

## Witness to transformation

**Level of challenge for participants:** Appropriate for all levels of awareness

**Level of challenge for facilitator:** Easy

**Materials:** Daily journal

**Introduction:** *But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you.* 1 Peter 3: 15

Dismantling racism and White privilege ultimately is an act of hope, of faith in reconciliation to God and to one another. This exercise focuses on one personal witness to transformation as a way of accounting for the hope that is within.

### Witness to transformation: Is this really necessary?

By Rev. Paul Gehrs

*Rev. Paul Gehrs is White and the Assistant to the Bishop, Justice and Leadership, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.*

During my first experience of anti-racism training, I felt as if my soul was being stomped on. In the small group I asked, "Is this necessary?" A colleague, a person of colour, asked me, "Paul, how often do you think about race?" When I replied, "Almost never," he said, "I am forced to think about it every day." This hammered home that privilege is real. Since then, I have listened more carefully in a variety of inter-cultural settings. When we listen, when it is safe to speak, we grow. I have come to believe that yesterday's soul-stomping helps me listen today.

#### Discussion

- 1) Read the personal statement.
- 2) What stands out for you in Paul's experience?
- 3) Keep a notebook where it can be your daily Journal of White awareness.

Use it as a log of your growing awareness, a place to write about your joys, struggles and actions taken regarding White privilege.