HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST
(Book Review)

Session 3
Chapters 9-12
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Written by:
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Welcome: Dr. Linda Abington

Facilitators:
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Invocation:
Rev. Rock Fremont
ICCC Vice President for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relationships
♦ ICCC Racial Equity Committee Members

♦ Rev. Phil Tom – ICCC Executive Director
♦ Rev. Dr. Rhonda Blevins – Vice President for Leadership Development
♦ Rev. Rock Fremont – Vice President for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relationships
♦ Dr. Linda Abington – Member ABBA Church of Renewed Faith, Nondenominational
Introduction of Book Review Participants
Suggested Ground Rules for Discussion

**Recognize:** We recognize that we must strive to overcome historical and divisive biases, such as racism and sexism, in our society.

**Acknowledge:** We acknowledge that we are all systematically taught misinformation about our own group(s) and about members of other groups. This is true for everyone, regardless of our group(s).

**No Blame:** We agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned, but to accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.

**Respect:** We agree to listen respectfully to each other without interruptions. Only one person speaks at a time. However, this does not mean we should ignore problematic statements. We acknowledge that we may be at different stages of learning on the content and discussion topics.

**Individual Experience:** We agree that no one should be required or expected to speak for their whole race or gender. We can't, even if we wanted to.

**Trust:** Everyone has come to the table to learn, grow, and share. We will trust that people are doing the best they can; we all make mistakes and have bad days; when these occur, let's challenge and encourage each other to do better. We acknowledge once again that we may be at different stages of learning on the topic.
Suggested Ground Rules For The Discussion

**Share the Air:** Share responsibility for including all voices in the discussion. If you have a tendency to dominate discussions, take a step back and help the group invite others to speak. If you tend to stay quiet, challenge yourself to share ideas so others can learn from you.

**Not Experts:** The facilitators are not experts. They are here to help facilitate the process. They and everyone in the group are here to learn. We also recognize that everyone has an opinion. Opinions, however, are not the same as informed knowledge backed up by research. Depending on the topic and context, both are valid to share but it's important to know the difference. To engage in deep learning, we will want to lean more toward informed knowledge and gain practice reflecting and speaking thoughtfully on difficult topics.

**Ask for help:** It's okay not to know. Keep in mind that we are all still learning and are bound to make mistakes when approaching a complex task or exploring new ideas. Be open to changing your mind, and make space for others to do so as well.

*These Ground Rules are adopted from the thoughtful librarians leading the Library Book Discussion Series at the Iowa State University Library.*
Excerpt From Democracy Now Full Interview:
Ibram X. Kendi on Antiracism, Anticapitalism and the Eugenicist Origins of IQ and SAT Tests

https://youtu.be/_oQXki0hG9w
The opposite of racist isn’t ‘not racist.’ It is ‘anti-racist.’ ...One endorses either the idea of a racial hierarchy as a racist, or racial equality as an anti-racist. One either believes problems are rooted in groups of people, as a racist, or locates the roots of problems in power and policies, as an anti-racist. One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an anti-racist. There is no in-between safe space of ‘not racist.’"
Guiding Questions for Chapters 9-12

1. In chapter 9, Dr. Kendi states that inequities between Light and Dark African Americans can be as wide as inequities between Black and White Americans. How is colorism, including preferences for particular skin and eye colors, hair textures, and facial features, reflected in today’s beauty standards? What steps can we take to build and support a culture that celebrates natural beauty? How have you seen colorism play out in real life and/or in the media?

2. In chapter 10, Dr. Kendi writes, “White supremacist is code for anti-human, a nuclear ideology that poses an existential threat to human existence.” How are white supremacists and their ideology actually harmful to all of humanity—including white people?

3. Chapter 10 also addresses a conversation around a confederate statue on the Square. One of the Lafayette County board of supervisors that voted to keep the statue was quoted as saying that he, too, had been a victim of racism. Dr. Kendi also asserts, “To be antiracist is to see ordinary White people as the frequent victimizers of people of color and the frequent victims of racist power.” (p 128) How is the supervisor’s encounter with racist power not an excuse for continued racist policies? How do racist policies hurt everyone, whites included?
Guiding Questions for Chapters 9-12

4. Dr. Kendi makes the case, in chapter 11, that to be antiracist, one must stand against all forms of bigotry. Why is standing against other bigotries so essential to standing against racism? What does it mean to be courageous in the face of racism? How is this different from being fearless? While reading the book, did you identify any examples of how you might act courageously in the face of racism?

5. In chapter 12, Dr. Kendi defines a class racist as someone who racializes certain socioeconomic groups or supports racial capitalist policies. Meanwhile, an antiracist anti-capitalist opposes racial capitalism. How has Dr. Kendi presented the main categories of racial ideas and focused on the way people of color promote racism through colorism, anti-white ideas, and the powerless defense. How has racism started to intersect with other structures of social hierarchy, starting with socioeconomic class.
Closing Prayer
Catherine Jackson - ABBA Church of Renewed Faith, Nondenominational Associate Pastor