

La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church
Antiracist Christianity: A Crucial Conversation on Racism

Host & Ch. 1 Presenter: The Rev. Kenneth L. Davis, M.Div.

Chapter 1: The Challenges of Talking to White People About Racism

Airing Date: 9/14/20

Kenneth Davis was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and moved to Los Angeles with his mother, father, sister, and three brothers. He grew up in South Central Los Angeles, not far from the Compton/Watts area, and became a naturalized U.S. citizen at age 12. He earned a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School and a Bachelor of Arts (Theology/Theater) from Loyola Marymount University (L.A. campus). While attending Yale, he was awarded the Distinguished Preaching award, elected president of the Black Students Association, and co-president of his graduating class. To fulfill the Lutheran requirement for ordination, he attended classes at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif. He was ordained in the Pentecostal Church in 1989 and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2002. He was ordained, and served as an associate pastor, at La Casa de Cristo Lutheran church for six years with Pastor Andy Garman and Pastor Carol Peters. He has also pastored Lord of Life Lutheran (Moreno Valley, Calif.), Good Shepherd Lutheran (Claremont, Calif.), Christ the King Lutheran (Fallbrook, Calif.), and Palisades Lutheran (Pacific Palisades, Calif.). After a racially motivated hate crime targeting his family in Pacific Palisades, and a call to use his gifts in other arenas, Pastor Davis 'rewired' from full time ministry June 2019. He is currently pursuing an acting/modeling career, inspirational public speaking in both secular and church settings, and serving as the part-time interim pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in Encino, Calif. He is the proud single father (widowed) of three daughters: Kennadi, 21, Cassadi, 18, Camryn, 18.

Chapter 2: Racism and White Supremacy

Airing Date: 9/21/20

Guest: Don Stevens, Esq.

Don is a former member of La Casa de Cristo who served over 40 years in various service and leadership roles including in the Adult Education ministry. Don continues to serve many Arizona Lutheran churches as a volunteer advisor for legal questions.

Chapter 3: Racism After the Civil Rights Movement

Airing Date: 9/28/20

Guest: Professor Jordan Liz, Ph.D.

Dr. Jordan Liz is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy at San José State University, where his research focuses on biomedical ethics, philosophy of

medicine, and philosophy of race. His primary research focuses on contemporary genetic and biomedical understandings of race and racial classifications. More recently, he is working on issues of race and racism related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter 4: How Does Race Shape the Lives of White People?

Airing Date: 10/5/20

Guest: Don Addiss

"I have mastered very few things in life. In fact, I can think of only one thing that I have mastered – imperfection. My aging body is certainly not perfect. Aside from the standard imperfections of age, I have tinnitus, pectus excavatum, essential tremor, plastic webbing in my abdomen as the repair of five hernias, and chronic anemia. My life is similarly imperfect – failed at marriage, failed at business, many mistakes made, unrealized and un-pursued dreams. My wife Cindy and I share a life approach that has been transformative to each of us—it is “walk into the pain.” Instead of trying to avoid pain or struggles in life, we walk into them, embrace them, and see what God has to teach us. Growth and new perspective always result. Imperfections, I have come to realize, are the same. Each imperfection, when explored with the assurance of Grace, results in new understanding, perspective, and growth. These provide release from the imperfection. My failures are my failures and my body is what it is, but within each imperfection is an opportunity for personal growth and a wonderful experience of God’s love and acceptance."

Chapter 5: The Good/Bad Binary

Airing Date: 10/12/20

Guest: Rev. Jeffrey Ruby, M.Div.

Pastor Jeff Ruby is the lead pastor of La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church. He has served as a pastor for 31 years but hopefully doesn’t look that age. Pastor Jeff has developed a mission church outside Washington, D.C., and served as lead pastor in three congregations. He has a passion for reaching the skeptics, the strugglers, and the doubters with the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Chapter 6: Anti-Blackness

Airing Date: 10/19/20

Guest: Professor Rebecca Chan, M.A., J.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Rebecca Chan is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at San José State University. She also serves as the University Director of Pre-Law Advising. She works mainly in the intersection of metaphysics and normativity and argues for a ‘normativity-driven

metaphysics.' She also applies what she does to other areas of philosophy such as philosophy of law, philosophy of religion, and applied ethics.

Dr. Chan earned her Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame where her dissertation was on *Making Metaphysics Matter: Essays on Reasons and Persons*. She received a J.D. and M.A. in philosophy from the University of Colorado and a B.A. from Boston University. She grew up in Scottsdale and her family attended, and she was confirmed at, La Casa de Cristo. Published articles include: "Transformed by Faith," *Faith and Philosophy*, forthcoming; "Moral Indulgences: When Offsetting is Wrong" (with Dustin Crummett), *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*, forthcoming; "Religious Experience, Voluntarist Reasons, and the Transformative Experience Puzzle," *Res Philosophica*, 93.1: 269-287 (2016).

Chapter 7: Racial Triggers for White People

Airing Date: 10/26/20

Guest: Patricia Webley-Bethune, M.D.

Dr. Patricia Webley-Bethune was born in Kingston, Jamaica, W.I., and lived there until 1977. She graduated from medical school at the University of The West Indies, Mona Campus, in 1975 and spent the next two years working at different hospitals all over the island. In 1977 she married and emigrated to the U.S., settling in Washington, D.C. For five years she taught physiology at Howard University Medical School, with an emphasis on lab programs for medical, dental, and graduate students. She entered into a residency program later at D.C. General Hospital as part of the Howard/Georgetown internal medicine program, completing this program at Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn, NY. She worked in private practice and in emergency rooms on Long Island until retiring in 2010. Her husband, Wyman Bethune, is also retired from radiation oncology. They have three sons and five grandchildren.

