Beyond Cordiality: 
Interpreting Practices of Mutual Hospitality 
toward Building Interculturally Competent Community at 
Thornhill Presbyterian Church

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Knox College 
and the Toronto School of Theology 
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Doctor of Ministry
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Abstract
In light of the changing demographic landscape of Canada over the past several years this dissertation seeks to answer the question: How will the mainline church respond to growing cultural diversity in our communities? Beyond Cordiality invites readers to listen to the experiences of one multi-ethnic congregation in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) that is learning how to be a community that celebrates diversity. The study examines what this thesis has termed “practices of mutual hospitality” within the congregation that have contributed to a feeling of belonging and multi-ethnic growth. These practices of mutual hospitality are viewed through the lens of established intercultural competence models to gain insight into intercultural competence levels and measurement possibilities. The Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence, the Bennett (Developmental) Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and the Rathje Coherence-Cohesion (Co-Orientational) Model of Intercultural Competence provided valuable insight into understanding
intercultural competence in congregational settings. Conclusions reveal that there is a way forward for congregations who wish to become multi-ethnic communities of faith.

This study proposes that there are important practices of mutual hospitality and practical actions congregations can take to build intercultural competence within their communities. These practices help continue to foster the feeling of belonging within communities that are culturally diverse. Practical applications include inspired leadership, educational development, renewed worship and holistic visioning. It is possible for churches to reflect the communities in which they exist by engaging in intentional actions to reach out across cultural divides and engage with the “other.”
Dedication

To my beloved husband Tom
who, despite the costs and sacrifices,
has been my companion, champion, encourager, strength
and best friend in life and on this journey.

To my darling children, Brett and Elizabeth
who made many sacrifices over the last nine years for me
and despite having to live with a distracted mom,
supported me with encouragement,
love and moments of mirth.

In loving memory of my parents, Helen and Joe Plant,
who instilled in me from birth a love for the “Other.”
They began this journey with me in 2008
but entered the presence of the Lord in 2009 and 2013
and have watched its completion from Heaven.

To my parents-in-law, The Rev. Dr. George and Faith Vais
who offered support, encouragement
and gestures of love to our whole family.

In memory of my beloved friend Dr. Michelle (Mikki) Langton
whose love and support kept me going.
Even through her terminal illness and death in 2013
she always watched out for me.

In memory of Professor Dr. Romney Mosley
who planted the seed nearly thirty years ago.

To the glory of God who through
Christ and the power of the Spirit
breathed life into the Church.

Soli Deo Gloria

With my eternal gratitude and love,
Heather
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Most importantly I thank the twenty-nine souls who volunteered to participate in this study. Your courage and honesty provided the important information to make this study come alive. Your stories are represented here. I hope they inspire others as they did me.

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Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... ii
Dedication ....................................................................................................................... iv
Acknowledgments .......................................................................................................... v
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................ vii
List of Tables ................................................................................................................ xii
List of Figures ................................................................................................................. xii
List of Appendices ......................................................................................................... xiii
Introduction .................................................................................................................... 1
Chapter One Background and Context ........................................................................... 9
  Part I: Church and Community .................................................................................. 9
    Thornhill Presbyterian Church ................................................................................. 9
    Thornhill and Vaughan ......................................................................................... 10
    Multiculturalism in Canada: Government Initiation and Response ......................... 12
  Part II: Situating the Presbyterian Church in Multicultural Canada ......................... 15
    The National Church’s Response ............................................................................ 17
    Mono-Cultural and Multi-Cultural Church ............................................................ 26
  Part III: The Multi-Ethnic Church ............................................................................. 29
Chapter Two Biblical, Theological and Theoretical Frameworks for a Multi-Ethnic Church.. 33
  Part I: A Biblical Foundation .................................................................................... 33
    Introduction .............................................................................................................. 33
    Biblical Foundations for the Multi-ethnic Church .................................................. 35
    From the Power of Babel to the Power of Pentecost .............................................. 37
    The Prayer of Jesus ............................................................................................... 38
    Conflicted Saints ................................................................................................. 45
    Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 47
  Part II: Theological and Historical Constructs for Hospitality ................................... 48
    Introduction .............................................................................................................. 48
    Why Hospitality? .................................................................................................. 49
    Unpacking Christian Hospitality ............................................................................ 50
    Christian Hospitality through the Ages ................................................................. 51
    A Trinitarian Grounding for Hospitality in Christian Community ......................... 56
    Christian Hospitality through a Trinitarian Lens .................................................. 58
    Mutual Hospitality ............................................................................................... 62
    Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 64
  Part III: Recognizing the Need for Intercultural Competence in the Church .......... 65
    Conceptualizations of Intercultural Competence .................................................. 66
    Theoretical Grounding for Cultural Competence Models ...................................... 67
    The Three Models in Review .................................................................................. 69
    Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 74
Chapter Three Research Methodology ......................................................................... 75
  Part I: The Processes Involved in Interpreting Practices of Mutual Hospitality ....... 75
Part III: Coffee Hour Observation Results ................................................................. 134
Summary: ......................................................................................................................... 138
Chapter 5 Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation of the Results .......................... 139
Introduction ..................................................................................................................... 139
Part I: Analysing the Results ....................................................................................... 142
  The Second Order Theme of Cultural Identity in Questions One and Six .......... 142
  Hyphenated Identities ................................................................................................. 146
  Cultural Self-Awareness and Cultural Other-Awareness ................................. 149
Part II: Identifying Practices of Mutual Hospitality .................................................. 151
  Overarching Themes .................................................................................................. 154
  Family ......................................................................................................................... 154
  Involvement .............................................................................................................. 155
  Worship and Coffee Hour ......................................................................................... 156
  Inclusion .................................................................................................................... 158
  The Centrality of Belonging ..................................................................................... 161
Part III – Practices of Mutual Hospitality and Intercultural Competence Models ... 162
Limitations of the Study ............................................................................................... 167
Summary ...................................................................................................................... 168
Chapter Six Toward Interculturally Competent Community ................................. 169
Introduction ................................................................................................................... 169
Learnings from the Study ............................................................................................. 171
  Practices of Mutual Hospitality ............................................................................... 171
  Intercultural Competence ....................................................................................... 172
Part II: Some Practical Actions ................................................................................... 173
Introduction ................................................................................................................... 173
Part III: Next Steps for TPC ....................................................................................... 182
  Something for the Denomination ......................................................................... 186
  The Final Word: Why is this study so important? .............................................. 188
Bibliography ................................................................................................................ 189
Appendices .................................................................................................................. 198
  Appendix A: Definitions ............................................................................................ 198
  Appendix B: Coherence-Based, Cohesion-Based Concept of Culture by Stefanie Rathje 200
  Appendix C: The Bennett Model of Intercultural Sensitivity ................................ 201
  Appendix D: Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence .................. 202
  Appendix E: Ethics Approval ..................................................................................... 203
  Appendix F: Poster and Bulletin Announcement ..................................................... 204
  Appendix G: Phone Solicitation Recruitment Transcript ..................................... 205
  Appendix H: Recruitment Letter ............................................................................. 206
  Appendix I: Focus Group Email .............................................................................. 207
  Appendix J: Focus Group Protocol: Observations about Intercultural Hospitality .... 208
  Appendix K: Informed Consent Form ..................................................................... 211
  Appendix L: Mutual Invitation ................................................................................ 212
  Appendix M: PowerPoint Presentation .................................................................. 213
  Appendix N: Map Of Fellowship Hall ................................................................... 216
Appendix O: Observational Protocol ............................................................................ 217
Appendix P: Carl James’ Identity Diagram...................................................................... 218
List of Tables

TABLE 1: Age and Gender of Participants ................................................................. 103
TABLE 2: Length of Time in Canada ........................................................................ 104
TABLE 3: Years in Thornhill Presbyterian Church .................................................. 105
TABLE 4: Birth, Culture, and Religion .................................................................... 105
TABLE 5: Participants’ Cultural Self-identity .......................................................... 108
TABLE 6: Self-Identity of Participants Living in Canada 10 Years or Less .............. 142
TABLE 7: Self-Identity of Participants Living in Canada More than 10 Years ........ 143
TABLE 8: Self-Identity of Participants Born in Canada ............................................ 147
TABLE 9: Listing of Key Components relating to Mutual Hospitality Emerging from the Data ............................................................... 152
TABLE 10: Listing of Components and Subcomponents as Barriers to Mutual Hospitality .. 153
List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1:</td>
<td>Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2:</td>
<td>Developmental Intercultural Competence Model</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3:</td>
<td>Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4:</td>
<td>Participants’ reasons for initial visit</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5:</td>
<td>Is your cultural distinctiveness celebrated</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6:</td>
<td>Coffee Hour Room Demographics</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7:</td>
<td>Second Order Code: Family</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8:</td>
<td>Second Order Code: Involvement</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9:</td>
<td>Second Order Code: Worship and Coffee Hour</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10:</td>
<td>Second Order Code: Inclusion</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11:</td>
<td>Charting Stages on the Bennett Model</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions ...........................................................................................................198
Appendix B: Coherence-Based, Cohesion-Based Concept of Culture
by Stefanie Rathje..................................................................................................................200
Appendix C: The Bennett Model of Intercultural Sensitivity ..............................................201
Appendix D: Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence ..................................202
Appendix E: Ethics Approval ................................................................................................203
Appendix F: Poster and Bulletin Announcement ......................................................................204
Appendix G: Phone Solicitation Recruitment Transcript ......................................................205
Appendix H: Recruitment Letter ...........................................................................................206
Appendix I: Focus Group Email .............................................................................................207
Appendix J: Focus Group Protocol: Observations about Intercultural Hospitality ..............208
Appendix K: Informed Consent Form ....................................................................................211
Appendix L: Mutual Invitation .................................................................................................212
Appendix M: PowerPoint Presentation ..................................................................................213
Appendix N: Map Of Fellowship Hall ..................................................................................216
Appendix O: Observational Protocol ....................................................................................217
Appendix P: Carl James’ Identity Diagram ............................................................................218
Introduction

