the Gospel, to continue to invite people to the ever-expanding table, to listen, to learn, and to double-down in what it means to be named and claimed as a beloved child of God.

Pastor Mack Patrick (he/him/his)
Board Member of ReconcilingWorks

CONTINUED: RECONCILINGWORKS REFLECTIONS OF CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY



"Throughout the week of plenaries and worship times, there were impromptu conversations with voting members from many RIC partners as we walked alongside each other in hallways, rode elevators, bumped into each other at breaks, or standing in line for iced tea or coffee. There were requests for meetings that came through the Assembly Guide messaging system and emails. The common thread in all these conversations was how important the Reconciling in Christ identity was for lay people, rostered ministers, and bishops. Wherever they were in the journey, living out the gospel of welcome and love was their goal. It was a blessing to hear their stories, and even though there's a lot of work between now and the next assembly in 2028, it is holy work, and the Holy Spirit will guide and support us." - Deacon David Behling



ReconcilingWorks Board members and staff with Bishops leading a counter protest.

Being a lifelong Lutheran, I find attending the Churchwide Assemblies to be a thing I look forward to time and time again. Either as a voting member, a resource person, or a visitor, having the opportunity to see how the church at large shapes how the churches in my synod and neighborhood function is really formative. Attending this year as a visitor with the ReconcilingWorks staff was a chance to see yet another angle of our denomination that I hadn't previously considered.

I saw queer lay and rostered people find one another and pray every morning with allies and RIC partners at our morning prayer. I heard young people stand up and speak out about the value of queer leadership in our denomination. I witnessed the assembled body vote to approve edits to the Human Sexuality Statement with a 90% affirmative vote. I watched RIC partners and future RIC partners approach with questions and conversations about the good and holy work they are supported in by our ReconcilingWorks staff.

My assumption that the work of this organization is valued, appreciated, and desperately necessary was affirmed in the ways that I was able to witness the non-anxious presence and partnership of our Executive Director engage relationships with leaders across the church. The work of being church, being church together, being church together for the sake of the world, is hard and holy work, and ReconcilingWorks belongs and is often welcomed at tables where LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC beloveds haven't always been invited. The ELCA has much work to do, and yet, attending this assembly reinvigorated my awareness that we - dear church - can arrive at welcome and affirmation of all of God's beloveds sooner if we continue to show up.

So my invitation to you all is to do the work of discerning your call to be a voting member at the next Churchwide Assembly in 2028. Rally your RIC communities to send young people to the assembly as voting members. Teach them the work of the church, and pray for those who are preparing their hearts and minds for the work ahead. ReconcilingWorks is here to support you, to resource you, to pray for you, and to accompany you in the shared work of reminding the ELCA that God's love is abundant for all.

Deacon Liz Colver (she/her/hers)
Board Member of ReconcilingWorks

PRIDE 2025

Queer Justice is Intersectional



CELEBRATING PRIDE ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Showing support for LGBTQIA+ Lutherans is more important than ever. Thank you to our Reconciling in Christ partners who have share photos from their PRIDE celebrations and worship services. We are grateful to be in this holy ministry together.



Lake View Lutheran



Lake Park Lutheran



Greater Milwaukee Synod



Faith Lutheran Church of Chino

NEW Job Board for our RIC Partners!



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We want to support RIC Partners in attracting candidates who want to work with RIC Partners.

Therefore, we have added a [Job Board](#) to our [website](#).



RIC Partners are invited to let us know about open calls or positions by [completing this online form](#). The post will be removed after 30 days. ReconcilingWorks maintains the right to refuse any submitted post. This free service is available to our RIC Partners.

ReconcilingWorks is grateful for our RIC Partners as we continue to advocate for the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual/aromantic (LGBTQIA+) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community.



RECONCILINGWORKS RECEPTION

ReconcilingWorks had the great joy of hosting a reception for those who attended the ECLA Churchwide Assembly. ReconcilingWorks is deeply grateful for the work and resilience, and sacred worth.

It was a joy to see so many people who have supported and lead ReconcilingWorks and Lutherans Concerned North America over decades. It is humbling to know just how vast and wide our community and connections are by hearing stories of organizing in the 70's, working to introduce the Reconciling in Christ program in the 80's, legislative work to make 2009 happen, and sharing hopes we have for the church that is still to come.

