



**MOUNT OLIVE
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

RIC Notice of October 5th Vote

September 19, 2025

Dear Friends,

Throughout this past year, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Subcommittee has been engaging in a reflective journey with our congregation at Mount Olive to learn what it means to become an officially inclusive Church. Since this process began in November 2024, we have been grateful for your feedback, which has helped us to create contextual studies and provide space for our community's collective discernment.

As a Congregation, we worked through monthly study sessions from January to June 2025, covering three modules: 1) The Voice of Conscience, Canadian Culture, and the ELCIC; 2) Lenses of Interpretation; and 3) The Voice of the Bible. We presented a draft Welcome Statement in June and held our last information session on September 7, 2025. At the September session, the Congregation signaled its readiness to proceed with a decision.

We want to thank everyone in the community for their openness and participation throughout this past year. Your caring involvement and respect for others has nurtured a safe space for all to engage, share personal stories, and understand other people's journeys. We acknowledge that for some of you this process has evoked anxiety, discomfort, and fear of division. As the Subcommittee, we are heartened by the trust you have placed in us and in each other. As noted at the September session, our approach has been anchored in Christ's commandment that we love one another as he has loved us.

The adoption of a Welcome Statement is a key criterion for becoming an officially inclusive Church under the Reconciling in Christ program. The Subcommittee and the MOLC Council have prepared a proposed Welcome Statement for the consideration of the Congregation. And the Statement has been adapted to reflect the ideas and input of the community that came forth since it was presented in June. It is wide in scope and focuses on including all people in our Church, holding in tension the importance of respectfully making space for individual consciences while committing to unity in diversity and creating a safe space for all within our community.

MEETING and Congregational Vote

11:45 am to 12:15 pm - Sunday, OCTOBER 5, 2025

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85958058514>

Meeting ID: 859 5805 8514

Dial In – Audio Only: 1-778-907-2071

Instructions:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/85958058514/invitations?signature=p2s6VEhOG3ljpAiqdagso2XnC7ipWn1UakgRWfHbVsl>

As noted at the September information session, adopting the Welcome Statement is a requirement to become an officially Reconciling in Christ Church, but we can adopt the Welcome Statement without becoming an RIC Church. We have received positive feedback on the Welcome Statement and will be asking you to vote on its adoption at an upcoming meeting on Sunday, October 5, 2025, following the Church service.

At the same time, we will be asking you to vote on a separate but related question of whether you approve of becoming an officially Reconciling in Christ Church. As described at the September session, becoming a Reconciling in Christ Church has four main requirements as follows:

1. Adopting a welcome statement that includes people of *all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions as well as a commitment to racial equity*;
2. Allowing the sanctuary and community space to be used for 2SLGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings;
3. Being open to calling rostered Pastors and leaders who are Black, Indigenous, People of Colour and/or 2SLGBTQIA+; and,
4. Making an annual contribution to the Reconciling Works program.

The text of the Welcome Statement and the questions that you will be asked to vote on are attached in the *Appendix*.

Reconciling Works

As discussed at the September session, should the decision be made to become an officially RIC Church, Council would decide the amount of the annual contribution on the recommendation of the Treasurer.

Reconciling Works is an independent organization that advocates for the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of 2SLGBTQIA+¹ Lutherans in all aspects of the life of the Church, congregations, and community.

For more information on Mission, Vision, and Values, please see their website: <https://www.reconcilingworks.org>

¹ 2SLGBTQ1A+ is an acronym that stands for *Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and other sexual and gender diverse identities*. The "2S" acknowledges the unique historical and cultural significance of Two-Spirit people within Indigenous communities, and the "+" includes those who identify with other identities not listed in the acronym.

VOTING

As quorum is needed for this vote to be considered viable for the business of our community, we ask that all voting members of MOLC prayerfully discern participating in this important meeting.

Please be aware that proxy/absentee or asynchronous voting is not permitted under our Constitution. As such, voting at this special congregational meeting will require members to participate in the meeting, either in-person or via ZOOM (joining online or by telephone).

Respecting that this may be a sensitive matter for members of our Church to publicly consider, we will be voting by secret ballot. In-person voting and voting via online communication through ZOOM will take place through secret ballot; however, please be aware that due to technical limitations, those joining by telephone on ZOOM will not be able to have their vote registered anonymously. However, only the registrar will be aware of how those who have joined by phone will vote.

More details on how those who join online or by telephone can register their votes will be provided at the meeting.

We thank you all for your commitment, resilience, patience, and courage throughout this process, as together we have engaged in a journey to decide collectively about becoming an officially inclusive, affirming, and welcoming community. We trust that God's grace and love will continue to guide our church and inspire our discernment.

Grace and peace be with you all,
Reconciling in Christ Subcommittee

Stephanie Oldford, Co-Chair	Penny Enarson
Brian Anderson, Co-Chair	Carol Malmas
Ralph Brewster	Pastor Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford

The text of the Welcome Statement and the questions that you will be asked to vote on are as follows.

APPENDIX

MOTION #1

That the Mount Olive Lutheran Church Congregation adopt the following Welcome Statement:

Mount Olive Lutheran Church is an inclusive and caring congregation inspired by faith and shaped by the love and grace of God. As we are called by Jesus to love God and one another, we are committed to welcoming and affirming all people to belong to our Church community, inclusive of all personal qualities such as age, ability, race, cultural background, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family structure, or socio-economic status. We celebrate and give thanks for the many diverse gifts that God graciously bestows upon us and encourages us to share through our relationships with others. We endeavour to provide a respectful, gracious, and loving space in our community for individuals to hold diverse opinions, encouraging the equity of all, respecting the consciences of all, and accepting each person as a unique creation made in the image of God. All are invited to participate in this lifelong journey of partaking in God’s reconciling love extended to every person in the inclusively welcoming grace of Christ Jesus.

_____ YES

_____ NO

_____ ABSTAIN

MOTION #2

That the Mount Olive Lutheran Church Congregation proceeds with becoming an officially Reconciling in Christ Church, in recognition that this includes the following in addition to the adoption of the above Welcome Statement:

- 1. Allowing the Mount Olive Lutheran Church sanctuary and community space to be used for 2SLGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings;
- 2. Being a church that is open to calling rostered ELCIC Pastors and leaders who are Indigenous, Black or People of Color, and/or 2SLGBTQIA+; and,
- 3. Making an annual contribution to Reconciling Works in an amount discerned annually by the Mount Olive Lutheran Church council.

___ YES
___ NO
___ ABSTAIN

PLEASE DO NOT FILL OUT THIS FORM. ANOTHER FORM WILL BE ISSUED AT THE TIME OF THE VOTE.