“It is not working here. We will have to go.” Those words stung so badly I broke out into a cold sweat. Esther\(^1\) was relatively new to the congregation. She had arrived in Canada from Korea a year or two earlier and she and her two children were trying to fit in to this new and strange country. The congregation in which I served was predominantly white, middle-class and mostly elderly, but we did have a few young families. It was exciting to see Esther and her family participating in worship and church events, despite language barriers. Esther was even beginning to bring a couple of her Korean friends and their children to church with her. There was a small but growing community of Korean immigrants coming into the area for work and we were excited to be able to provide a church home for those seeking one.

Things seemed to be going along smoothly until that Sunday when Esther asked to speak with me privately in my office. She was very emotional when she told me of her decision to leave the church. When I asked why, she informed me that her children had been playing in the Reception Hall during coffee hour the previous Sunday and one of the elderly church members yelled at them. The church member then turned to Esther and said “You people need to watch your children more closely; they are like wild animals!” Esther was dumbstruck. She felt so disrespected and shamed by the person’s comments. She could not understand how someone could speak like that. In her last church (a Korean church) the children were always allowed to run around and play together. In fact, Sundays were the only opportunity for Esther and her friends to sit and talk and let the kids play. I certainly

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\(^1\) All names used in this dissertation have been changed.
felt for Esther but I also understood the elderly member’s concerns too. Over the last many months I was made aware of several “close calls” with children running into older parishioners. The older parishioners were worried about being pushed over and hurt. I understood their concerns; however, I was also aware that it was not just the Korean kids doing the running around. All of the children did it. I tried to explain the concerns to Esther but it was too little too late. She and her friends eventually left the church.

While it was a great loss to the congregation, this experience taught us a valuable lesson in hospitality and cross-cultural communication. We learned that if we want to welcome people from different cultural backgrounds to our congregation then we would have to redefine ourselves in a growing multicultural world. We would have to learn to acknowledge cultural difference and step outside of our own cultural frames and comfort zones to engage appropriately with others. We began to ask ourselves some questions. In congregations facing growing cultural diversity, what does it mean to be respectful and inclusive? How do we welcome those different from us?

Years have passed since that experience, yet it has never been far from my mind particularly with regards to the church. Presently I am serving in team ministry with my husband at Thornhill Presbyterian Church (TPC) in Thornhill, Ontario. Thornhill is part of the thriving city of Vaughan just north of Toronto. Over the nine years we have served at TPC we have noticed that the diversity within the congregation is a growing trend.\(^2\) A survey of other Protestant congregations in our neighbourhood reveals that their church

\(^2\) More than one third (35%) of the present membership of TPC has joined the church in the last 6 years and 50% of those new members are first or second generation Canadians.
memberships do not boast the same rich diversity that TPC has. For some reason TPC is different. While it is not without its problems and is far from being perfect, it would appear that we are doing something right. People genuinely seem to “get along.” The tenured members of the congregation appear to be welcoming and accepting of the growing numbers of culturally diverse people attending worship and participating in the life of the church.

The new attenders who do not belong to the traditionally “dominant” group appear to feel “welcomed” and appear to extend “welcome” back; yet there is this lingering question as to how comfortable people really are together. Is it mere cordiality? Are cultural groups simply tolerating each other; or is genuine community being built through mutual acts of hospitality?

Many organizations in a multiple of fields (including education, the military, business, government etc.) have asked similar questions about intercultural community. Within these fields, intercultural competence models and theories have been designed to measure competency levels. While a better understanding of the intercultural dynamics in congregations would provide much needed insight into growing multicultural churches,

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3 This survey was conducted by me to fulfill the requirements of the Research Methodology course TSH 5013, June 2009.

4 By “tenured” in this chapter I am referring to members who have been in the church for longer than 20 years. In this case it is important to note that the tenured members include mostly Caucasian but also Jamaican, Guianese, Trinidadian and Chinese families.

5 For example, there is an old quilt with members’ names written on it that was created 20 years ago in honour of the congregation’s 150th anniversary. The quilt hung for a long time on the wall in the entranceway to the church. This quilt became a symbol of the “old-time” congregation and the spot in which it hung was considered almost “sacred”. Suggesting that the quilt be moved raised many hackles and defensive posturing. As the congregation began to grow and change some of the “old guard” began to recognize that the quilt did not have the same meaning to newcomers. Eventually it was agreed that the quilt could be moved to the chapel. It remains a sign of the “good old days” but it no longer stands as a symbol of the present congregation.
presently there would appear to be no models, methods or tools to measure intercultural competence in religious congregational settings. Thus, there is a need to study practices of mutual hospitality in a congregational setting in order to build conceptual models of intercultural competence for future consideration and application in different congregational contexts.

In light of this, I have found myself deeply curious about two things: What is happening among the congregational members at TPC to make this multi-ethnic church community thrive? Secondly, how “well” we are doing? What do intercultural competence theories and models reveal about the practices of hospitality at TPC? Do the culturally dominant members share power with members of non-dominant groups? How do the components of intercultural competence in available models inform intercultural competence within a congregational setting, specifically TPC?

The purpose of this dissertation is two-fold. First, the processes of mutual hospitality extended across cultural difference at TPC will be defined, identified and described. Second, the dissertation will consider what intercultural competence theories can reveal about the practice of mutual hospitality in a congregational setting. What works and what does not work from an individual and organizational perspective when interacting across difference in a multicultural congregation? What themes and patterns of hospitality are at work? How do intercultural competence theories help us understand better the dynamics at play? And where do we go from there?

Before proceeding, it would be helpful to clarify some terms. In this dissertation I have coined the term mutual hospitality. While I will define this term in more
detail later, I here suggest that mutual hospitality is closely aligned to Letty Russell’s definition of *hospitality* in her book, *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference*. She writes:

> I understand hospitality as the practice of God’s welcome embodied in our actions as we reach across difference to participate with God in bringing justice and healing to our world in crisis.\(^6\)

*Mutual hospitality* is the extension of welcome between individuals across difference.

Other definitions are in order here as well. What does it mean to be *competent*? How do we describe *culture*? And what does *Intercultural Competence* suggest?

For the purpose of this study I will rely on the definitions that most experts in the intercultural competence field accept.\(^7\) *Competence* describes the process “of managing interaction in ways that are likely to produce more appropriate and effective individual, relational, group, or institutional outcomes.”\(^8\) We will understand the term *culture* for this study to mean an organic set of “intergenerational attitudes, values, beliefs, rituals/customs and behavioural patterns into which people are born.”\(^9\) Because *intercultural competence* is a term used to describe individual and/or group interaction in a multiple of different contexts, there is no singular conclusive definition for the term.\(^10\) However, there is a

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\(^7\) I will particularly be relying on the writings of Janet Bennett, Darla K. Deardorff, Brian Spitzberg and Gabrielle Changnon for my definitions.


growing consensus with leading scholars that, in its simplest form, intercultural competence is defined as “appropriate and effective communication and behaviours in intercultural situations”. 11

Throughout this dissertation the terms *multicultural, multi-ethnic, cross-cultural* and *intercultural* will be used. While within the Canadian context, “multicultural” has become a highly contested ideology, 12 in this study multicultural and multi-ethnic are used interchangeably as purely descriptive terms. They are quantitative and refer to a number of different cultures in one place together. *Intercultural*, on the other hand, is more of a qualitative term. The word intercultural describes communities where different cultures are able to interact with one another across difference (See Appendix A).

This study is grounded on the belief that the multi-ethnic church is both necessary and biblical. It is a reflection on earth what shall be in Heaven. Revelation 7:9-12 describes the vision of heaven where all people of every nation, tribe, people and language come together and stand before the throne of God to worship. In a changing world where cultures are mixing and often clashing it has never been a more urgent time than now for the church take steps to cross the boundaries of difference to create unity in diversity.

Chapter one will begin by examining the current demographic contexts of TPC, the village of Thornhill, the city of Vaughan and multicultural Canada. Part two will

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12 While Canada has benefited from its diverse population, multiculturalism is not without problems. Ever since the Multiculturalism Act was passed in the early 1980’s there has been much debate over whether or not it was successful in bringing cultures together. Some experts have argued that the Act has only succeeded in creating cultural ghettos and enclaves across Canada, thus causing cultural divisions. More will be said on this later in the dissertation.
explore how the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) has responded to the changing demographics in church and society over the years. The chapter will conclude with a brief consideration of the multi-ethnic church movement in North America.

