

Intercultural Ministries (Canada)

I. Introduction

Intercultural Ministries operates as a crucial national advisory committee in Canada. Collaborating closely with the senior leader for antiracism and intercultural conciliation, our mission is multifaceted. We are dedicated to equipping and empowering Canadian churches, helping them to adapt to and embrace the growing diversity of ethnocultural and racial groups within their communities and congregations. The collective is steadfast in its commitment to fostering practices of hospitality and guiding churches toward evolving into vibrant, healthy intercultural communities. This transformation is deeply rooted in the principles of biblical justice and love, aiming to reflect these values in every aspect of church life.

II. Reflecting on Our Calling

A. Faith formation

We recognize the complex interplay between faith and cultural identity, especially for our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members. These individuals often encounter challenges when integrating their unique cultural experiences in some CRC spaces. To address this, our ministry provides support through a range of avenues, including personal interactions, small-group dialogues, and expansive networks. Initiatives like the BIPOC affinity group, the Diaspora Leader's Retreat, and the Canadian National Gathering are key platforms for active listening and sharing, employing diverse communication methods to cater to all voices.

Our consistent message to the community stresses that ethnocultural and racial diversity is not just a societal reality but a vital part of God's vision for humanity. We emphasize the beauty and inherent value of intercultural church communities. This message is promoted through our online platforms, our website, the One Family Conversation Initiative, preaching engagements in local churches, and appearances at regional events as we aim to make our presence felt and our message heard far and wide.

B. Mercy and justice

In our advocacy for intercultural interaction, we prioritize approaches grounded in love and justice, mirroring Christ's ethos. By engaging in multicultural cohort groups and initiatives like the One Family Conversation, we seek to foster churches and regional gatherings into inclusive environments. Here, every member, regardless of their background, is valued and empowered to contribute.

Justice, a central pillar of our mission, extends beyond the confines of individual ministries. We actively collaborate with ministry groups such as Resonate, Thrive, Diaconal Ministries Canada, and World Renew. This collaboration focuses on pursuing a comprehensive approach to justice that

captures the diverse aspects of God's call and reflects our commitment to striving toward a just and equitable society.

C. Gospel proclamation and worship

We advocate for and encourage diverse preaching and worship styles. By inviting BIPOC members to lead and infuse their particular cultural heritages into worship, we aim to create a mosaic of worship styles. This vision is inspired by the imagery of intercultural worship found in Revelation 7:9-10 and 21:22-27, symbolizing the universal and inclusive nature of God's kingdom.

III. Connecting with Churches

A. Cultivating practices of prayer and spiritual discipline

We actively listen and engage with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, learning about their unique practices of prayer, spiritual disciplines, and discernment processes. It is enlightening to discover the various expressions of prayer and spiritual disciplines within our churches. Sharing stories and practices not only enriches individual spiritual journeys but also strengthens our collective faith experience.

B. Listening to the voices of every generation

Acknowledging the importance of generational diversity, we look for ways to bridge generational divides. By leveraging our experiences in intercultural dialogue, we enhance valuable intergenerational connections, fostering a deeper understanding and respect among different age groups within our communities.

C. Growing in diversity and unity

The senior leader for antiracism and intercultural conciliation completed training to be an Intercultural Development Inventory facilitator, a service that will benefit churches to move away from a monocultural to an intercultural mindset. This service will begin early next year. He is also involved in other inclusivity initiatives, such as being part of two Thriving Practices cohorts for the 2023-2024 season, furthering our commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

D. Sharing the gospel

Our ministry places a strong emphasis on sharing the gospel through both actions and words, rooted in deep, trusting relationships. By guiding churches in cultural humility and intercultural engagement, we empower congregations to effectively convey Christ's love across cultural boundaries. This approach enriches our collective understanding of the gospel's universal appeal, demonstrating its relevance and power in a diverse world.

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