

The

intention

In Church and Community



From the Senior Pastor

The Hard Work of Justice



not going to be easy.

George Floyd's death at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer and the subsequent protests around the world have pushed the conversation about racial injustice to the forefront of public discourse and reminded us that, despite advances made in this country and elsewhere in policy and legislation, we still have a lot of work to do. Unfortunately, it's

According to Ibram X. Kendi, the author of *Stamped from the Beginning* and *How to Be an Antiracist*, racist ideas have defined our society since its beginning. They can feel so natural and obvious that they appear commonplace. In contrast, antiracist ideas remain difficult to comprehend, in part because they go against the flow of this country's history. The American poet Audre Lorde said in 1980, "We have all been programmed to respond to the human differences between us with fear and loathing and to handle that difference in one of three ways: ignore it, and if that is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, or destroy it if we think it is subordinate. But we have no patterns for relating across our human differences as equals."¹ Thus, any attempt to dismantle systemic racism or replace racist policies with strategies for ensuring equal treatment for all will take herculean effort and great endurance. Even so, in the aftermath of George Floyd's death, it seems as though the time is now for that work to be done.

¹Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984), 115.

Kaitlin Curtice, a citizen of the Potawatomi Nation and a Christian who grew up in the Southern Baptist church, reflects on the urgency of this holy work in her book *Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God*.

In America, Black people, Indigenous people, other people of color, and religious minorities have run out of time. There is no more time to tiptoe around conversations, no more time for white people to say, "This isn't who we are!" There is no more time for Indigenous bodies, women's bodies, two-spirit Indigenous bodies, trans bodies, Sikh bodies, Asian bodies, disabled bodies, or Black bodies to be attacked and for everyone to misunderstand why it happened. This is the America we know and have always known. History tells the story, and if we can't gather in a living room to tell the truth and listen to one another, we will never gather in the streets, in our churches, or in our political spaces to ask for change. It must begin with our experiences, with our words, and with our bodies, and lead us to a better way forward.

At Our Savior's, we are recognizing the time in which we are living and the call that God is placing upon us to be people who do whatever we can to extend God's expansive love to all. You can hear it in our annual vision for ministry: Out of abundance, we will celebrate God's grace, and boldly embrace and serve all.

To that end, in partnership with Augustana University, we will be welcoming the Rev. Lenny Duncan, an ELCA pastor and the author of *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.*, to our campuses September 27 through 29 to lead us further in our discussion of racism and to


identify appropriate and faithful steps we can take in dismantling the scourge of racial injustice in our church and in our country. Information about his visit is elsewhere in this issue of The Intercom. Prior to his arrival, take some time to prepare yourself to be part of the conversation: read his book; pray for him and for those who will hear his message; and make plans now to participate not only in the events we have planned with him but in other opportu-

nities that will follow that will be part of this important and urgent work of justice to which God is calling us.

In Christ's love,



Pr. Randy Gehring



AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY AND OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH WELCOME

REV. LENNY DUNCAN

Author of *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.*

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Worship featuring Rev. Duncan preaching
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
8:45am and 10:15am

Dear Church book reading and Q&A
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
2:00-4:00pm

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

"The Church, White Privilege, and God's Justice"
A conversation with Rev. Duncan moderated by Willette Capers and Ann Rosendale
Augustana Chapel of Reconciliation
3:00-4:30pm

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Campus worship featuring Rev. Duncan preaching
Augustana Chapel of Reconciliation
10:00-10:30am

All events are free and open to the public. Events will be in-person, minding physical distancing guidelines. MASKS ARE REQUIRED.

Augustana University events will be live-streamed on the Augustana (SD) Campus Ministry Facebook page.

Sunday morning worship will be live-streamed on the Our Savior's Lutheran Church Facebook page.

AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH • SEPTEMBER 12-13, 2020

LAUNCH!
THE
BEGINNING
IS
NEAR

Ready to Launch!

September signals the beginning of OSL's programming year, and September 12 and 13 will be *Launch!* Weekend at Our Savior's.