Chapter two provides the theoretical frameworks operative in the study. First this chapter will explore the biblical grounding for multi-ethnic communities of faith. It will establish my definition of mutual hospitality and expand on its theological implications. This chapter will also outline the latest research on and models for measuring intercultural competence and will describe in detail the three models that will be referred to in this dissertation. Finally, I will outline my reasons for using these three models. My primary focus will be on how Darla Deardorff’s Process Model of Intercultural Competence can give insight into considering competency progress within a congregation. Two other models will enter the dialogue. They include the Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence by Stefanie Rathje and the Developmental Intercultural Competence Model by Milton J. Bennett.

Chapter three will provide a concise overview of the research methodology used in this study. This project will take the form of an exploratory qualitative instrumental case study within a bounded system (the congregation) over a set period of time (4 months) and setting (the church). Various forms of data gathering and procedures taken to ensure triangulation of data results will be outlined.

Chapter four will describe in detail the major findings of the research and how the various modes of discovery rendered similar and sometimes conflicting results. It
will also situate what Focus Group transcripts, coffee hour observation notes and field notes revealed about practices of mutual hospitality at TPC.

In chapter five I will outline how the data was themed and coded looking for patterns, similarities and differences. Themes will be categorized. The strategy for data analysis will rely on theoretical propositions. As Robert Yin suggests, this method looks back to the theoretical propositions which lead to the case study. In my case I will compare the results of the research to the intercultural competence theories to see what conclusions can be drawn. A last step will consider the application of the results and the limitations of the study.

Chapter six will summarize the results and draw conclusions from the results. Best practices for building intercultural competence in congregations will be suggested. Next steps for TPC will be explored as well as the implications of the study on the local church and the PCC. Finally, questions for further study will be presented.
Chapter One
Background and Context

Part I: Church and Community

Thornhill Presbyterian Church

TPC is located in the historical village of Thornhill within the city of Vaughan, just blocks north of Toronto city limits. The church has been a vital part of the Thornhill community for nearly 170 years. At the time of its founding in 1849, and through the years of its greatest growth, it was principally a congregation made up of first and second generation Canadians of Dutch, English, Scottish, American and Irish descent.\(^\text{13}\) This demographic reflected the surrounding community very well (Caucasians of European descent) and remained the same for many decades. However, over the last 50 years Toronto has grown and the village of Thornhill has become more like a suburb of Toronto.

Presently, the congregational membership stands at about 350 members and adherents.\(^\text{14}\) There are 70-80 children enrolled in the Sunday school annually, and weekly church attendance averages about 225 adults and children. Although the membership of TPC remains predominately Canadian born, the roll indicates that of the 204 households within the congregation 99 of the households (49%) are made up of first or second

\[^{13}\text{Much of the community was comprised of United Empire Loyalist who migrated to Canada from the U.S. after the war of 1812. For a more descriptive accounting of the demographics of Thornhill see: }\]
\[^{14}\text{An adherent is a person who comes to the church regularly but who has not become a church member. Adherents contribute to the life of the congregation every way a member does, except they are not permitted to vote to receive a new minister.}\]
generation Canadians\textsuperscript{15} representing Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago, various other islands in the Caribbean (St. Kitts, St. Martin and Jamaica), the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland), The Netherlands, Italy, Hungary, Ukraine, Greece, South Africa, Cameroon, Ghana, Israel, Iran, Armenia, Iraq, Lebanon, Guyana, India, Sri Lanka, and the United States.

Of the more than thirty different nationalities represented at TPC, twenty of them are easily identifiable by accent alone.\textsuperscript{16} Approximately ten households speak a language other than English within the home (Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese, Hungarian, Mandarin, Farsi, Hindi, Hebrew and Ukrainian). The demographic changes in the congregation are reflective of the changes going on in the village of Thornhill and the city of Vaughan.

**Thornhill and Vaughan**

The village of Thornhill is divided along Yonge Street with one half within the city of Markham and the other half (where TPC is located) within the city of Vaughan.\textsuperscript{17} While the village has been split between the two cities, it remains a community and a postal designation to this day. As the years have passed the population of the cities of Vaughan

\textsuperscript{15} By First Generation Canadian I mean individuals who were born outside of Canada. Second generation means children with at least one parent born outside of Canada.

\textsuperscript{16} The presence of an accent indicates the person likely had some schooling in their native country which would influence their sense of cultural identity.

\textsuperscript{17} In 1850 at the initiation of municipal government Thornhill was divided along Yonge Street between Markham and Vaughan which were then townships. Thornhill was designated a police village so maintained its historical boundaries. For more on the history of Thornhill see: A Brief History of Thornhill: https://www.vaughan.ca/services/vaughan_archives/historyofvaughan/VaughanDocuments/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20Thornhill.pdf Accessed September 25, 2016.
and Markham have mushroomed to over 319 000 and 337 000 residents respectively. These two cities remain in the top three fastest growing in Ontario.18

The growth of these communities is in large part due to immigration. From the time of its incorporation as an official city in 1991, the population of Vaughan has increased by nearly 200%.19 In 2010 the city of Vaughan prepared a diversity strategy for the city and claimed diversity was one of Vaughan’s “greatest assets”.20 The 2011 census reveals that 46.4 percent of Vaughan’s population was foreign born.21 As part of the city of Vaughan, the village of Thornhill has experienced similar demographic shifts. Presently, only 48% of Thornhill residents claim English as their mother tongue.22 The same source claims that the other 52% of languages spoken in the homes of residents include Korean, Hebrew, Farsi, Italian, Cantonese, Russian, Tagalog, Mandarin and others.

It is evident that the city of Vaughan and the community of Thornhill are experiencing tremendous demographic shifts. These changes are not isolated; they are a reflection of what is happening in Canada, and in particular, in the larger urban centres of

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18 See demographic information at: The Corporation of the City of Vaughan: https://www.vaughan.ca/business/market_indicators/demographics/Pages/population.aspx accessed 06/10/16.

19 According to Vaughan demographic reports, since Vaughan was incorporated as a city in 1991 it has experienced close to 200% growth in population much of which is from immigration. See: https://www.vaughan.ca/business/market_indicators/demographics/Pages/default.aspx accessed November 7, 2016.


22 Ibid. According to the City of Vaughan website, where Thornhill is located, 46.4% of the population of Vaughan are foreign born.
Canada. It is important to look at what has happened in Canada to understand the situation in which we find ourselves.

**Multiculturalism in Canada: Government Initiation and Response**

There is no doubt that Canada is a nation of ethnic and cultural diversity. Many have asserted that pre-colonized Canada, with its numerous Aboriginal communities, has always been a country of diversity. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that with the arrival of the first European explorers in the 16th century and governmental policies on immigration thereafter, diversity would be part of the Canadian ethos.

Since the time of Confederation in 1867 the federal government saw immigration as a priority for the growth of the fledgling country. The country was geographically large and there was a need to populate it to spur on economic growth and infrastructure, particularly in the west. In 1869 the government passed the first Immigration Act which was touted as an “open door” policy with few restrictions. However, as time went on, more and more constraints were placed on immigrants including restrictions based on health, physical ability as well as “race, ethnicity and national origin.”

By 1960’s the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism acknowledged that while the Canadian population was predominantly made up of people of British or French descent, there was also another growing segment of the population from other parts of the world typically (but not exclusively) from other European countries.

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Commission dubbed this group the “Third Force” and acknowledged that Canada was a “mosaic” or “multicultural society” made up of three parts: the British, the French and Others.\(^{25}\)

In response to further immigration growth, in 1971 the federal government initiated multiculturalism as an “official government policy”.\(^{26}\) Nine years later (1982) this policy would eventually become entrenched in section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.\(^{27}\) The sentiment of the policy was that all Canadians, regardless of ethnic origin or language, have unique cultural identities that should be preserved and will eventually shape what it is to be Canadian.

In 1988 the Multicultural Act came into effect providing a “legislative framework” for the multiculturalism policy. The Act begins with a declaration:

3. (1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to (a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{27}\) The policy was enacted in response to recommendations made by The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism formed in 1963 which was set up to deal with the ongoing rights debate between Francophone and Anglophone Canadians. In its response the Commission made the policy broader than the original English/French biculturalism debate. Instead the Commission recognized the vast array of cultures represented in Canada at the time. The government was criticized harshly for this decision.

