

Moving Forward: Courageous Conversations with

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Land Acknowledgement

- We stand on the homelands of the Wahpekute Band of the Dakota Nation. We honor with gratitude the people who have stewarded the land throughout the generations and their ongoing contributions to this region. We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota Nation, and we wish to interrupt this legacy, beginning with acts of healing and honest storytelling about this place.

St. Olaf's Five-Part DEI Strategic Plan

1. Develop an Inclusive, Culturally Competent Community
2. Intentionally Engage and Uplift All Types of Diversity
3. Ensure Support for Staff, Faculty, and Students
4. Identify and Revise Policies, Process, and Practices that Present Barriers
5. Hold Ourselves Accountable

Source: stolaf.edu/equity-inclusion

Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community

- **Mission:** Rooted in Lutheran tradition and engaging all traditions, the Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community brings together people of different faiths and worldviews to enrich spiritual inquiry, foster love of neighbor, and deepen a sense of vocation in all.

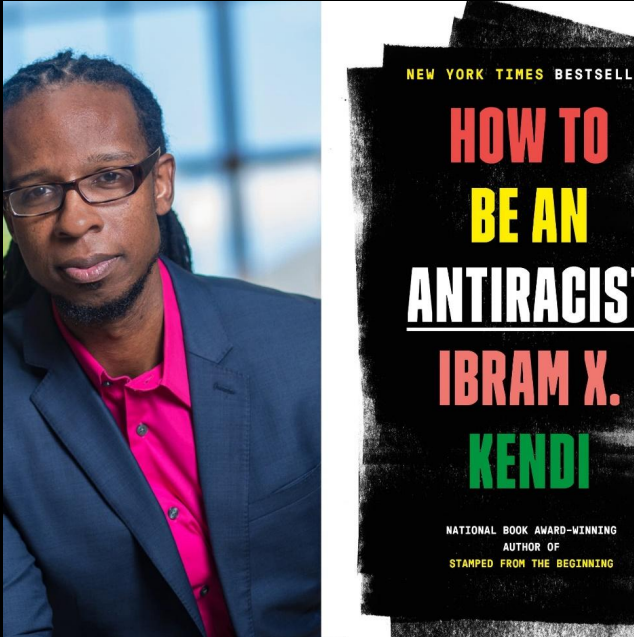


What is “Lutheran Tradition”?

- 16th century Religious Reformer
- Professor of Old Testament, Clergy
- Rebelled against corruption of medieval church
- Key Values:
 - Grace without prerequisites
 - Broken individually and corporately, always in need of reform
 - Faith and reason coexist
 - Called to vocation of love of neighbor
- What aspects of Lutheran tradition need to go out as waste?
 - Luther’s writings against Jewish people
 - ELCA: whitest denomination in North America



Key Points about Anti-racism from Dr. Ibram Kendi



- Racist: "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race."
- Opposite of racist is anti-racist
- Being racist or anti-racist isn't a fixed identity, it's evidenced by what we say and do

Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community

- “[Lutheranism is] the whitest denomination in the U.S.; if not us, then who will enter this battle for freedom?”
- “There will be no recognizable witness in this country in fifty years if we don’t participate in this work. Period.”
- “Before reconciliation, before forgiveness, after the acknowledgement of sin, there is something that is groaning to be born in the womb of the church: **reparations**.”



Examples of Moving Forward

SOCIAL CHANGE WHEEL 2.0

All of these strategies can contribute to social change.

Source:

<https://mncampuscompact.org/resource-posts/social-change-wheel-2-0-toolkit/>



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Decolonizing Work with Faculty and Staff

“Decolonizing Global and Local Engagement”

- Classroom specific in content and form
- 10 faculty participants
- Visited *Why Treaties Matter* at Carleton
- Hosted Darlene St. Clair for a workshop attended by 35+ faculty and staff on “Intersections of Antiracist Pedagogy and Dakota Worldviews”
- Digging into concrete actions to take in classroom, in department, and on-campus

“Beyond the Land Acknowledgement” Symposium



Creation of Task Force to Confront Structural Racism

- In response to open letters to St. Olaf by two Black faculty members, Dr. Kelly Figueroa Ray writes, to all St. Olaf faculty listserv: “To my white colleagues, how shall we respond? I hope with conviction and repentance that leads to real change. I’d like to be a part of it and no, while important for self-education, I don’t think we need another book club. Anyone want to join me to figure out something concrete we can do to change **structural problems that uphold racism at St. Olaf College?**”



- Precepts:
- Push for structural change → not an educational group about anti-racism.
- Open to anyone, but spearheaded by white faculty and staff members who will take full accountability for its actions.
- Students -> Their voices will be integral to the task force’s organizing, planning, and implementation of our action items.
- The work of this group will be transparent and accessible to anyone.

Task Force to Confront Structural Racism

Last Year

- Building relationships within and beyond
- Solidifying structure
- Immediate Actions

This Year

- Staff Concerns
- Ole Culture

Students & Campus Community

- Content in the classroom
 - Teaching Methods
 - Syllabi
- Campus Initiatives
 - STEM Departments
 - Student Athletics
- STAR
 - Collective for Change on the Hill → SGA STAR

Students & the Classroom

Academic Civic Engagement Examples

- Environmental justice presentation with Just Deeds (Fall 2020)
- Learning lab modules with Smithsonian's Asian Pacific American Center (Spring 2021)
- Videos, kits, and more with Growing Up Healthy (Fall 2020-present)
- Physics outreach with Northfield Public Library and GVP Community School (Fall 2020-present)
- Somali dance workshops with Faribault High School and MN Somali Museum (Spring 2021-present)

Small Group Reflections

- Which part(s) of the wheel are you drawn to most? Why?
- What ways to work toward social change do you have experience with? What ways to work toward social change have you seen others use effectively? How?
- Which part of the wheel do you find most challenging or unappealing? Why?
- How could an “around the wheel” approach be activated to address enduring social problems and inequities? For what motivation and value?

individual AND faith community contexts



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Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

- Tension: White bodies doing the labor while still centering BIPOC voices and priorities
- Tension: Time and sense of urgency
- How to sustain energy and momentum

Opportunities

- Practice openness, curiosity, and humility
- Reconsider shared power
- More interest and commitment to this work
- Focus on what's urgent, relevant, and achievable