Assumptions and ground rules.

1) We are here because we know that racism exists in America and in the church.
2) Our stance is primarily one of learning and humility. We aim to understand what Austin Channing Brown has to say.
3) We will read the book.
4) No one person should dominate the discussion. If you have spoken already, make sure all others have a chance to speak before you speak again. Facilitators may invite quieter people to speak and may ask more forthright people to listen.
5) We will be honest and kind.
6) We trust God’s Holy Spirit to be with us as we wrestle with what we learn and seek to apply it to our lives.
7) Confidentiality – you may share broad conversation topics but not specifics of someone’s life. If you want to share, ask first. If you want something not to be shared, be explicit.
8) Please set your name in your “rename self” so we know what to call you.
Session 3, July 15, 2020. Chapters 8-9 plus interlude. Pages 112 - 130

7-7:20 Introduction, ground rules, and prayer.

These chapters are about the need for honesty in telling the true story of racism in America, both past and present. They focus on the healing power of anger and truth-telling, including being truthful with what kind of institutional change one person can make.

We’ll start with history.

A. I’m going to name some events and ask you to answer just for yourself, if this were a category on Jeopardy, would you choose it?

Middle Passage; Trail of Tears; Bracero Program; Jim Crow; Internment Camps; Chinese Exclusion Act. WEB DuBois.

B. What are some “aha” moments you’ve experienced learning about American history?

C. History of our own community.

What do you think is the value in figuring out the history surrounding, say, our church. Or your land.

From Wikipedia about Lincolnia: Originally created following the Civil War as a community of freed slaves, Lincolnia remained as one of Fairfax County's original communities of African Americans for over 100 years. During segregation, Lincolnia had its
own schoolhouse. The historical structure is still standing, now incorporated into Lincolnia Senior Center. The school became integrated in 1962 as part of court-ordered busing. The African American students were bused out and white students were bused in.

7:20 – 7:45  “How to survive in an institution that claims to be antiracist.” Video and small group discussion about your impressions. How does this connect with your experience?

7:45 – 7:55  Anger. Read the Baldwin quote on page 119.

  - What specific things make Austin angry? (Pages 120-122) Make a list.
  - What makes her proud?
  - What’s the link between communal identity and pride/anger?

7:55 – 8:05 Back into break out groups:

Anger is an appropriate reaction to injustice, but Austin shares that she really struggled to become comfortable expressing that anger.

A. What’s your comfort level with anger in general (your own and others’)?
B. Where have you seen anger about racial injustice lately and what has been your response?
C. How can white people do a better job of listening to the anger of people of color?
D. How can white organizations make space to respond in supportive ways to the anger people color express?

8:05 – 8:15 Large Group. Wrap up, next week.

Next week; Pages 131-164

Optional homework. Write a one-page letter to a child in your life expressing how you hope that America will change for the better. If you write something you’d like to share, let me know and we’ll make space for it next week.