\(^{28}\) Canadian Multiculturalism Act.
Pundits over the last many decades have debated the value of multiculturalism as an ideology in Canada, but these criticisms lie outside the boundaries of this dissertation. Multiculturalism, regardless of its dissenters, is a reality.29

The census of 2011 indicates that Canada is the fastest growing of the G8 countries and that the population growth is due to immigration.30 This trend is not surprising. In 1951 nearly 80% of Canadians were of British or French descent.31 At the turn of the 21st century there were more than 200 ethnic origins in Canada (not including First Nations, Metis or Inuit peoples), and 50 percent of Canada’s population growth was due to immigration. In 2001, approximately 13.5 percent of the population was non-Canadian

29 The criticisms about the multicultural project include but are not exclusive to the following: 1) Multiculturalism Threatens Canadian Identity: Recognizing all cultural identities and traditions has made establishing a single Canadian cultural ethos or identity tricky to navigate. The question “What does it mean to be Canadian?” is still asked. 2) Multiculturalism Promotes Stereotypes and Essentialism: In an effort to allow ethnic groups to keep their own cultural identities and celebrate them at cultural events and festivals, ethnic cultures are largely reduced to stereotypes and over generalizations. 3) Mosaic or Melting Pot? Multiculturalism in Canada encourages immigrants to keep their own nationality (integration) rather than take on their new identity as Canadian (assimilation). This has resulted divided national loyalties. 4) Human Rights Conflicts: Multiculturalism, which protects the rights of all ethnic groups to have freedom of expression and preserve their cultural heritage, sets up political stalemates when one culture’s values conflict with the values of other cultural groups (i.e. the role of women and girls in a culture). 5) Ghettoization: Historical demographics demonstrate that upon arriving in Canada cultural groups wishing to maintain traditional practices, language and food formed their own cultural enclaves. Critics claim this creates an “us-them” mentality with other cultures. It also stymies attempts to assimilate with other Canadians. For more information on the criticism of multiculturalism in Canada please see: “Canadian Multicultural Act,” accessed November 23, 2016, http://www.pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/canadian-multiculturalism-act-1988; Jo-Anne Lee, “Multiculturalism: A Contested Terrain for Social Services and Citizenship” in: Ludgard DeDecker ed., Is Multiculturalism Possible? Victoria Perspectives Community Seminar 7, (Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria, 1999) 35-55; Robert Schreiter, “A New Modernity: Living and Believing in an Unstable World,” part four in New Theology Review, 20 (November 2007); Neil Bissoondath, Selling Illusions: the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada (Toronto: Penguin, 2002); and Garth Stevenson, “Multiculturalism: As Canadian as Apple Pie,” Inroads, 4 (1995), 74 see: http://inroadsjournal.ca/multiculturalism-as-canadian-as-apple-pie/ Accessed 04/10/16.


born. It is predicted that by 2020 that number will have reached 20 percent, and by 2025 Canada’s population growth will be based solely on immigration. These demographic shifts are most evident in larger Canadian urban centers like Toronto. Reports indicate that 7 out of 10 immigrants settle in the Greater Toronto Area and by 2031 there will be more Toronto residents who were born outside of Canada than born in Canada. These statistics represent the realities of our Canadian culture; we are quantifiably ethnically diverse.

In response to these realities the government of Canada, successfully or not, has made attempts through policies and legislation to deal with our multicultural situation. There is no contesting that Canada is a country built on vast ethnic diversity and it is only becoming more diverse. The question which remains, then, is how do we learn to live together in a culturally diverse country? In organizations such as the church is it possible to create communities which reflect the diversity around them? And what has the Presbyterian Church in Canada done to respond to this diversity in society and the church over the years?

**Part II: Situating the Presbyterian Church in Multicultural Canada**

In light of (or in spite of) the dramatic demographic and population shifts in Canada, the PCC as a denomination has seen significant decline in membership. The 2011 Census reports a “long term downward trend” in the membership of all Protestant

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32 Statistics from “*A Multicultural Workshop, April 2004 Department of Canadian Heritage,*” accessed November 23, 2016, [www.culturecanada.gc.ca](http://www.culturecanada.gc.ca) “Canada’s foreign born population is at its highest level in 70 years. Its visible minority population has tripled since 1981, and its Aboriginal population, as a percentage, is second only to that of New Zealand (Statistics Canada, 2003). The Conference Board of Canada (2003) projected that by 2025, immigration will account for all population growth in Canada.

denominations across Canada.\footnote{“Statistics Canada, Chart 1, Frequency of Religious Attendance, 1985 to 2005,” accessed November 23, 2016, \url{www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-630-x/2008001/c-g/10650/5201028-eng.htm}.} The report, however, adds that the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) has suffered the greatest losses of all. These statistics are bolstered by church historians Brian Clarke and Stuart Macdonald in their \textit{Working Paper – Presbyterian Church in Canada}. Since its peak in 1964 membership in the PCC has decreased by 45% from 202,498 members to 113,104.\footnote{Brian Clarke, Stuart Macdonald, “Working Paper-Presbyterian Church in Canada version 2.0,” January 6,2011, accessed November 20, 2016, \url{http://individual.utoronto.ca/clarkemacdonald/clarkemacdonald/Welcome_files/presbyterianchurch.pdf}.}

The causes attributed to church membership decline are twofold. First, membership in Protestant churches is aging and there are not enough young people to replace those who die. Secondly, many immigrants arriving in Canada are not Christian, thus tending not to seek out affiliation with Christian churches.\footnote{“Statistics Canada, Chart 1, Frequency of Religious Attendance, 1985 to 2005,” accessed June 20, 2016.} Another obvious and serious consideration is that over the centuries the PCC has been viewed, rightly or wrongly, as a bastion of white, Eurocentric/Scottish tradition and values which could repel diversity.\footnote{Stuart Macdonald, “Presbyterian and Reformed Christians and Ethnicity,” in \textit{Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada}, eds. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 170-171.}

While there has been progress over the years it is still an observable fact that racial minorities including Canada’s Aboriginal peoples are not adequately represented in the communion and leadership within congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.
in both rural and urban settings. How has the PCC responded to the change in the Canadian landscape?

The National Church’s Response

In the recent decades the PCC has been taking steps to address the diversity question in the country and the church. In its report to the 107th General Assembly, in 1981, The Board of World Missions acknowledged that the PCC “is an ethnically and culturally pluralistic church” and recommended the following statement be approved:

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is an ethnically and culturally pluralistic church. Among the congregations in many presbyteries are congregations of various ethnic backgrounds, some of which are among the strongest congregations of our church. Among the membership of many congregations are people of various ethnic backgrounds who bring different Presbyterian and cultural traditions and add spiritual strength to these congregations. Some of them contribute welcome leadership.

We thank God for this growing pluralistic community of faith, and for the sharing, and new life, and growth which it occasions.

A pluralistic church also brings some challenges. One is to provide ordained ministries for congregations of minority language and cultural groups. Regulations and facilities designed to strengthen ministry to white English speaking Presbyterians can have the reverse effect on ministry for Presbyterians of minority groups. Ways must be found that will enable and encourage an ordained ministry for this part of our Church, with appropriate standards and opportunity for training.

A related challenge is for congregations, presbyteries and national boards and committees to seek out leadership from minority group Presbyterians. If we are a pluralistic church, we must be seen to be a pluralistic church. Representatives of the minority groups who make up the membership of our congregations must be given opportunity to use their gifts on Sessions, Boards, Church School staff, leadership of Presbytery Committees and national staff.

A third challenge which is of prime importance is racism. There are sometimes overt and blatant expressions both in the church and the community, which must be challenged directly and publicly by members of the majority group; i.e. white

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38 At the 135th General Assembly held in 2009 the Presbytery of Ottawa acknowledging this fact petitioned the Venerable General Assembly to direct the Life and Mission Agency to develop a task force to study and strategize ways to be more inclusive of visible minorities in the church.
English-speaking Presbyterians. Perhaps the larger challenge is in the subtler forms of racism, because while members of minority groups may be sensitive or even super-sensitive to these expressions, the members of the majority group are often oblivious, cavalier or even unintentional participants. A racially sensitive majority group will make for a strong pluralistic church.  

The Board of World Missions also made recommendations to continue the policy of establishing ethnic congregations and to encourage “established congregations” to “explore and make use of the gifts and experiences of newcomers.” Following that Assembly, it appears the PCC responded to these recommendations. Church members of non-European descent were becoming more visible in the leadership of many congregations. Additionally, between 1981, when the recommendations were made, and 2015 the number of mono-cultural ethnic congregations in the PCC went from 27 (2%) to 65 (9%).

By 1985 Korean Presbyterians had become the largest single non Euro-Canadian ethnic group in the PCC. In response to the mounting spiritual, communal and linguistic needs of the Koreans within the church, two ethnically based presbyteries were established. They were called Eastern Han-Ca and Western Han-Ca (Han representing the Korean identity and Ca representing the Canadian identity).

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40 A & P, 1981, 424
43 A presbytery is a governing and administrative body representing ministers and an equalizing elder within a geographical district.
44 Not all Korean Presbyterian churches in the PCC joined the Han Ca Presbyteries.
Twenty years after the 1981 General Assembly recommendations were made, another overture would come to the 127th Assembly in (2001); this time from The Presbytery of East Toronto. The prayer of the overture requested definitions of “racism” and “racial harassment” and the development of a racial harassment policy for the church.\textsuperscript{45} The overture was placed with the Associate Secretary of Justice Ministries who immediately established a working group to prepare a response to the overture. The working group invited and sought out the voices of Presbyterians from minority groups across Canada to share stories and insights of personal experiences. Many candid dialogues took place. The committee also consulted with the Knox College faculty and students.

The committee grounded its work on the concept of “unity in the body of Christ” as outlined in the letter to the Ephesians. In speaking of the cultural divide between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians, the writer of Ephesians states: “For he (Jesus Christ) is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Ephesians 2:14). In Christ believers are to be united into one household and dividing walls of culture and difference are broken down.

