

Justice Week #2 (Racial Justice Emphasis)

Watch the video of the Zoom session with Elisa Oh found on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/z2uD2ChfHrM>

Consider your baptismal calling, which states:

... you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to... care for others and the world God made,

and work for justice and peace. (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 228)

Ask the following questions, or others as you are so moved (this is a tough topic; read your audience):

1. Did you know that working for justice and peace is a part of your baptismal calling? What does that mean to you?
2. Have you ever talked about this with your parents or other church leaders? Why do you think these conversations can be difficult?
3. What surprised you about what Elisa said?
4. Based on what Elisa shared, does it sound like her experience growing up was much different from yours? In what ways? Did you notice any similarities?
5. Have you ever been a part of a situation where you or someone else was being treated unfairly because of how they look or sound? Did anyone show up as an ally for the one(s) being mistreated?

Pray together. Here is an example:

Dear God, We pray for ears to listen and hearts to be open to the others around us. Open us up to voices different from our own. Help us to see all people as created in your image, and help us to treat them as such. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Consider this definition of “ally” from @chescaleigh on YouTube

This is an optional 5 minute add-on video that you can use, which outlines the steps to allyship that Elisa also raised: <https://pitt.libguides.com/antiracism/ally>

“An ally is anyone from a dominant or majority group that is working towards ending oppression by supporting and advocating for those in marginalized and oppressed groups.”

HOMEWORK:

Now, **imagine a time when you could be called on to be an ally** to an individual who is being treated unfairly due to their race or something else that makes them different.

Write a story or dialogue script OR record a video of how you could be an ally by disrupting a scene where someone is being mistreated because of their identity. You may write your own scenario, or you may use any of the scenes mentioned below. Stories should be at least two paragraphs long and should include an explanation of the problem with an emphasis on the resolution (the part when the ally lifts up the person/people being mistreated). A dialogue script would look like a short scene from a play: write just the spoken words that 2 or more characters might act on stage. Your video could be a short skit acted out with others, or it could simply be a recording of you describing the scene.

*Remember, allies are not saviors who swoop in like superheroes to “fix” injustice, but rather they listen to and support those on the margins.

Example scenarios to consider for a video or story:

- You are eating tacos at school and your friend refuses to eat them because she says, “Only bad things come from Mexico.”
- You are in the locker room with all boys when someone starts talking about a girl’s body in a way that doesn’t seem appropriate.
- You are watching basketball and your grandpa makes a comment about the hairstyle of a black player, saying, “He looks like a thug.”
- There is a new girl at school who appears to be of Asian descent. Your classmate asks her where she is from and if she knows how to speak English.

Sample dialogue script:

Setting: Lunchroom.

JOHN: Hey, did you see the new girl in science class? I heard her tell the teacher her family is from El Salvador. I bet they're illegal.

MARY: Come on, don't make that assumption--have you even talked to her?

JOHN: No, but I see people who look like her on the news who come to this country to take jobs and money that belong to real Americans.

MARY: Hey, people's inside experience doesn't always match the stories you believe based on their outside appearance. Turns out she's in my Spanish class, and her accent's better than the teacher's!

JOHN: It'll be hard for her to learn English and catch up to us.

MARY: Her English is fine, since her school started teaching it in Kindergarten. The only thing she has to catch up on is why all the classrooms on Hall B have no room numbers after that prank with the lighter fluid--I talked to her during passing time when she was looking for her new math class, and she told me her mom is a professor of mycology and got a huge grant to come here for a year to study the big fungus.

JOHN: What??

MARY: I invited her over to study Spanish with Sarah and me, and I think you should stop making up stuff about her and her family, OK?

JOHN: OK, whatever.