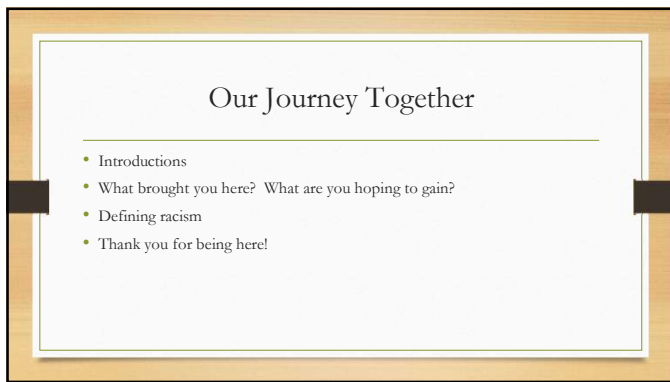
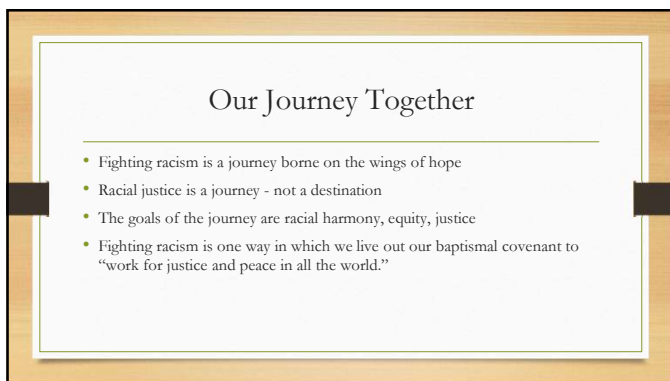


1



2



3

The ARC of Our Conversation...

Jemar Tisby* recommends we pursue the ARC of Racial Justice:

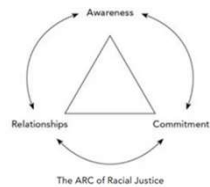
- **A** is for Awareness – be a life-long learner on the history of racial injustice in our society and the problems that persist around us. Refuse to grow complacent!
- **R** is for Relationships – expand new possibilities for understanding and solidarity by the people we engage with deeply
- **C** is for Commitment to Action – Once we are aware and expand relationships, we must, with urgency, go and do – starting in our own community

*Author of "The Color of Compromise" and "How to Fight Racism"

4

The ARC of Our Conversation...

Awareness, Relationships, Commitment is non-linear and unending



5

A is for Awareness

- Being aware of racial injustice is the first step to fighting structural racism.
- Without education and raised awareness, racial injustice persists
- Awareness is a life-long process as we examine the history of race in society and the problems that exist around us
- Awareness is a life-long act of refusing to grow complacent and ok with the status quo

6

Growing in Awareness Discussion

- How might you gain greater awareness around issues of racial justice?
- What influences have helped you become aware of racial bias, systems of injustice?
 - Implicit Bias Training? Books or Films? "Did You Know?" stories?
- Is your congregation willing to address the need for the A of awareness? What work has your congregation done in this area? Do you know what resources the ELCA has to help grow awareness of racial injustice?

7

R is for Relationships

- Relationships expand our horizons and open up new possibilities for understanding and greater solidarity
- Relationships have the power to touch our hearts - "When you know someone, you care about someone. What affects them begins to affect you." (Jemar Tisby)
- We must be willing to be deeply affected by the plight of our neighbors which can only take place in the context of authentic relationships that matter.

8

Growing in Relationships Discussion

- How has your awareness of racial injustice been impacted by knowing a person or people of color or different ethnicity?
- Which relationships have you been most thankful for in your journey toward racial justice?
- How have you grown in expanding your circle of relationships – personally and in your church?
- Equity involves ceding positions of power and privilege to those who have historically been marginalized. Who have you invited to places of power who previously was overlooked?

9

R is for Relationship

The "Trinity of Anti-Racism"

Where does *Awareness* become Real - RELATIONSHIP

What provides the soil for *Commitment* to Grow -
RELATIONSHIP

10

R is for Relationship

If God came down to be Incarnate-ly in relationship with Us, what does that say about the importance of In-Person Relationship to Anti-Racism?!

11

R is for Relationship

- God created us as people of **relationship**: As the means for God to know and love us, and for us to know and love God, and for us to know and love our neighbor, as we know and love ourselves. And one of the powerful ways Jesus talks about Relationship is Friendship (John 15)
- **Friendship** - Rev. Thabati Anyabwile notes that when we were three and four years old, we were happy to approach others and ask the simple question, "*will you be my friend?*" Somehow as adults it becomes "weird!"

12

R is for Relationship

Pr. Anyabwile...
 White Fragility (Robin De Angelo)...
 How to Fight Racism (Jemar Tisby)...
 ALL speak of "just asking someone" to get something to
 eat, for a cup of coffee, etc. *not to pick their brain, not to*
"ambush" them about racism, but to GET TO KNOW THEM
FIRST...

13

R is for Relationship

'THEN...