The committee presented its response to the overture at the 130th General Assembly in 2004. The final eight page report provided definitions for “racism” and “racial harassment”\textsuperscript{46} and then outlined some of the strengths and areas for growth needed in the church. The committee commended a number of congregations in the PCC that had


“considerable diversity in their membership, where all are involved in the life of the congregation and decision making is shared.”

The report also made mention of the church’s three theological colleges. It was noted that the colleges were making changes to accommodate the needs of their student bodies and the church at large. Knox College in Toronto had established the Asian-Canadian Centre for Theology and Ministry and called a Professor from South Korea to fill the Christian Education & Youth Ministry chair. St. Andrew’s Hall in British Columbia was offering courses and programs to connect with the Aboriginal and Asian communities; and Presbyterian College in Montreal was offering a course in Christianity in a Global Perspective.

Part of these advances can be attributed to the 1996 review of the ATS (Association of Theological Schools in Canada and the United States) standards by which seminaries and colleges are assessed for accreditation. With respect to cultural diversity the standards state:

In their institutional and educational practices, theological schools shall promote awareness of the diversity of race, ethnicity, and culture widely present in North America and shall seek to enhance participation and leadership of persons of color in theological education. Schools shall assist all students in gaining the particular knowledge, appreciation, and openness needed to live and practice ministry effectively in culturally and racially diverse settings.


The report also acknowledged the “bold step” taken by the church with the establishment of the Han-Ca presbyteries, stating:

More than anything else, Han-Ca presbyteries gives (sic) the Korean congregations a clearer sense of presence in the church by allowing them to have a collective identity. They now have a sense of belonging not only to each other but also to the larger church. Today they actively participate in presbytery life because there is a sense of community, and through this community, they are challenged to look beyond their own local congregation. They have become more interested in the church’s mission and the church’s polity. They can now reflect in their own collective voice and soon this collective voice will be heard more strongly than before. Their presence in the General Assembly is now assured.  

The report concluded with several recommendations. These included the development of policies to deal with allegations of racial harassment; the development of diversity policies for hiring and appointments in the higher courts and offices of the church and for the Presbyterian Record to continue to publish articles and by-lines relating to congregations whose memberships include visible minorities. That report was received and approved.

In that same year other cross-cultural progress was being made in the church. Justice Ministries in cooperation with Knox College and the Asian-Canadian Centre for Theology and Ministry began hosting an annual series of forums called “Crossing Cultures Together”. These forums were open to the broader church and hosted well known

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50 A & P, 2004, p. 386. There is much debate as to whether this has actually happened or not. In an article written by Daniel Cho for the Presbyterian Record entitled “Is Multiculturalism Bad for the Church?” Cho argues that “…this success was self-contained – by that I mean these groups blossomed so much so that their involvement, whether in business, finance or religion, need not extend beyond their own communities. The result is less interaction and integration of diverse groups of people because of healthier self-identity and clearer cultural lines of demarcation.” See: Daniel Cho, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for the Church?” in The Presbyterian Record, June, 2011, accessed November 23, 2016, [http://presbyterianrecord.ca/2011/07/15/is-multip---](http://presbyterianrecord.ca/2011/07/15/is-multip---).


52 In the 12 years since this report it is still unclear if the aspirations of the Assembly have been met.
speakers who specialized in cultural diversity and the church. The forums were attended by clergy, laypersons, faculty and students and continue to this day.

Changes were still yet to come for the PCC. At the 134th General Assembly in 2008, the Assembly Council presented its response to the recommendations from the 2004 Assembly for a policy on racial harassment. The document entitled *Growing in Christ—Seeing the Image of God in our Neighbour (Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Allegations of Racial Harassment)* was presented.

In its presentation the Assembly Council pledged to keep racial issues in the forefront by “carrying out surveys of national staff and standing committees, monitoring progress in this area and addressing issues related to achieving the goal of equal opportunity and diversity, possibly through a committee that meets periodically to review, monitor and address issues.” The document was received and adopted.

Meanwhile Justice Ministries had its own work to do. In April of 2008, just two months before the Assembly Council would present the policy of racial harassment to the General Assembly, Justice Ministries hosted a forum with and for ethnic minority members of the PCC. Forty-nine participants from eleven different presbyteries attended the week-end event. The forum, labeled *The Ezekiel Forum* by participants, was a productive and transformative experience for all involved. At the close of the forum participants issued the following appeal to the wider Church which was published in the conference proceedings published by Justice Ministries in June 2008:


54 A&P 2008, p. 227-28
We, the members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, clergy, seminarians and laity, youth, middle aged and seniors, representing various Presbyterian congregations across Canada, representatives of diverse racial and ethnic groups met at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre from April 4-6, 2008, under the auspices of Justice Ministries.

We met at a time when the demographic profile is rapidly changing and thus reflects The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the same way it does in Canada.

We gave of our precious time, time we could have spent with our families, our jobs, our studies, to serve our Church to become more representative of the diverse ethnic and racial realities of Canada.

We are marginalized. Our voices are not heard within the existing structures of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We ask you prayerfully to consider our request to have a legitimate fully resourced structure within the rubric of the Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to address our concerns about racial and ethnic relations within our congregations, our sessions, our presbyteries and at the national level.  

As a result of The Ezekiel Forum, the Presbytery of Ottawa sent an overture in 2009 to the 135th General Assembly. The prayer of Overture 18 requested the Assembly to direct the Life and Mission Agency to create task force to find ways for all levels of the church to learn how to “appreciate and welcome racial and ethnic minorities and to value the skills and spiritual gifts they have to offer.”

Once again Justice Ministries formed a task force with representatives from the Life and Mission Agency (the Agency), the Assembly Council and members of the church community at large. Two years of meetings and discussion ensued. In an effort to focus

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their study, the task force established some guiding questions and defined several terms in
the overture. Their questions lead the committee to conclude:

The transformed relationships that the spirit of the overture craves, require posing
the question, “Who welcomes who?” With transformation, the goal cannot be that
some people are required to ‘do’ the welcoming, wherein ethnic and racial
minorities occupy positions as perpetual ‘receivers’ and ‘objects of admiration and
joyful thankfulness’. The goal is to create the changes that will enable ethnic and
racial minorities to participate fully in the life of the church, through shared
responsibilities and meaningful engagement of their spiritual gifts.\(^{57}\)

The report highlighted the many programs and events sponsored by Justice
Ministries and Knox College over the years to help build a more diverse and inclusive
church. However, despite the work already done the committee observed: “there is
frustration among some members of ethnic and racial groups in the church that comes from
a lack of a sense of belonging to the denomination.”\(^ {58}\)

Concluding that the church needs to enter the “Grace Margin” where people
of diverse cultures can live and work and interact together, the committee presented to
Assembly Recommendation 5 that proposed ten initiatives for the church to adopt. After
some discussion on the floor of the court, eleven initiatives were proposed and
Recommendation 5, as amended, was adopted:

1. That the church adopt as part of its vision the guiding principle of working towards
making The Presbyterian Church in Canada more racially and ethnically inclusive in
ways that will bring about transformation and better utilize the gifts of its racially
and ethnically diverse membership.

2. That the church takes into account this guiding principle of greater racial and ethnic
inclusion in any and all of its future work.


\(^ {58}\) A & P., 2011, p. 375.
3. That the church continues to account for progress in its racial and ethnic inclusion strategies and initiatives by reporting to General Assembly.

4. The Assembly Council is encouraged to integrate ethnic and racial diversity training into their regular meetings.

5. Each ministry has an advisory committee. Associate Secretaries will work with the General Secretary in developing strategies designed to expand representation by ethnic and racial minorities on their advisory committees.

6. Justice Ministries will continue to co-host Crossing Cultures Together forums with Knox College and welcomes opportunities to collaborate with Presbyterian College and St. Andrew’s Hall.

7. The Life and Mission Agency Committee is encouraged to integrate ethnic and racial diversity training into their regular meetings.

8. Synods are encouraged to provide opportunities for regional staff to take training workshops in ethnic and racial diversity. The workshops are intended to assist regional staff in working with presbyteries, presbyterials, sessions, PYPS and other youth groups to strengthen leadership of ethnic and racial minorities, and Justice Ministries will assist synods in identifying trainers and guest speakers on ethnic and racial diversity.

9. The General Assembly Office is encouraged to integrate ethnic and racial diversity training into the biennial clerks’ meetings.

10. The camps are encouraged to enable young people from racial and ethnic backgrounds to attend the camps.

11. That the church, at all its levels, strive to identify: a) the skills and spiritual gifts of the racial and ethnic minorities among us, b) the wider church’s shortcomings in need of these skills and gifts, and c) ways we can use all our gifts and skills to serve side by side, as brothers and sisters, in the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁵⁹

To this date no further petitions or overtures have come to the Assembly floor and the church’s final word rests on these eleven recommendations. But the question asked by the task force still lurks in the shadows.

In the case of the multicultural church, “Who welcomes who?” Who is the guest and who is the host? Who holds power and who does not? Where does the responsibility and accountability lie when it comes to cross-cultural communication? In a changing Canadian ethnic landscape, how will the church extend welcome across difference?