Though it will look different this year because of necessary COVID-19 safety precautions, we are excited to see how God will bless this year of learning and service. Be assured, the staff is committed to providing excellent programming for OSL members and friends alike in service to our mission to proclaim Christ and nurture faith that connects to everyday life.

Note that the current worship schedule will continue for the time being.

A Year of Adventure

Pr. Shelly Gehring pauses a moment when asked what she sees in the year ahead—but only a moment.

“It will be a year of adventure,” she says. “It will be a year of doing something that has not been done before—not for Our Savior’s or, obviously, Church on the Street.”

The year ahead will see Pr. Shelly serving both the OSL community and Church on the Street, a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community of the ELCA and a ministry partner of Our Savior’s. In the former position, she will serve as Pastor of Youth and Family; in the latter, she will work with Rebel Hurd, Church on the Street mission developer, in serving the unhoused and at-risk population of the Sioux Falls area.

“This has great potential to grow the partnership between the two ministries,” Pr. Shelly says.

The year-long interim position is the culmination of a long process that began with the South Dakota Synod office being aware of OSL’s pastoral vacancy, following the departure of Pr. Sami Johnson, as well as looking for ways to provide increased support to Rebel Hurd and Church on the Street. The synod office proposed a partnership that would serve both ministries: a one-year pilot without a long-term commitment by either party. Pr. Randy Gehring and the Governing Board agreed to explore the options.

A number of candidates were considered during that time of exploration; eventually the synod office, the board of directors of Church on the Street, and the OSL Governing Board decided to be in touch with Pr. Shelly. Following interviews and several more meetings by the parties involved, the decision was made to enter into the one-year appointment. This arrangement was unanimously approved by the governing board at its meeting on July 16 (with Pr. Randy abstaining) and by the board of directors of Church on the Street at their meeting on July 13. The news was met with applause when presented to OSL members at the July 26 congregational meeting.

“For me personally, I see an opportunity to flex and stretch gifts that may not traditionally be used in parish ministry,” Pr. Shelly says, “in terms of organization and people skills.” She adds that this partnership will provide the opportunity to revisit a passion of hers, children, youth, and family ministry. “I didn’t think I’d have the opportunity to do that again,” she says, explaining that she had spent 27 years in that ministry area before being called to ordained ministry. “It’s exciting to think about doing children, youth, and family ministry with two excellent colleagues who are leading the



charge,” she says, referring to Faith Formation Director Melissa Nesdahl and Youth Director John Schomberg.

“I’m looking forward to supporting Melissa and John—and playing some fun games!”

She looks forward also to working with Church on the Street: “That’s the other exciting piece—to be part of a ministry to such a vulnerable population in our community. And to provide some relief for Rebel, who’s been shouldering this alone all these years. The ministry can’t grow further without help.”

Finding the proper balance between her two ministry commitments will be a challenge, Pr. Shelly acknowledges, but she is confident that balance will be achieved: “Rebel and Randy are both committed to making the sharing as fair as possible,” she says.

Pr. Shelly officially began her assignment on September 1. The position is not a call, but rather an appointment by the South Dakota Synod. At the end of the one-year term, the arrangement may be reconsidered. Regardless, it will indeed be a year of adventure—for all concerned! ♦



OUR SAVIOR'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Worship Services

Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Sunday Morning

Celebrate Worship – 8:45 A.M., Celebrate Center

Festive Worship – 10:15 A.M., Sanctuary

Television and Internet

Celebrate: 9:00 A.M., KTTW (cable channel 9; channel 7.1)

Festive: 1:00 P.M., KSCB (cable channel 30; channel 53)

Facebook Live, 8:45 and 10:15 A.M.

Website: oslchurch.com

Social Media

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Faithful, Hopeful, Loving Generosity

Your support of OSL's mission to proclaim Christ and nurture faith that connects to everyday life is life-changing, both for you and for those whom our ministry reaches. Thank you! May God bless your faithful, hopeful, loving generosity.

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