Chapter 8: The Result: White Fragility

Airing Date: 11/2/20

Guest: Ashlei Snead, M.A.

Ashlei has been working in the field of early childhood education since 2002. Her experience with children ranges from birth to elementary school and includes children with special needs. She has a B.A. in Child and Adolescent Development and an M.A. in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in Early Childhood Education, both from California State University, Northridge. She believes that Early Childhood is a lifelong learning field. She attends ongoing training and enjoys learning new strategies to support teachers and children in the classroom.

Chapter 9: White Fragility in Action

Airing Date: 11/9/20

Guest: Arnold Chanon Bloch, L.C.S.W.

Arnold Chanon Bloch is a speaker, psychotherapist, and indoctrination expert. He was indoctrinated into racism as a child growing up in apartheid South Africa and has spent much of his 36-year career helping people to overcome the detrimental effects of destructive conditioning so that they can live fully empowered lives.

Chapter 10: White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement

Airing Date: 11/16/20

Guest: Christine Smith-Mahoney, Ed.D.

Christine Mahoney, Ed.D., is a consummate professional and devoted educator who served diligently as a learning leader in school districts in Connecticut, providing focused instruction, leadership, and professional development to improve teaching, student learning, and enhanced educational outcomes.

As the school district's transformational instructional leader, Dr. Mahoney enlisted Board of Education members, administrators, faculty, parents, school community partners, members of town government, and students in a collaborative process to develop and ensure diverse and focused 21st century educational experiences. This effort resulted in transformed learning approaches, awards and accolades bestowed on the town's high achieving elementary and high school, and recognition of Connecticut's first high school to institute a fifth-year Associate's Degree program in one of the state's celebrated small towns.

Dr. Mahoney has been inducted into the Gamma Pi Chapter of Epsilon Pi Tau in the Connecticut Community Colleges. She received a Resolution from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Official Citations from the City of Hartford and the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, and a Proclamation from the Town of East Granby extolling her extraordinary commitment and indefatigable efforts to engage the learning community in processes to attain the best educational outcomes for students.

In her 36 years of service in K-12 education, Dr. Mahoney fulfilled roles as an impactful teacher, assistant principal, principal, and Superintendent of Schools in diverse communities. She also served as Instructor at Central Connecticut State University, Asnuntuck Community College, and Quinnipiac University. In addition to adjunct assignments at the higher education level, Dr. Mahoney now devotes her time to

deepening her faith, embracing her spirituality, and preparing to expand her role in the leadership of the church. Dr. Mahoney earned her Associate and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of the Virgin Islands, a Master of Science from the University of Connecticut, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study and a Doctorate in Education Leadership from the University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut.

Chapter 11: White Women's Tears

Airing Date: 11/23/20

Guest: Rabbi Karen Bender

Rabbi Karen Bender was born and raised in Los Angeles in the home of Israeli parents, studied political science at the University of California Berkeley, and was ordained by the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1994. As a student she interned in Prescott, Ariz., Boise, Ida., and at Central Synagogue in Manhattan. Rabbi Bender served as rabbi of Temple Beth-El of Great Neck, NY, for seven years, Temple Judea in Tarzana, Calif., for thirteen years and since 2014, serves as the Skirball Director of Spiritual Life and Campus Rabbi at the Los Angeles Jewish Home, previously known as the Jewish Home for the Aging.

Rabbi Bender has been active in social justice issues throughout her rabbinate, with a special passion for racial equality, voting rights, Muslim-Jewish dialogue, interfaith and intercultural work, GLBTQ+ advocacy and Israel. Rabbi Bender has published numerous sermons, articles, poems, and original prayers. In 2015, she received the Eisendrath Bearer of Light Award for outstanding civil rights work and the Distinguished Community Leader Award of the San Fernando Valley Council of Na'amat USA and was showcased in the month of February in the 2019 National Women's Political Caucus's calendar. In spring of 2019, she was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion for 25 years of service to and on behalf of the Jewish people. She has served on the boards of numerous organizations, including the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the Advisory Council of the Valley Interfaith Council. Rabbi Bender enjoys playing piano and guitar, travel, theater, and adventure, including horseback riding, swimming, biking, hiking, wakeboarding and especially activities that can be enjoyed with her three children, Holden, 22, Joshua, 19, and Shoshana, 16, of whom she is immensely proud.

Chapter 12: Where Do We Go From Here?

Airing Date: 11/30/20

Guest: Rev. Aliah MaJon, Ph.D.

Dr. Aliah MaJon is the founder of the Next 50 Years Project, which focuses on finishing what the Civil Rights Movement left undone. She is known as a pioneer of new methods for Racial Healing, and her approach is rooted in Truth and Reconciliation models and Restorative Practices. Dr. Aliah began her long career as a Diversity Trainer in 1995. She is currently the Chief Inclusion Officer (CIO) for The Shift Network, a premiere personal development company that is newly focused on becoming an industry leader in social justice and societal change.

She is also the creator of SOUL TECHNOLOGY®, a proprietary coaching system that introduces her clients to the other half of their intelligence—what she calls the “Inner Teacher.” Dr. Aliah is an expert in the field of Transpersonal Psychology, holds a Ph.D. in Metapsychology and a Doctor of Divinity in Practical Theology. After the suicide of her only child, Dr. Aliah began harvesting every tool that she learned firsthand in her journey from tragedy to triumph. She is committed to sharing those golden keys with clients so that they can do the same.