



ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

Special Congregational Meeting

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025

DRAFT

Call to Order

Cathy Dykman-Acinger (President) called the meeting to order at **12:20 p.m.** by reminding we are God's beloved children, called to love God with our whole hearts, and called to love our neighbors as ourselves. **Pastor Zac Sturm** followed, opening the meeting with a word of prayer.

Neil Pfeiffer (Secretary, Welcome Journey Conversations chair) introduced the purpose of the special meeting is to review the Welcome Journey Conversations survey results (October 2025) and that it is the Council's recommendation to move forward in calling the two survey questions to a congregational vote. Handouts were distributed containing the results of the survey, all additionally provided comments, and the proposed motions for consideration.

A quorum of at least 80 voting members was verified with 204 members signing in.

Welcome Journey Survey Results

The results of the Welcome Journey Survey were presented to the congregation:

- 714 voting members were emailed (572 emails sent out, 112 email addresses are shared between members). There were 296 survey responses total, 226 online survey responses, and 70 printed survey responses
- For question 1: **"If you were asked to vote today, how do you feel about Atonement revising our Welcome Statement with the proposed changes?"** From 294 responses (2 surveys did not include a response for question 1), the results were: 76.2% Would Support (222), 8.8% Lean Toward Support (26), 2.7% Undecided (8), 0.7% Neutral (2), 5.1% Lean Toward Concern (15), 6.5% Would Not Support (19).
- For question 2: **"If you were asked to vote today, how do you feel about Atonement becoming a Reconciling in Christ partner congregation?"** From 296 responses, the results were: 65.5% Would Support (194), 9.8% Lean Toward Support (29), 4.7% Undecided (14), 1.3% Neutral (4), 5.4% Lean Toward Concern (16), 13.2% Would Not Support (39).
- 85.0% was the combined result of **Would Support & Lean Toward Support** for question 1.
- 75.3% was the combined result of **Would Support & Lean Toward Support** for question 2.

- Included with the printed results, the Council chose to provide all the feedback received on the Welcome Journey Conversations Survey, allowing for every voice and statement to be shared and represented, not to persuade each other in order to arrive at a consensus, but to **help us more clearly see and hear each other** — the diverse perspectives that come from the beautiful quilt of experiences at Atonement.
- Though potentially risky, the Council decided to share these comments as a critical part of the transparency and openness for all perspectives to be heard and shared with the full congregation. A statement of respect and caution was given explaining the Council’s decision, asking for the congregation to maintain care for one another, even though particular views might differ and not resonate with their own.
- From the handout:

“As you read these comments, knowing you will agree with some & disagree with others, we ask you to consider them respectfully, not so that another’s opinion might makes sense to you, but so you might better understand why an opinion makes sense to them.”
- There were no additional questions or comments for the Survey results or methods.

Special Question for Congregation

The two motions were read aloud by Neil Pfeiffer, as well as the discussion and voting format.

Motion to Amend Continuing Resolution [C8.01.A13] Statement of Welcome and Affirmation of the Atonement Lutheran Church Constitution

and

Motion to Become a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

– Recommended by the Atonement Church Council on October 23, 2025.

RESOLVED, to adopt that the Constitution of Atonement Lutheran Church, with Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, be amended in Continuing Resolution [C8.01.A13] Statement of Welcome and Affirmation by the four changes presented to the congregation in the Welcome Journey Conversations updating the language for gender identity and expression, physical and mental ability, and committing to racial equity, justice, and peace.

RESOLVED, provided the amendment to Continuing Resolution [C8.01.A13] Statement of Welcome and Affirmation of the Constitution of Atonement Lutheran Church is adopted, to further provide clarity on the public commitment to living as a welcoming faith community, to adopt that Atonement Lutheran Church become a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

Combined motions, moved by Ashley Swan

Combined motions, seconded by Kim Schultz

Procedural Motion to Limit Discussion Period

RESOLVED, to limit discussion for the question for a total time of thirty (30) minutes, allowing each member to speak only once for a period of two (2) minutes, with the format of alternating between someone for the question with someone opposed and continuing so forth until the end of the thirty minutes.

Moved by Nikki Esser

Seconded by CJ (Caroline) Justice

No objection or debate.

Discussion

- Sixteen (16) members approached the microphone and spoke on behalf of the motions. One (1) member spoke neutrally, neither for nor against. Three (3) spoke against the motions, and twelve (12) spoke in support of the motions. Each speaker kept approximately to the 2-minute time limit established, with proper alternation of support and opposition until there were no more speakers of opposition.
- Each speaker delivered a respectful and heart-felt reason for their position, and each was received respectfully without interruption or disruption from the listening members of the congregation.

Congregational Member Vote

- Discussion was closed with no objection or further debate at the end of 30 minutes, putting the questions and calling the vote.
- Voting was conducted by a private written ballot, with both motions listed on a single printed ballot. Ballots were then collected and tabulated.
- Results were recorded together and announced to the congregation as follows:

Motion #1: Motion to Amend Constitution [C8.01.A13] Statement of Welcome

- Yes: 181
- No: 17
- Abstain: 5

With 203 total votes, 181 passes by simple majority. Motion Carried.

Motion #2: Motion to Become a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

- Yes: 164
- No: 31
- Abstain: 8

With 203 total votes, 164 passes by simple majority. Motion Carried.

Closing

Cathy Dykman-Acinger (President) closed the meeting with no objection.

Pastor Jordan Stone ended the meeting by asking everyone to stand, join hands, and led the congregation in reciting the Lord's Prayer. The meeting ended at **1:36 p.m.**

Recorded by Neil Pfeiffer, Secretary: 10/26/2025

Addendum

Certification of Voting Results

- On Tuesday, October 28, 2025, the ballots were recounted by **Neil Pfeiffer** (Secretary) in the presence of **Nathan Choate** (Director of Communication), in order to certify the election results and verify the outcome.
- After recounting, one (1) ballot got miscounted for Motion #2, accidentally misattributing a “No” vote as a “Yes” vote. The certified and corrected vote counts were as follows:

Motion #1: Motion to Amend Constitution [C8.01.A13] Statement of Welcome

- o Yes: **181** 89.2%
- o No: **17** 8.4%
- o Abstain: **5** 2.4%

With 203 total votes, 181 passes by simple majority. **Motion Carried.**

Motion #2: Motion to Become a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

- o Yes: **163*** 80.3% (*Corrected from 164)
- o No: **32*** 15.7% (*Corrected from 31)
- o Abstain: **8** 4%

With 203 total votes, 163 passes by simple majority. **Motion Carried.**

Appended by Neil Pfeiffer, Secretary: 10/29/2025