**Mono-Cultural and Multi-Cultural Church**

The PCC has always have been a “multi-ethnic” denomination. Stuart Macdonald, Associate Professor of Church and Society at Knox College at the University of Toronto, reminds us that even in the earliest years of its formation, the PCC was made up of Highland and Lowland Scots, Americans, and the Irish. What the Presbyterian Church has seemed to do well with its diversity is create ethnic-specific communities of faith. Macdonald writes, “the denomination...had a long-standing tradition of establishing or allowing the establishment of distinct congregations based upon language or, in some cases, ethnicity.” From Gaelic speaking Scots to the many languages of the Aboriginal Canadians, congregations were formed around language and culture in the early years of the PCC. According to Macdonald, as more and more immigrants from countries like Iceland, Scandinavia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Italy flooded the Canadian shores, mission work began in earnest. “The result of these missions”, Macdonald concludes, “was the creation of ethnic congregations that have co-existed with the traditional Presbyterian communities for decades.” Since those early years the PCC has Arabic, Ghanaian, Chinese, Taiwanese,

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60 Macdonald, “Presbyterian and Reformed Christians and Ethnicity,” in Bramadat and Seljak, 182

61 Ibid, 183
Hungarian, Ukrainian, and Korean congregations which are thriving communities in the PCC today.

Despite the evident diversity of the denomination nationally, it appears from historic and present realities, the PCC is good at establishing mono-cultural local congregations. The question remains: is this the best way to deal with diversity in the church, particularly in the culturally diverse large urban centers of Canada? In an article published in the Presbyterian Record\(^\text{62}\) in June of 2011, Toronto pastor Daniel Cho attempts to address the question: “Is multiculturalism bad for the church?”

Cho acknowledges that the creation of ethnic specific churches gives minority groups a sense of value and belonging in their given context, but he also wonders if ethnic-specific congregations can become isolationist. As ethnic-based groups become more inward focused, Cho says, communication across groups begins to break down.\(^\text{63}\) Cho goes back and forth weighing the positive and negative aspects of mono-cultural and multi-cultural congregations ending up on both sides of the matter. He asserts that our task “as Christians is to go beyond culture as we discern how our understanding of God can be enhanced through our relations with others who are different from ourselves.”\(^\text{64}\)

All that having been said, the fact remains that congregations, particularly in the larger urban centers, are seeing more and more ethnic diversity in their pews. Presently

\(^{62}\) The Presbyterian Record is the church’s national magazine. Launched on January 1, 1876, The Record will cease to be published after the December 2016 edition due to lack of funding.


\(^{64}\) Ibid
the national church has not established any concrete strategies for congregations to build healthy multi-ethnic communities.

While the national church has made attempts to foster multi-ethnic community, some would argue that there is still a lethargy that gets in the way of progress on the matter. In an article in the Presbyterian Record (April 2010) entitled “Ethnicity, Identity and Isolation: the long shadow of racism on the church”, Managing Editor Andrew Faiz writes about ethnic groups in the church whose voices are not being heard by the dominant group. Faiz suggests this is not so much about racism as it is “institutional indolence.” He concludes:

It’s not that the church doesn’t want to be inclusive and it’s not as if the church doesn’t know what the right thing is to do; it’s just that the church doesn’t know how to go about being inclusive, given the established structure, the traditional short-hands, the smug tribalism, the comfortable pews. In other words, it is not a matter of racism—an active hatred—but of laziness, a comfort in doing things the way things have always been done.65

I would not go so far as to use the word “lazy” to describe the national church’s efforts, however there is a need to consider how our established structures may get in the way of valuing the multi-ethnic congregation within the PCC. While monocultural churches have their place in the PCC, they cannot sustain the church forever in a growing multicultural Canada. There are theological, biblical and practical implications of fostering and nurturing multi-ethnic congregations in the PCC.

65 Andrew Faiz, “Ethnicity, Identity and Isolation: the long shadow of racism on the church”, Presbyterian Record, April, 2010. p.34
In Part III we will consider what some U. S. American Churches are doing to deal with the issue of multi-ethnic congregations in that country. While I recognize they will not speak fully to the PCC context, there is some wisdom to be gleaned.

**Part III: The Multi-Ethnic Church**

In recent years many North American pastors, theologians, researchers and scholars have written at length about the value and importance of forming multi-ethnic communities of faith. In fact, the general opinion is that the multi-ethnic church “is not only biblical but also critical to the advance of the gospel in the twenty first century.”\(^{(66)}\) In his book entitled: *Leading a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments, and Practices of A Diverse Congregation*, pastor, author and cofounder of Mosaix Global Network,\(^{(67)}\) Dr. Mark DeYmaz, outlines a brief history of church growth movements over the last 50 years.

According to DeYmaz, as early as the mid 1960’s, Christian Missionary, Donald McGavran, began to write about his ideas on how churches grow and how individuals become receptive to the Gospel. His work formed the seed for Church Growth studies and the Movement that would follow. One of the key tenets of the Church Growth Movement (CGM) is the *homogenous unit principle (HUP)*, a philosophy structured on the

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\(^{(67)}\) Mosaix Global Network is an organization dedicated to encouraging and training leaders for multi-ethnic church leadership. An excerpt from the organization’s website states: “Founded in 2004 by Drs. Mark DeYmaz and George Yancey, Mosaix is a relational network of local church pastors and planters, denominational, network, and ministry leaders, educators and researchers, alike, that exists to establish healthy multi-ethnic and economically diverse churches for the sake of the gospel throughout North America and beyond.”

belief that churches are stronger and grow faster when their members are ethnically, economically and educationally the same.

DeYmaz suggests that while this philosophy has for the most part been successful in building churches for at least 3 decades since the movement started, it has failed in one important way. According to DeYmaz, the Movement has failed to unite people across lines of cultural and ethnic difference. DeYmaz asserts:

The problem with the homogenous unit principle is that despite the good intentions of those interested in rapidly reaching the world with the gospel (and consequently growing churches quickly), the principle has had the unintended effect of justifying the segregation of local congregations along ethnic and economic lines. 68

This conclusion has led DeYmaz and other theologians, pastors and scholars in the United States to begin to envision a new movement: the Multi-Ethnic Church Movement. The Multi-Ethnic Church Movement, according to DeYmaz found its genesis after the publication of a book written by American sociologists Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith entitled: Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America. Emerson and Smith conclude that the church is one of the last bastions of institutional racism in the United States. The solution is to create multi-racial/multi-ethnic communities of faith in order to build understanding between cultures and begin a movement of social change. 69

While the research reflects the situation within the United States, it can certainly shed some light on the Canadian context too. In his book, DeYmaz offers seven core commitments of a multi-ethnic church. Each one of these core commitments requires

68 DeYmaz, 22.

69 DeYmaz, 24-25.
serious reflective consideration (and possibly debate); however it will be the fourth and fifth commitments that will be addressed in this dissertation: Develop Cross-Cultural Relationships and Pursue Cross-Cultural Competence. According to DeYmaz, forming relationships is crucial to building healthy multi-ethnic churches. Considering the long history of cultural divide in the North American society, building trust across cultures will take time. Often people do not realize the prejudicial attitudes they carry. Open communication, freedom to share, and non-judgmental listening will help build strong relationships. As far as cross-cultural competence goes, DeYmaz believes: “The understanding we need to be effective in a cross-cultural environment is gained through experience and interaction with diverse people.” He goes on to describe a linear model of inter-cultural competence development. The development process he describes is not unlike that which Milton Bennett proposes in the field of intercultural competence. It is a linear process that moves from ethnocentrism toward ethnorelativism, or, as DeYmaz describes it “from destructiveness, to blindness, to awareness, to sensitivity, to competence.”

As I interpret practices of mutual hospitality extended across cultures in the case of TPC, pursuing cross-cultural / intercultural competence will be an important step toward building multi-ethnic community. The questions that remain have to do with the

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70 The other commitments include: Embrace Dependence; Take Intentional Steps; Empower Diverse Leadership; Promote a Spirit of Inclusion; Mobilize for Impact. The purpose of the multi-ethnic church, according to the author, is not to grow churches quickly or make change for political correctness. The multi-ethnic church is a sign of the church past and the future church in the Kingdom of God. A church whose primary mission is to lead the world to Christ will have the strength and power of God behind it.

71 DeYmaz, 96.

72 DeYmaz, 103-107.
nature of intercultural competence and how it will affect a community built around diversity?

The next chapter will outline the biblical mandate supporting multi-ethnic churches looking specifically at three key passages in the Old and New Testaments. The chapter will demonstrate how the multi-ethnic church is not just an option for church leadership to consider, but an imperative for congregations in communities with great diversity. What follows will lay out the important elements of intercultural competence in the face of a growing multicultural world and how they can be utilized in congregational settings.
Chapter Two
Biblical, Theological and Theoretical Frameworks for a Multi-Ethnic Church

Part I: A Biblical Foundation

Introduction

When I was preparing to write this dissertation I was speaking with a friend of mine about my work. After listening to my lengthy elucidations, she simply responded: “Why?” Thinking she was asking me why I was even doing this degree, I chuckled and replied: “Yeah, I get asked that a lot….I guess I do it because I believe in it.” She smiled and said, “No, WHY multi-ethnic church?” I paused as a flood of answers filled my head. There were so many reasons why from my perspective, not the least of which are the considerable shifts in Canada’s demographics due to immigration and refugee policies. But my reasons for doing this project go beyond even that. They are so much deeper. I wondered…where would I even begin? In the end I told her to read my dissertation when it was completed. That pretty much ended the conversation. But in retrospect I think her question is germane. Why indeed! As I mulled it over, it suddenly occurred to me why this was so important! As with most things in life, a story describes it best.

