**Anti-Racism Lenten Study Series**

**Grace Lutheran Church – Yorktown Heights, NY**

**Series Session 4 March 14, 2021**

**Required Preparation for this Session:**

Most of us have spent little time thinking of ourselves as being White. As Robert Terry has said, “Being White in America is never having to think about it.” For the most part, we grow up in the United States surrounded by images of Whiteness, reading about history from a White perspective, reading White authors, dealing with White people as the people in authority, and functioning with cultural norms that are based in western, European heritage. Our life is seen as normal and we generally do not wake up every day looking at the color of our skin and having to prepare ourselves for how we will be treated because of our skin color. Peggy McIntosh speaks of our ability to be oblivious to our skin color—and all of the other advantages we receive—as White privilege. She talks about an invisible knapsack that we walk around with constantly. We did not ask for and we may not want it, but we have it. It is unearned and is simply given to us at birth. We may have other factors that work against us by virtue of gender, economic class, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation, but in our daily lives, the institutional systems that govern our lives are led by White people and are set up with White people in mind.

We tend, as White people, to see ourselves as individuals, rather than as members of a group. We describe ourselves as members of the human race, rather than as members of the White race. We see others as racial beings, and describe them as such, but we do not see ourselves or describe ourselves as White racial beings. We tend to group people of American Indian and Alaskan Native, African, Asian, Latin, and Arab/Middle Eastern heritages as “multicultural,” but do not include ourselves as White people as one equal part of that multicultural mix. Our temptation is to define others and assign group characteristics, but to see and define ourselves as individuals.

**Assignment and Journaling**

The link to the article “White Spaces” by Tobin Miller Shearer. Please read the article before this 4th session.



Please also continue to journal. Reflect in your journal on what it means to be part of a White group and the loss you experience because of being White.