

Advocacy Working Group – June 22, 7pm Zoom meeting

Present: Jennifer Hemken, Karen Carl, Kelly Kautz, Leanne Brown, Linda Toso, Darrell Westby, Emily Ryski, Susan Geitzenauer, Karen Heuchert, Kim Rathjen

Notes taken by Kim Rathjen

- 1) **Introductions and respond** to this question, “Why are you interested in this work in the Racial Justice arena?”
 - To connect and grow
 - Looking for involvement
 - Hoping to help the church be more involved
 - Want to be part of a bold church
 - Do advocacy work as part of a group
 - Find out how I can help with Racial justice

- 2) **Overview of resources available** for organized advocacy efforts – especially those endorsed by and utilized by the ELCA including:

Websites:

- ELCA website advocacy resources <https://www.elca.org/advocacy>
- ELCA Advocacy Connections newsletter
http://support.elca.org/site/MessageViewer;jsessionid=00000000.app20121a?em_id=5394.0&dvlv_id=8628¤t=true&em_id=5394.0&NONCE_TOKEN=FB7D606CAB8027FED3E9A3A061674531
- Lutheran Social Services of MN <https://www.lssmn.org/get-involved/advocate>

Pages to follow On Facebook:

- Twin Cities Lutherans for Racial Justice
- Unite Table MPLS
- ELCA Advocacy
- MICAH Twin Cities <https://www.facebook.com/MICAH.twin.cities/> (Specifically focused on housing)
- ISIAIH <https://www.facebook.com/ISIAIHMN/>

- 3) **What are other ways to do advocacy?** (Read and respond to following post)

WHITE FOLX DOING “THE WORK” — THIS IS A MUST READ FOR YOU:

“Note to white allies: When you beat up on your fellow white people for being ignorant about racism, you are NOT HELPING. Those naïve white people just waking up to racial justice? That want to do the right thing but are saying the wrong thing because they were just born to the struggle yesterday?”

They are YOUR JOB #1. YOU are supposed to empathize with their white fragility, get them past their self-centering feels, and bring them over to the right side of history.

Why? SO PEOPLE OF COLOR DON'T HAVE TO.

Sound exhausting, frustrating, and slow? You bet it is! So is any work for liberation! It's not all speeches and cookies. This is The Work.

Don't want to do it alone? Find your nearest Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) chapter and promise to hold your Newly Woke White Ally's hand at a meeting.

Here's what doesn't help: taking on the mantle of BIPOC's rage and tearing down well-intentioned but ignorant white folks on our behalf. Our anger isn't yours. It doesn't belong to you. By being angry and berating other white people for being asleep all this time, you are actually centering yourself and your feelings—a mistake you should leave behind in White Allying 101.

We need you to be the Movement Greeter: a friendly face, a patient guide. Check out White Nonsense Roundup. They model this role for you.

In your lifetime, a person of color—or many—probably took the time to educate you when you meant well but wrong-stepped. Intentions do not excuse harmful effects, but if we are to grow this movement, the well-intentioned need to be educated to know and do better.

Too often, that job falls to BIPOC. It's exhausting, emotionally fraught, sometimes traumatizing for us, because it's our struggle.

*This is the work you need to take up, because we've been doing it for you. IT'S YOUR TURN.”
-Anoosh Jorjorian*

4) What are you thinking about how we go about doing this work?

- Advocating without alienating/conversations
- Resist the temptation to use “Us vs Them” Language – work doesn't need to be divisive, start from a place of agreement
- Learn what other Faith communities in our area are doing and partner
- Conversations with other ILC members – how do we involve new people
- Give support to Pastors when they speak out on Race Issues
- Want to be a bold church
- Ongoing meetings – starting out monthly – support and growth

Action:

Next Meeting – Monday, July 20, 7pm (probably via Zoom)

Meeting assignment –

- 1) Explore the three websites below (some are one page, some are several)
 - a. What did you learn?
 - b. Where did you feel called to action on these websites? Did you do anything?
 - c. Are there any things you think would be particularly important to share with the congregation from these websites? What is the best way to do that?
- 2) For those who are interested – research what other Faith communities are doing and be ready to report

ELCA Social Statement on Race, Ethnicity and Culture https://www.elca.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-and-Culture?_ga=2.97823199.1120077471.1592853562-1958602427.1585760146

ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge https://elca.org/racialjusticepledge?fbclid=IwAR02SVkf812oyQfFNVYsK1nL-LAWkl83eJ9aCKIZiqH_MN7z-q-CBwM-pHo

ELCA Advocacy website resources

https://www.elca.org/Resources/Advocacy?_ga=2.68109649.1120077471.1592853562-1958602427.1585760146#CivicEngagement