

European American Lutheran Association (EALA)

"Allies in the struggle to dismantle racism"

Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 1

JANUARY 2010

Anti-Racists Everywhere

Welcome to the EALA. We seek to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among groups and individuals committed to the work of dismantling racism in the ELCA and in society.

Under Construction

The new EALA website is under construction. Our goal is to have it up and running by the next newsletter. You can find us on the web at www.elca-eala.org

On this site you will find information about us, as well a calendar of current events, links to resources, features such as faith journeys, and commentary on current events.

If you would like your events included on our calendar, or if you would like us to include a link to your organization contact Paul Lewellan at plewellan@mac.com

In the News

Broaden your perspective on racism by reading "'Clean, Safe and High-Value' Neighborhoods Are Nice Ways of Saying 'White' Without Bringing Race into It" by Rich Benjamin, Hyperion Books. Posted October 16 <http://www.alternet.org/rights/143337>

(Suggested by Pastor Sandy Jones)

Some Talking Points By Harlan Johnson

The ELCA strives to be a multi-racial anti-racist church. Synods have established anti-racism or racial justice - multi-cultural teams with minimal success. Now the ELCA, at the urging of other ethnic associations, has established the EALA. We encourage you to join, and when asked about the EALA, to say:

Recognizing that the ELCA is overwhelmingly white, we are called to mobilize all whites to overcome the separation and power differential between whites and others. *How will we do it?*

1. We will hold ourselves accountable to the other ethnic associations in the ELCA.
2. We will awaken white Lutherans to the challenge of overcoming institutionalized racism beginning with our own church body in its many expressions.
3. We will call on all white Lutherans to participate in a year-long process called *Troubling the Waters for the Healing of the Church* (Guide is available from Augsburg Fortress.)
4. We will identify and provide resources to the church to equip white Lutherans in this task, One source currently available is *Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*, a course based on a DVD and study guide from World Trust Educational Services.
5. We will challenge all leaders in the ELCA to publicly take a stand and bring the church to a position of partnership with all against oppression and for racial justice.
6. We will do all we can to connect all who are working for racial justice to become a unified force, celebrating our unity and our partnership.

WHY?

- To celebrate God's amazing creation, forming us in human community without judgment or separation.
- To enable connections that include respect, compassion, and understanding.
- To influence individuals and structures to have the curiosity and the courage to view our conditioning, and to take action within and outside the ELCA.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

“What Can I Do?”**By Frank Samuelson**

When our congregation's Social Ministry Committee asked this question of our Racial Justice/Multicultural team, the team came up with a variety of answers. Here are a few:

1. Don't lend your smile, or let your silence, encourage those who think racist remarks are acceptable humor.

Why? God loves all people and calls us to respect, not hurt, one another in word and deed. We can discourage racist “humor” by denying its desired effect.

2. Read the book “Sundown Towns” by James Loewen which is available from or through your local library.

Why? We all need to know more about the history of race relations in America, how they have changed, and also persist, in our society today.

3. Ask a person of color who you know to take you to a worship service or other gathering of his or her ethnic group.

Why? We need to open ourselves to people from other cultures as their guest.

4. Become familiar with the immigration issues in your community. (Talk with an ESL teacher or a pastor who serves immigrants, etc.)

Why? Most of us don't know what it's like to be an immigrant, but as Christians we are called to welcome the strangers among us.

5. When you encounter a person of color in the mall, the grocery store, at a meeting, etc. acknowledge him or her with a smile and/or a bit of small talk.

Why? Often Blacks, Hispanics, etc. feel ignored or shunned by members of the white majority. A simple smile or greeting can say “I accept and respect you as a fellow human being.”

Upcoming Events***EALA Board of Directors Meeting**

Friday, February 5, 2010
9:00 (PST), 11:00 (CST), 12:00 (EST)
Katherine Long – President
katherineblong@verizon.net

EALA Board of Directors Meeting*

Friday, March 5, 2010
9:00 (PST), 11:00 (CST), 12:00 (EST)
Katherine Long – President
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Two-Day Training

Southeastern Iowa Synod Anti-Racism Team
March 19-20, 2010
Iowa City, Iowa
Contact Kathy Smith, smith@seiasynod.org

White Privilege Conference

Thursday, March 25, 2010
Augustana College, Rock Island IL
Contact: Ken Brill, kenbrill@augustana.edu

Visit These Websites for Information on Other Anti-Racism Activities**Crossroads Anti-racism Education and Training**

www.crossroadsantiracism.org

Lutheran Human Relations Association

www.lhra.org

People's Institute for Survival and Beyond

www.racmatters.org/peoplesinstitutesurvbeeyond

*If you have events you would like to appear in this newsletter, contact Pr. Lyle A Kleman revprlak@mchsi.com

Note: *If you are interested in joining the EALA, you can do so by going to the social networking website, PLAXO (www.plaxo.com) or contact Cathy Crimi at catherine.a.crimi@vanderbilt.edu*