Several years ago on a crisp Sunday morning in September, a smartly dressed Caucasian man in his mid-50’s walked through the doors of our church. After worship we greeted him as he left the sanctuary. In our pleasantries he reported to us that he was new in town—transferred by his business to Canada—and he was looking for a church home. His thick accent betrayed his South African roots even before he told us. We directed Terry to the Fellowship Hall for coffee and invited him to come back next Sunday. The following
Sunday he returned, and the Sunday after that, and he has never stopped attending. After his wife and children relocated to Canada the family joined the church. One day I asked Terry what it was about TPC that attracted him. He responded with a powerful story.

When he was a child growing up in apartheid South Africa his family had several black servants working for them. One of them was a boy about Terry’s age. Terry would watch the boy as he worked in the garden, pushing the wheelbarrow and doing other outside jobs. Terry said he longed to play with the boy. He wanted to run and explore, ride bikes, throw a ball, but Terry’s father strictly forbade him: “Whites do NOT associate with blacks!” he admonished. Terry could not understand. Apart from the colour of his skin, the boy seemed a lot like him. His long gangly prepubescent arms and legs, his curiosity for all things gross, and he rode a bike!

A deep sadness came over him as Terry began to notice other things that confused him. Blacks could not eat in the same restaurants as whites; they had their own section at the beach! They could not use “whites only” bathroom facilities or even share a drinking fountain! Terry’s sadness turned to disbelief and then resentment. When apartheid finally did come to an end he was measurably glad. But the experience left a lasting mark on him. He told me that the first day he walked into the sanctuary of TPC and witnessed so many people of various hues and colours, nationalities and ethnicities all coming together to worship God as one people, he knew TPC was where he was supposed to be. “This is what the church should look like,” he said, “All of God’s people worshiping God together! It is in the Bah-bule!” he concluded with his warm South African drawl. Indeed, he is right! It is in the Bible. And that is where we will begin with Chapter two.
Biblical Foundations for the Multi-ethnic Church

Diversity among God’s people and learning to become communities of difference are recurrent biblical themes. One of the most significant biblical stories depicting the Hebrew author’s interpretation of God’s plan for diversity is the tower of Babel narrative in Genesis 11:1-9. The Babel story tells of the time when all the people on earth had “one language and the same words.”\(^73\) While migrating eastward the people set out to build a city with a tower in order that they could “make a name for ourselves, otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”\(^74\) As the author describes it, when God saw what humans were doing, God confused their language so they could not understand one another and then God scattered them over the face of the earth.

Some Christian biblical scholars have interpreted this passage as a conflict between prideful humanity and a punishing God.\(^75\) However, other biblical scholars have taken a different look at the Babel account.\(^76\) Theodore Hiebert, Professor of Old Testament; Dean of Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, proposes that Genesis 11:1-9 is not a story about pride

\(^73\) Genesis 11:1, All biblical references in this work are from Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

\(^74\) Genesis 11:4


and punishment at all; it is really a story about the origins of world cultures.\textsuperscript{77} He argues that the narrative’s structure and word repetition indicate the “tension between singularity and multiplicity with the purpose of explaining the origin and variety of the world cultures.”\textsuperscript{78} Indeed, he says the tower plays only a minor role in the narrative. The power of the Babel story lies elsewhere.

According to Hiebert, the Babel account is part of the larger narrative of the spread of the human race over the earth following the flood. Hiebert and others suggests that Genesis 10 and 11 are variations of the same story (much like the story of creation in Genesis 1 and 2).\textsuperscript{79} Genesis 10 describes the genealogical account of the migration of the descendants of Noah’s sons over the earth into different nations with different languages. At the conclusion of this chapter the descendants have dispersed and filled the earth. The Babel story, Hiebert asserts is an event set within the larger context of the migration of Noah’s sons.\textsuperscript{80}

Eric Law, founder and executive director of the Kaleidoscope Institute in California,\textsuperscript{81} suggests the Babel story characterizes the conflict between humankind’s tendency toward ethnocentrism and God’s desire for ethno-relativism.\textsuperscript{82} Humans feared

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{78} Hiebert, 31
\item \textsuperscript{80} Hiebert, 32
\item \textsuperscript{81} The Kaleidoscope Institute provides resources to help church leaders “create sustainable churches.”
\item \textsuperscript{82} Eric Law, \textit{The Bush was Blazing but not Consumed}, (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 1996) 43.
\end{itemize}
“scattering”. The human project was to maintain the homogeneity of one language and one culture in one place and prevent disbursement. Law asserts that God’s plan was for diversity; to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” To this end, Law continues, God confuses their language and scatters them. This action is viewed not so much as a punishment but rather the unfolding of God’s divine plan for creation. God’s plan of “riotous difference” is how Letty Russell describes it.

From the Power of Babel to the Power of Pentecost

Lectionaries have often paired the Babel story with the story of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-21. Some biblical interpretations have held that Pentecost was the reversal of God’s divisive actions at Babel; but recent scholarship has proposed an alternative understanding of the passages. Where in the Genesis narrative God creates diversity in culture and language, in Acts at Pentecost God brings clarity. Letty Russell says that Babel and Pentecost are equally important to God’s plan for creation. Babel was God offering

83 Hiebert, 36-37.

84 Genesis 1:28 to Adam and Eve; Genesis 9:7 to Noah and his sons; Genesis 35:9-11 to Jacob who receives the name Israel and God continues the blessing God made to Abraham and Isaac through him.

85 Law, The Bush Was Blazing, 38.

86 Letty Russell, Just Hospitality, 53-54.

87 The Pentecost event is significant to Christians in that it marks the beginning of the disciples’ mission in “Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” The Pentecost event occurs immediately following the accounting of the reconstitution of the Twelve with Matthias taking the place of Judas (Acts 1:24-26). The writer of Acts is careful to point out that there were gathered there that day “God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5). New Testament scholar Ben Witherington III explains the significance of this comment with respect to the Christian mission. While the disciples’ mission was to bring the Good News to “all the nations” their mission was to witness first to the Jews—the twelve tribes of Benjamin. Ben Witherington III, The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.) 128.
humanity the “gift of difference”, and Pentecost God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is portrayed as offering humans the “gift of understanding”.88

The power of Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit gifts God’s people with the ability to reach across difference to form God’s community. In the Pentecost narrative we see that people retain their own language and culture when the Holy Spirit comes. What changes is the ways in which the disciples are able communicate the Gospel across cultures.

The Prayer of Jesus

The special importance placed on unity in diversity among believers is certainly made evident by the Acts account of the work of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is also made evident in John’s account of the prayer uttered by Jesus just before his betrayal, arrest and crucifixion described in Chapter 17 of the Gospel according to John.

The prayer of Jesus in John 17 comes at the conclusion of the upper room discourse with his disciples (John 13-16). The chapters leading up to this speech/prayer of Jesus illustrate the final interactions Jesus has with his disciples. Gathering with his disciples before the Passover, Jesus washes their feet and shares a meal with them. He then predicts that he will be betrayed by one of them and killed. After sending Judas away he tells his disciples that Peter will deny him three times. In this scene Jesus offers his disciples comfort with the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Using the image of a vine and its branches, Jesus instructs his disciples to abide with him and the Father as they wait. This discourse concludes with a three part prayer in chapter 17.

88 Russell, 54-60.
Jesus prays first for himself that he would be glorified by the Father in his death. Then he prays for his disciples’ protection and “that they may be one.” Finally he prays for all believers. It is in this final part of the prayer that the Gospel writer describes Jesus’ intention for all those who call Him Lord:

My prayer is not for them (the disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17:20-23).

The unity of believers under the son of God is a significant motif in John’s Gospel, but it is also a unity in diversity.89

The first century church was a diverse group of followers divided culturally and ideologically. James Dunn, in his book Jesus, Paul and the Gospels, describes the circumstances under which the early church had to navigate the expansion of Jesus’ mission. The communities of believers in John’s Gospel faced conflict on the inside as well as opposition from the outside. In his commentary on the Fourth Gospel, Dunn notes that converts to the faith were under threat of being expelled from the synagogues for acknowledging Jesus as Messiah.90 Added to this were the conflicts of opinion and belief among the early followers who were not always unified in culture or religious perspective. There were, Dunn writes, Jews of various sects including Samaritans and Gentiles who had


different understandings of the new faith and what was expected of them. Their diversity was creating conflict between the different groups.  

Because of the diversity and the resulting conflicted ideas of “truth” the writer of the John’s Gospel wants to ensure that in the face of this diversity, there was one thing that needed to be made clear: “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:31); that Jesus is the anointed and chosen Messiah who has come to fulfil the promise of God. Consequently the unity Jesus prays for is not conformity or uniformity; it is rather a doctrinal unity that is dependent upon believers all professing and serving Jesus Christ as God’s son.