The reception was a powerful reminder that change and transformation come when we share our gift and love of the church.

Thank you all who were able to attend! Make sure to mark your calendar, because you will be invited to join us at our next Churchwide Assembly in 2028!





NEW Ways to Give!

As ReconcilingWorks continue to deepen and expand the reach of our ministry we also wanted to expand the way you can show your support by making online giving a little simpler. You are now able to give to ReconcilingWorks through Venmo and PayPal. Scan the QR Code for Quick and easy giving.

venmo

@ReconcilingWorks



PayPal

ReconcilingWorks:
Lutherans for Full Participation



BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

[Building an Inclusive Church Training & Toolkit](#)

This training helps you design and implement a journey for your faith community to publicly and intentionally welcome people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, and incorporate a commitment to the work of racial equity. Building an Inclusive Church equips you with ways to create dialogue, deepening relationships throughout your faith community rather than sparking debate and division.

Upcoming Online Trainings:

1. September 13th, 2025
2. November 8th, 2025
3. January 10th, 2026
4. March 14th, 2026
5. May 9th, 2026

Learn
more
here



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ACTION PLANS – UPDATING AND PUBLICIZING PARTNER COMMITMENTS

Many RIC Partners have submitted their updates to the Reconciling in Christ public commitments since January, and a number who are still working on taking that step in their RIC journey. There is information about commitments on the [How to become an RIC Partner](#) page on our website. We have also posted a PDF with [additional information for updating the four RIC Partner Public Commitments](#). Once leaders in a faith community have decided how to manage the updates, we ask that you contact us with that information, including a timeline, so we can make a note of that in our records. Updates to commitments and RIC partner profiles can be reported via the [RIC Partner Information](#) form.

If you have questions about those commitments or want to consult with staff about how to manage the conversation in your ministry setting, please contact Deacon David Behling, the Program Coordinator. You can reach him most easily via email at davidb@reconcilingworks.org.

For those ministries that have not updated commitments or submitted an action plan to Deacon David, the end of December 2025 is the deadline. Starting in January 2026, we will begin informing faith communities that their RIC status is suspended and information about them will be removed from our partner network and the website.

REGIONAL ZOOMS

To provide support to RIC partners working on updating their commitments, ReconcilingWorks hosted Zoom meetings for each ELCA region in April and June of this year. A total of 75 representatives from synods, congregations, and other faith communities participated. No additional Regional Zooms are planned, but if members of a synod RIC team would like to request or organize one, please contact us at info@reconcilingworks.org.

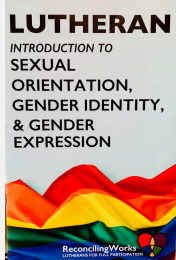
HOW TO BECOME RIC



RESOURCES FOR YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

ReconcilingWorks has a multitude of resources to help support you and your faith community available in English and Spanish. Check out each store below.

Orders are shipped out weekly, so order soon to ensure you receive your package in time!



PURCHASE RESOURCES



CELEBRATING NEW RIC PARTNERS



St. John Lutheran Church (Green Bay/Ashwaubenon, WI)
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (Wilmington, DE)
Resurrection Lutheran Church (Ankeny, IA)
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection (Racine, WI)
Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church (Arlington, VA)
St. Paul Lutheran Church (Dearborn, MI)
United Lutheran Church (Grand Forks, ND)
Calvary Lutheran Church (Hauppauge, NY)
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (Newport News, VA)
Unity Lutheran Church (Burlington, IA)
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church (Ames, IA)
Zion Lutheran Church (Cloquet, MN)
Zion Lutheran Church (Akron, PA)
Immanuel Lutheran Church (Kingston, NY)
Blessed Trinity Lutheran Church at Rosemont (Bethlehem, PA)
Good Soil Lutheran Ministries (Rocky River, OH)
Zoar Lutheran Church (Canby, OR)
Northern Illinois Synod (Moline, IL)
Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church (Clawson, MI)
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church (Homewood, IL)
Our Lord's Lutheran Church (Oklahoma City, OK)
Northeastern MN Synod (Duluth, MN)
Holy Cross Lutheran Church (Creve Coeur, MO)
Resurrection Lutheran Church (Dublin, CA)

