

White Privilege in SWMN Synod of the ELCA
--assembled by members of SMART

As you return to your home congregations, look around and listen. Try to see through the lens of a person of color. Here are some things you will see. Can you add others?

1. When I look at pictures in the Bibles in the church, they reflect my race. (Jesus, apostles, etc)
2. When I look at the stained glass windows, they reflect my race almost exclusively.
3. When my children or grandchildren play with the dolls in the church nursery they will find one of their race.
4. When I look at the art on the walls of my church I see people, places, and things that reflect my race and culture.
5. When my children or grandchildren look at their Sunday school and Vacation Bible School curriculum they see children that reflect their race and culture.
6. The music played and sung in the church is generally of Euro-American origins. There is rarely infusion of drums or instruments that would be typically present for peoples of color.
7. Euro-American history and culture is celebrated and taught in the church on a regular basis. That of people of color is generally relegated to one Sunday per year.
8. The history of Lutherans of color is rarely uplifted, taught, or preached about thus most Euro-American Lutherans know nothing about it.
9. The synod staff is exclusively European-American and most of the parish pastors in the SW MN Synod are Euro-American.
10. There are few people of color who are lay leaders in parishes in the SW MN Synod.
11. When European-American Lutherans are invited to interface with people of color it is generally only as "missionaries" who need to "help" the poor people of color. There is little acknowledgment that people of color have something to teach Lutherans in our synod.
12. I can establish my "Lutheran credentials" by saying, "my great, great grandmother was a Lutheran or I was born and baptized a Lutheran."