

ReconcilingWorks

LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION



This fall, the ReconcilingWorks team is stepping into a season of deep work—work shaped not only by where we have been, but by what we have heard from you. Over the past year, our team has had the privilege of listening to hundreds of people across our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) partner network. Through listening sessions, conversations, trainings, and gatherings, you have shared what is happening in your communities, where you are experiencing challenges, and what resources you need to deepen your commitments to welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy.

Now we are putting that listening into action.

This fall, our team will begin developing new and updated resources shaped directly by what we heard from RIC partners. We are especially focused on creating practical tools that help communities move beyond welcome statements and more deeply live into their RIC commitments throughout the life of their ministries.

We are also continuing to engage the ELCA's important work surrounding Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust. As conversations about sex, gender, sexuality, relationships, and marriage continue across the church, ReconcilingWorks will provide theological resources, opportunities for learning and reflection, and a clear witness to the belonging and full participation of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

At the same time, we are expanding support for ministries discerning whether becoming RIC is their next faithful step. More communities are reaching out for accompaniment, conversation, and resources as they begin this journey, and we are committed to meeting them with care.

There is much ahead of us this fall. Through it all, our work remains rooted in listening—to our partners, to communities seeking deeper welcome, and to the Spirit calling us toward a Church where all people know: you are beloved, you are valued, and you belong.

-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

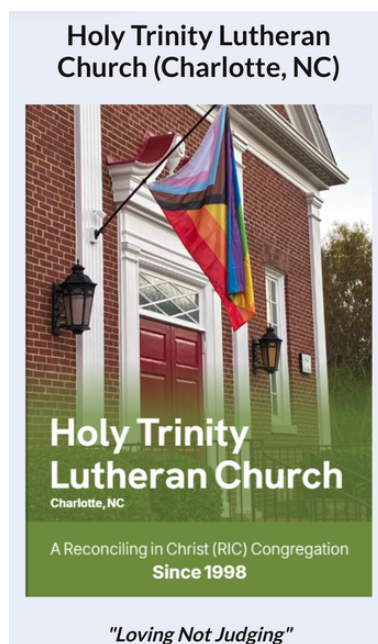
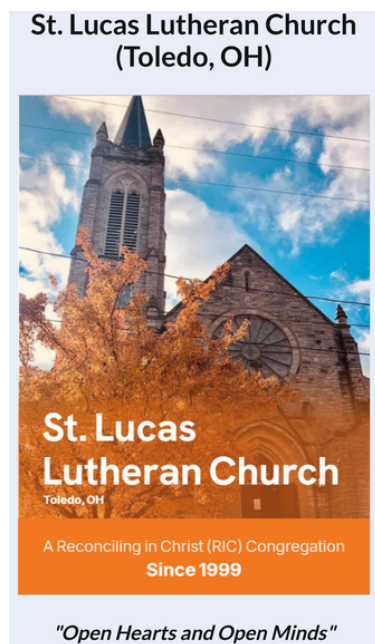
STORIES OF IMPACT - STORIES, RESOURCES, AND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR RIC MINISTRY



One of the gifts of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program is that no community does this work alone. Across the United States and Canada, RIC Partners are finding meaningful and creative ways to live out their commitments to welcome, inclusion, celebration, advocacy, racial equity, and anti-racism.

This summer, ReconcilingWorks launched a new way to share some of that incredible work: our Stories of Impact webpage. [Explore RIC Stories of Impact](#)

Each month, we will highlight stories from RIC Partners who are putting their commitments into action. These stories are about more than becoming an RIC Partner—they are about lives changed, relationships deepened, congregations transformed, and communities strengthened. We hope you will visit regularly, celebrate the work happening throughout the RIC community, and discover ideas and inspiration you can bring back to your own ministry.



**READ RIC STORIES
OF IMPACT**





JENNIFER TROM, OPERATIONS MANAGER

These last few weeks I've read so many books – I'm all in on my “summer reading” before having to acknowledge the crisp cool mornings and the leaves now beginning to fall, one by one, off the tree outside my window. Choir rehearsal and fall programs are back on the calendar, along with winter prep in the garden – even as a few tomatoes are still trying to ripen.

This fall leads to my two-year anniversary and my gratefulness only grows for the work I get to do as Operations Manager with ReconcilingWorks. I get to have phone and email conversations with you all, I get to dive deep into the database to keep the data “clean” and reporting useful, and I get to support ReconcilingWorks staff and board – powerful advocates for all God's beloveds.

Regarding resources, Be sure to share the [sign up for our e-news](#) for newsletters and other occasional emails such as “resource reminders” – there are so many resources on the ReconcilingWorks website. (Feel free to call or email for help finding what you need.)

In preparation for the upcoming mid-term elections in the US, check out the message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Curry, [A Call to be Trusted Messengers in this Election Season](#). Bishop Curry states “Our public witness is rooted in faith, guided by honesty and expressed through active citizenship.” Be sure you are registered to vote in advance and make a plan to cast your vote.