- We must be willing to be deeply affected by the plight of our neighbors which can only take place in the context of authentic relationships that matter. (*Jemar Tisby*)

14

R is for Relationship

- What ways have helped you to enter into friendship or relationship with someone of another race?
- How have you grown in expanding your circle of relationships – personally and in your church?

15

R is for Relationship

When we grow in Relationship, there are often times when or places where we grow more deeply in our ability to care, to find solidarity, to act. Can you share a time when you experienced this?

- What difference has it made in your AWARENESS and COMMITMENT?
- Have you found your congregation a good place for growing in relationship together? Have you had to “create your own community?”

16

R is for Relationship

What ways have you - and/or your congregation - engaged in Racial Justice practices together?

What ways have you - and/or your congregation - “grown your DNA,” so that you find yourselves growing in diversity?

17

C is for Commitment to Action

- Martin Luther King, Jr. expressed the “**fierce urgency of now**” in calling churches to stand against racial injustice and compromise no longer.
- **NOW is the time!** (*I Have a Dream*, 1963)
- With greater awareness and expanded relationships, we are called to act to create the society that God desires and that we desire to see.

18

C is for Commitment to Action

- Lifelong Commitment to Way of Life
 - requires a total shift in disposition
 - antiracist activity becomes our way of life

For we are what God has made us,
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.
(Ephesians 2:10)

19

C is for Commitment to Action

- Willingness to set aside our own preferences, prestige, privileges
 - Accompany / walk alongside / take action with those who are being marginalized, despised, oppressed
- Like Jesus!

20

Actions Steps: Developing a lifelong commitment to racial justice

- Create something that speaks to racial justice
 - (As you do, strive to get feedback from someone who identifies in a different racial or ethnic background AND who is willing to help)
- Join an organization that advocates for racial and social justice (like VICPP!)
- Donate money to organizations that advocate for racial or social justice
 - Donate to/ purchase from BIPOC-owned business!
- Speak with candidates for elected office, asking them about their views of racial justice **and** the policies they advocate
- VOTE!

*All suggestions are from Dr. Jemar Tisby, in *The Color of Compromise*

21

Actions Steps: Developing a lifelong commitment to racial justice

- Actions can be steps of taking up for and standing in solidarity with people in your neighborhood, school system, workplace, and church.
- Action steps challenge systemic and institutional racism:
 - Can involve challenging hiring practices or confronting discrimination in the workplace.
 - Changing policies to make sure diverse perspectives are at the table
 - Vote - in support of a just, equitable society for ALL.

22

Growing in Commitment to Action Discussion

**What is ONE action step that you can take,
in this fierce urgency of now?**

1. Ponder on your own for 1 minute.
2. Find another person and share together for 3 minutes.
3. Back together to briefly reflect for 2 minutes.

23

A Few Resources

Do your own work! - Worth reading:

- ELCA Social Statement, 1993: "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture"
- Jemar Tisby - *"The Color of Compromise"* and *"How to Fight Racism"*
- Latasha Morrison - *"Be the Bridge"* and *"Brown Faces White Spaces"*
- Emma Dabiri - *"What White People Can Do Next - from allyship to coalition"*
- W. Kamau Bell & Kate Schatz - *"Do the Work!"* workbook
- Ibram Kendi - *"How to be an Anti-Racist"*
- Angela T. Khabeb - *"Call to Allyship: Preparing Your Congregation for Leaders of Color"*
- Celeste Headlee - *"Speaking of Race - Why Everybody Needs to Talk About Racism and How to Do It"*
- Clint Smith - *"How the Word is Passed - A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America"*
- Joseph Barndt - *"Becoming an Anti-Racist Church - Journeying Toward Wholeness"*

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Racial Justice Organizations

- ELCA Racial Justice Ministries (elca.org/our-work)
- ELCA Association of White Lutherans for Racial Justice (whitelutheransforracialjustice.org/)
 - "Working to dismantle white supremacy in the ELCA and our world"
- SURJ – Standing Up for Racial Justice (surj.com) "A home for white people working for justice"
- Be the Bridge (bethebridge.com) - on-line learning courses such as "Foundations" for white people by white people and "Be the Bridge" study for mixed group of adults who wish to pursue racial reconciliation
- Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy - VICPP, Richmond
- Others?

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National Day of Racial Healing 2025

- "We are a church that values and encourages diverse voices and lively dialogue in our faith and life. The National Day of Racial Healing was an opportunity for church leaders and allies to express individual perspectives, and their perspective do not necessarily reflect official positions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."
- National Day of Healing 2025 was joined by the ELCA, and there are 10 videos that capture the day's presentations.
- URL: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNDmVwhz-MU6QdZbY6o_b4JPkqAY35Dw

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Closing Prayer

- Based in part on Jemar Tisby's study guide, "The Color of Compromise" (p. 154)
We thank you, God, for the opportunity to walk through this conversation together with your beloved community. We confess the times when we should have acted or spoken up in the midst of gross injustice; give us grace which restores us to you and to others. We pray for strength as we seek to do your will in creating a more equitable church and society. Come, Holy Spirit and fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Unsettle us in our complacency and gives us new vision to see you, Jesus, in the face of every neighbor. Help us to live out the ARC model of justice and peace as we journey forth as your baptized children. In Christ's name we pray. Amen

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