

European American Lutheran Association (EALA)

"Allies in the struggle to dismantle racism"

Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 2

SPRING 2010

Welcome 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.

Visit Our Website

For information on joining the EALA, anti-racism resources, and registration forms for our Biennial Meeting go to www.elca-eala.org

Biennial Meeting—October 28-30, 2010—Windham Milwaukee Hotel

Keynote Speaker, Sociologist Allan G. Johnson, describes white privilege as varying strands that create a complex knot that is hard to unravel. Johnson is a nationally recognized writer and public speaker who has worked on issues of privilege, oppression, and social inequality since receiving his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Michigan in 1972. He is the author of *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy and Privilege, Power, and Difference*.

Workshops Include:

Immigration. Pr. Lydia Villanueva examines issues related to immigrants and their lives.

Race in the News. A look at how race plays out in the media.

Why Aren't We Really Talking. Explores ways that people can connect across racial barriers.

Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible. Discussion of the film by Shakti Butler.

Sharing Our Individual and Team Best Practices. A swap meet and sharing session.

Schedule in Brief:

October 28	3:00-5:00 Registration and Networking	5:30 Banquet	
	7:00 Opening	7:30 Keynote	8:30 Socializing
October 29	9:00 Devotions	9:15 Allan Johnson follow-up session	
	11:45 Lunch Buffet and EALA update	1:15 Ethnic Associations Panel	
	2:45 Intro to Caucusing	4:30 Worship	7:30 <i>Mirror of Privilege</i> viewing
October 30	8:30 Biennial Meeting	9:45 Workshops	11:00 Closing

Cost: Registration for the Conference is \$125 and includes two meals, plus two complementary breakfasts for those registered at the Windham Milwaukee at the Conference rate of \$84 per night.

Register and pay online at <http://www.elca-eala.org/conference.html>



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

My Faith Journey by Bruce Brenn

My journey seeking justice began in my teen years when I worked as a respiratory therapist and later as a registered nurse. I became a caregiver. Regardless of who individual was, I was an advocate.

In the early 1990s I began volunteering in a local “soup kitchen” and became friends with a cook who was African American. When we went out socially, he would ask how safe the place was. I didn’t understand what he was getting at. Then at the Northwest Lower Michigan Synod Assembly in 1996, I went to a breakout session on the subject of white privilege and I became committed to work on anti-racism, not knowing where it was going to take me.

A year later I was involved in the closure of a Lutheran church. Congregation members asked the synod to use the money left over from the sale of the church and paying off the debt to go back into the community. The synod leadership offered the money to the community via a ministerial alliance that was comprised of mostly black churches. The alliance wanted to utilize the money for anti-racism work with Lutherans. Intense meetings with the synod, local churches, and community

advocates took place, and I was privileged to be a part of them..

During the MLK celebration in Kalamazoo in 2000 the announcement of the formation of ERAC/CE (Eliminating Racism and Claiming / Celebrating Equality) was made. I was a board member for the next 7 years.

In ERAC/CE we were able to identify five targeted systems and institutions in the community that we wanted get the message to. We were successful and ERAC/CE continues to work with many of the institutions yet today. I have been involved with video productions involving ERAC/CE and the synod’s anti-racism team.

At work I helped get our management team to anti racism workshops along with many of the staff. We have an active diversity team. I participated in the formation of the European American Lutheran Association (EALA) and am a board

member.

My anti-racism work continues through my membership with the Synod’s anti-racism team, my activity in my workplace, and my ecumenical and evangelical work with my church and



In the News

New information has appeared on Post-Katrina events.

In an article entitled “Rumor to Fact in Tales of Post-Katrina Violence” criminologist John Penny said, “The environment that was produced by the storm brought out what was dormant in people here — the anger and the contempt they felt against African-Americans in the community. We might not ever know how many people were shot, killed, or whose bodies will never be found.”

(Trymaine Lee, *New York Times*, August 26, 2010)

Upcoming Events

EALA telephone Board Meeting
September 10, 2010
12 EDT/11 CDT/9 PDT

EALA telephone Board Meeting
October 1, 2010
12 EDT/11 CDT/9 PDT

EALA Biennial Meeting
Wyndham Hotel
Milwaukee, WI
4:00 pm Thur.-12:00 Saturday
Allan Johnson, Keynote

Other Notable Events

Arab Lutheran/Middle Eastern
Heritage
Biennial Meeting
October 8-10, 2010

Asian Pacific Islander
January 25-February 1, 2011
Asian Lutheran International
Conference

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Selected Readings on Racism in the United States (Suggested by the Southeastern Iowa Synod – Anti-racism Team)

And don't call me a racist!; A treasury of quotes on the past, present, and future of the color line in America. Mazel, Ella, Selector & Arranger.

Broken Spears, The. Leon-Portilla, Miguel, ed.

Cose, Ellis. *The Rage of a Privileged Class: Why Do Prosperous Blacks Still Have the Blues?*

Family Properties: How the Struggle Over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America. For further information on the Web:

<http://www.semcoop.com/book/9780805091427>

Johnson, Allan G. *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy and Privilege, Power, and Difference.*

Ferris, Susan & Sandoval, Ricardo. *The Fight in the Fields.*

McCall, Nathan. *Makes Me Wanna' Holler: A Young Black Man in America.*

Page, Clarence. *Showing My Color: Impolite Essays on Race and Identity.*

Robinson, Randall. *Quitting America: The Departure of a Black Man from His Native Land.*

State of Native America, The: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance. M. Annette Jaimes, Ed.

Tatum, Beverly Daniels. *Why are all the Black Kids sitting together in the Cafeteria?: And Other Conversations About Race.*

Wise, Tim. *Colorblind: The Rise of Post Racial Politics and the Retreat from Racial Equality.*

Zia, Helen. *Asian-American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People.*

Speak Out on Rewriting History

On May 21st the Texas State Board of Education adopted a new history and social studies curriculum that amends or waters down the teaching of the civil rights movement and other historical events. Included in the revisions, the slave trade would be renamed the "Atlantic triangular trade."

Another example of the Board's actions is that President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis's inaugural address will now be studied alongside Abraham Lincoln's inaugural.

As part of the study of Title IX, affirmative action, and the Great Society, students would be required to learn about their "unintended consequences."

This revisionist history is even more disturbing because of the implications in the textbook publishing business. Texas is one of the largest markets for textbooks in the nation. It is one of twenty states that adopt statewide textbooks standards. With 4.7 million students, Texas carries a lot of clout. Additionally, because of the volume, unit costs are lower, making the books popular in the nationwide market.

As advocates for an end to racial injustice, we should not be silent on this issue. If you would like to weigh in on the actions of the Texas State Board of Education, contact Paul Lewellan at plewellan@mac.com. Comments will be collected for the next newsletter and/or posted on the EALA website.

Want to join in this effort? Go to <http://webapps.elca.org/MultiCultural/EALA/> and complete the membership form.

My Faith Journey by Reverend Sandy Jones

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