May your fall be filled with gorgeous colors, joyous hearts, and “laughter [as] carbonated holiness” (Anne Lamott).

DEACON DAVID BEHLING, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

I continue to be filled with joy and gratitude for all the things that RIC partners are engaged in, wherever they are on their journeys. The welcome, inclusion, and celebration of LGBTQIA+ people and the ongoing advocacy and anti-racism work all y'all do make a meaningful difference in the life of the church — and in the wider world beyond the walls of our buildings.

This past April, May, and June, there were a series of regional and ministry focused listening sessions for RIC partners, and people from over 100 different faith communities participated. There was also a survey available for those unable to participate in a listening session.

CONTINUED: DEACON DAVID BEHLING, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Listening to lay and rostered leaders serving faith communities and the wider church in a wide variety of ways, I was struck by your passion and commitment to the concept of genuine hospitality, which lies at the heart of the RIC journey. If your faith community participated in either a listening session or the survey, thank you! I will do my best to provide the support YOU need in YOUR contexts to sustain and support you in this mutual work.

When you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me! I add that request to the end of most emails I send to RIC partners, but it is worth ending this newsletter item with it. As the Program Coordinator, I am here to help you find answers to questions and to talk through the journey taking place in your faith communities and ministries. Keep the questions and the emails coming!

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR DEEPENING & EXPANDING WELCOME



ReconcilingWorks offers a variety of educational resources to help individuals, congregations, and communities grow in their welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy of LGBTQIA+ people. From Bible studies and theological reflections to training tools, conversation guides, and workshops, these resources are designed to equip people of faith with knowledge, language, and practices that foster justice and belonging.



**PURCHASE
RESOURCES
HERE**



Whether you are just beginning the journey or seeking to deepen your commitment, ReconcilingWorks provides the support you need to live out God's call to love and inclusion. Orders ship weekly.

<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/purchase/>

NEW Job Board for our RIC Partners!



ReconcilingWorks
LUTHERANS FOR FULL PARTICIPATION

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.

ELCA HUMAN SEXUALITY SOCIAL STATEMENT REVISIONS”



ReconcilingWorks has released a [Pastoral Letter](#) on the ongoing work of the ELCA Task Force and revisions to the Human Sexuality Social Statement. For more than 50 years, ReconcilingWorks has advocated for the acceptance, full participation, and liberation of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions within the Lutheran Church.

That commitment remains steadfast.

As the ELCA continues discerning revisions to Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust, we believe this is an important moment to ask:

- Does our language reflect the expansive diversity of God’s creation?
- Are we creating space for the fullness and complexity of human relationships and families?
- Do our policies and theology uphold the dignity of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions?
- Are we moving the Church toward liberation—or maintaining systems that allow discrimination and exclusion?

Our Pastoral Letter shares ReconcilingWorks’ theological grounding, concerns, hopes, and recommendations as this important work continues. We envision a Church where LGBTQIA+ people never have to question whether they belong.

A Church where every family is valued.

A Church where love is celebrated with equal dignity and joy.

A Church where every person hears God’s liberating promise:

You are beloved.

You are seen.

You belong.

**READ THE LETTER &
TAKE ACTION**



On the Road with ReconcilingWorks



THE HOLY WORK OF WELCOME

Each day, the staff of ReconcilingWorks is blessed to connect with so many of you. Through countless emails and phone calls, Zoom conversations, and gatherings in person, we witness the Spirit moving in powerful ways. These moments of connection remind us that the holy work of welcome is not something we do alone—it is a shared calling, carried out together in community. Here is a little bit about where staff have been up to in September.

CONVOCATION AND PROLOG WEEK AT WARTBURG THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

On Thursday, September 3, Deacon David Behling, ReconcilingWorks Program Coordinator, helped facilitate a convocation at Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS) in Dubuque, Iowa, celebrating the 10-year anniversary of WTS becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Partner.

Following opening reflections from Deacon David and Rev. Robin Luckey, Director of Community Life and Candidacy, participants gathered for table conversations centered on hospitality, diversity, inclusion, affirmation, and equity. Together, students, staff, faculty, and visitors reflected on how these values shape their community and their ongoing commitment as an RIC Partner. Deacon David was also available for individual conversations, resources, and support.

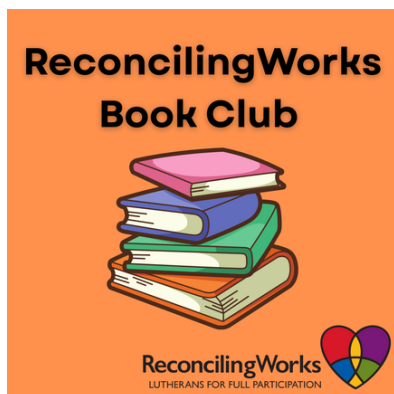
The powerful diversity of the Church and God's beloved people was beautifully visible throughout the gathering. ReconcilingWorks celebrates this milestone with Wartburg and gives thanks for their continued commitment to creating a community of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy.

TARYN MONTGOMERY INSTALLED AS BISHOP FOR THE NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD

On Saturday, September 12th, the Rev. Taryn Montgomery was installed as Bishop for the Northeastern Minnesota Synod, which had voted to become an RIC Synod at their Synod Assembly in spring of 2025. Deacon David Behling, the Program Coordinator, served as the representative of ReconcilingWorks at the event.

The beautiful diversity of the church and God's beloveds was clearly visible throughout the worship service, both visually and liturgically, especially in the Welcome Statement Litany and Land Acknowledgement at the beginning. We at ReconcilingWorks ask for Bishop Taryn and her new staff to be blessed and inspired to continue the synod's ministry of inclusion, affirmation, and advocacy over the next six years.

More information about RIC synods is available on the [Synodical & Churchwide Engagement](#) page on the ReconcilingWorks website.

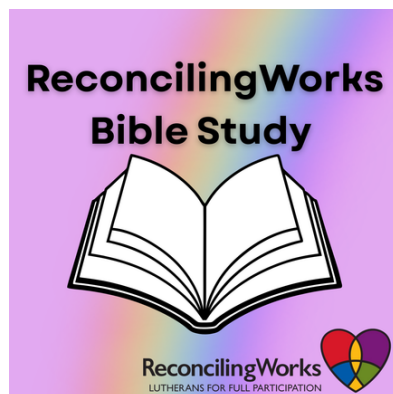


JOIN THE RECONCILINGWORKS QUARTERLY BOOK CLUB

Exploring Stories of faith, justice, and liberation
ReconcilingWorks is thrilled to continue our new Quarterly Book Club — a space for learning, reflection, and connection!



**BOOK CLUB
HERE**



JOIN THE RECONCILINGWORKS MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY

Each month, we'll be guided by a rostered leader from the LGBTQIA+ community who will lead us in exploring how Scripture calls us to love our neighbor, work for justice, and celebrate the diversity of God's creation.

**BIBLE STUDY
HERE**



BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

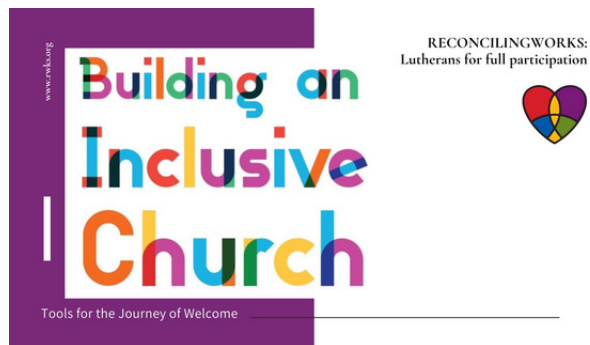
[Building an Inclusive Church Training & Toolkit](#)

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. Online: Saturday, September 19, 2026
2. Online: Saturday, November 7th, 2026
3. Online: Saturday, March 13th, 2027
4. Online: Saturday, May 8th, 2027

<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/trainings/bic/>



**LEARN MORE
HERE**



CELEBRATING NEW RIC PARTNERS

Hope Lutheran Church (Long Grove, IL)
Messiah Lutheran Church (Winnipeg, MB)
St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church (Barrington, RI)
Faith Lutheran Church of Briston (Bristol, CT)
Hills of Peace Lutheran Church (Kamloops, BC)
Saint Barnabas Lutheran Church (Cary, IL)
Celebration Lutheran Church (Sartell, MN)
Lord of Life Lutheran Church (Darien, IL)
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Gaithersburg, MD)



NEWS & EVENTS

**NEW
STAFF
MEMBER**

STAY TUNED TO HELP US
WELCOME OUR NEW
GRATITUDE COORDINATOR
STARTING IN OCTOBER!

2026
WED
16
SEP

BISEXUAL AWARENESS WEEK

🕒 1:00 pm - 11:50 pm (23) CT (GMT-05:00)

2026
THU
17
SEP

**BIBLE STUDY - GOSPEL TEXT
FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

A SACRED SPACE TO GATHER, LEARN, AND
GROW IN FAITH TOGETHER.

🕒 3:00 pm CT (GMT-05:00)

Online: Zoom

2026
SAT
19
SEP

**BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE
CHURCH (BIC) TRAINING**

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO FACILITATE A
WELCOMING JOURNEY IN YOUR FAITH
COMMUNITY.

🕒 11:00 am - 3:30 pm CT (GMT-05:00)

⌚ Duration 4 Hours 30 Minutes

Online: Zoom

2026
WED
23
SEP

BISEXUAL VISIBILITY DAY

🕒 (All Day: Wednesday) CT (GMT-05:00)

LEARN MORE
HERE