Roger Fredrickson in the Communicator’s Commentary speaks about this unity of believers in this way:

As there is only one “true God’ who manifests Himself through the differing functions of Father, Son, and Spirit, so the loving unity of the body of believers is expressed through a rich variety of gifts and ministry. The whole family of God is a beautiful montage of differing cultures and temperaments, colors and gifts, offered to God in worship and ministry that He may be glorified.

According to John, the final part of Jesus’ prayer emphasizes that the unity of believers is essential to the conversion of the world. Mark DeYmaz, exegetes this passage from John in the following way. He points out the subordinating conjunction ἵνα (hina) “so

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91 Dunn, 100-101.
95 Ibid, 259.
that” which occurs numerous times in this passage. The word ἵνα “introduces an “if-then” propositional truth.” It is provisional in its intent. If a certain thing were to occur, then something else will be the result. DeYmaz suggests that in his prayer Jesus is stressing that it is if believers are united as one to each other in Him then the world will come to know and believe God sent Him. The unity and oneness of believers with Christ and with one another will result in, and, DeYmaz would assert, is mandatory to the world receiving the Good News. This “unity of believers” must necessarily cross cultures in the church.


In the book of Acts, Luke provides a biblical-historical picture of the early church. At the beginning of Acts, Luke makes clear, through the resurrected Jesus’ parting words, what the mission of the early church will be: “and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). To that end the apostles immediately set about reconstituting the Twelve by selecting Matthias to take Judas’s place (Acts 1:24-26). According to the Luke schema, the mission would begin with the twelve apostles continuing the work of Jesus to preach first to the Jews and then in a continuing and ever widening circle to “all the nations.” As in the case of John’s Gospel, unity among believers will play an important role in the work of the apostles.

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96 DeYmaz, 9

97 DeYmaz, 9-10.


The early church was challenged with diversity. The Jews of the day were not a united body. Second Temple Judaism had many different sects including the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes which formed the Qumran community. The group called “Christians” (Acts 11:26) were just another Jewish sect (the Nazarenes). As Luke reconstructs those early years, it is clear the apostles, whose first mission was to the Jews, had to reconcile themselves to these many different factions of Judaism which were continually in conflict about how to interpret the law.

It is into this complicated condition of the Judaism of the time that the apostles missionized. In chapters 3 – 6 of Acts, Luke describes the ebb and flow of the early mission to the Jews. The apostles’ teaching and witness won some converts but also created serious opposition from the Sadducees and Jewish temple officials (Acts 3:11 – 4:4; 5:12-20). The persecution by Jewish officials culminated in the assassination of Stephen by stoning (Acts 7:54-59).

This event had two significant outcomes: It prompted the scattering of the fledgling church beyond Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) and it signalled the beginning of the mission of the apostles beyond the Jewish people, specifically to the Samaritans and the Gentiles.

According to Acts, the sending of Philip by the apostles to the region of Samaria marks the

100 Dunn, 99
101 Dunn, 119-120.
102 Each faction accused the other factions of being sinners because of conflicting interpretations. Dunn, 100.
103 In 722 BCE, when the Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians (2 Kings 7:3-6) the conquered Jews were taken to Assyria where they intermarried with the Assyrians. The offspring were called “Samaritans”. Because of this intermarrying “purebred” Jews despised the Samaritans and claimed they no longer fell under the Jewish covenant. Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Acts*, The Communicators Commentary, (Waco, Texas: Word Book Publishing, 1979) 150.
beginning of the apostles’ mission outside the Jews. Luke describes how God directed Philip to travel toward Gaza. On the way Philip met an Ethiopian eunuch who he encountered reading the Book of Isaiah. After speaking to him about the scriptures and the good news of Jesus, Philip baptized the eunuch and then the Spirit took Philip away (Acts 8:26-40). The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch is signalled as the first ethnic Gentile conversion to the new faith.

Saul, who would later become the Apostle Paul, also figured prominently in the cultural expansion of the early church. Describing Saul’s conversion in Acts 9, Luke emphasises the mission Paul would be given by God: “But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man (Paul) is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel” (Acts 9:15; italics mine).

Paul is called and commissioned by God to bring the Good News across cultures into Gentile territories. Later, to the Galatians, Paul would write:

For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it... But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man (Gal. 1:13, 15-16).

Dunn suggests that without Paul, and Peter and James to a lesser degree, those known as “Christians” would have been nothing more than another Second Temple Jewish sect. Dunn writes: “Paul’s mission was the single most important development in the

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104 John reports occasions where Jesus began that expansion to Samaritans and Gentiles during His ministry on earth. It began with Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well and the healing of the Roman official’s son in John 4.
first decades of Christian history”, as it moved Christianity “into a religion hospitable to Greeks, increasingly Gentile in composition.”

Shortly after this event, according to Acts, Peter too has a vision. The disciple has a dream of a large sheet coming down from heaven with animals forbidden to the Jews. In the vision God tells Peter to kill and eat. Peter resists, saying the animals are unclean and forbidden, by Jewish law, to eat. God responds to Peter: “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean” (Acts 10:15). Later the Spirit would come to Peter and tell him to go with the men who are coming for him. Peter is invited to visit a God-fearing Gentile by the name of Cornelius (Acts 10). Upon meeting Cornelius and his family Peter reiterates that Jews are forbidden by law to associate with Gentiles. Cornelius explains that he was praying and God heard his prayer and told him in a vision to seek out Peter. When Peter hears this he proclaims with joy: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right” (Acts 10:34-35; Italics mine).

Immediately following Peter’s speech, so Luke continues, the Holy Spirit descends on all those who are in assembly, Jew and Gentile alike, and they began to praise God together in different languages (Acts 10:44-46). Then Peter arranges for the whole household to be baptized. Later Peter defends his actions before the Jewish believers who opposed his welcome of and eating with a Gentile. After his explanation, the Jewish believers praised God saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that

\[\text{Dunn, 119-120}\]
leads to life” (Acts 11:18). This Pentecost moment seems, once again, to be the Spirit’s way of affirming a church where diversity is embraced and welcomed.

**Conflicted Saints**

Despite the fact that there was diversity in the churches, they were not without conflict. Throughout his ministry to the churches, Paul often needed to encourage members to work beyond factions in the fellowship brought on because of their diversity. The conflicts within the churches often stemmed from clashes arising from cultural disparities (for example, between converts from various Jewish sects and Gentile converts).¹⁰⁶ These conflicting opinions were also evident between Paul and Peter.

In contradistinction to what took place in the Cornelius narrative, Peter supported two tables at Antioch for celebrating the Lord’s Supper¹⁰⁷ - one table for Jewish believers and the other for Gentile believers – whereas Paul affirmed one table for all (1 Cor. 11:17-34).¹⁰⁸ In his letter to the Galatians, Paul defends his rebuke of Peter for refusing to eat with Gentile converts (Gal: 2:11-21). Paul emphasizes time and again the importance of a community of equals bound together as one under Christ.¹⁰⁹

In his monumental book, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* David Bosch explores the nature of Paul’s mission looking through the lens of Paul’s letters to the churches. In considering Paul’s sense of “ekklesia”, Bosch asserts that

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¹⁰⁶ Romans (circumcision) 1-3; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Galatians 1-3.

¹⁰⁷ Paul rebukes Peter for his actions at Antioch – Galatians 2:11-21.


¹⁰⁹ Ephesians 2:11-13; Romans 11:11-24;15:5-13; Colossians 3:15; Galatians 3:27.
Paul saw the importance of community above the individual. Bosch also observes that Christian unity which is often part of Paul’s teaching finds its basis in the baptism of believers into Christ. This unity crosses multiple borders. Bosch writes:

The fellowship in Christ does not unite only Jews and Gentiles, but people from different social backgrounds as well…The contemporary Greek and Roman associations tended to be rather homogeneous sociologically..., but Paul insists that divisions be transcended. 1 Corinthians 10-11 offers a sustained argument in support of greater social integration between the rich and the poor (and, by implication, between free citizens and slaves) within the community’s celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

These arguments put forth by Paul are consistent throughout his letters. In his letter to the Galatians Paul writes: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal.3:28). Similarly, Paul writes to the Corinthian church: “For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Cor. 12:13). To the church in Ephesus, those coming after Paul tell the Jewish and Gentile Christians that their unity in Christ means they are “no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone” (Eph.2:19-21). The diversity of the early church was Paul’s foremost mission focus and one of his greatest challenges.

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110 Bosch, 166-167.

111 Bosch, 167
Conclusion

According to the stories of Babel and Pentecost, diversity is a gift bestowed upon God’s people and is blessed by the Holy Spirit. The multi-ethnic church has, it appears, been a reality for Christian communities from the beginning. However, the barriers to building intercultural community in Paul’s day were not unlike the barriers we face in churches today.

Like Paul who had to deal with schism, cultural elitism and prejudice, sometimes contemporary churches must deal with similar issues. Individuals who do not belong to the dominant culture may have difficulty finding a voice and a place within the average Euro-Canadian church community. Further to this, the ethnically dominant group often does not realize the power it holds. White privilege,112 “colour blindness”,113 and traditionally assumed power roles can operate under the proverbial radar in many Euro-Canadian dominant churches. In addition, in communities where multiple cultures co-exist, there can also be conflicting values and cross-cultural stereotypes or prejudices which add to the challenges multi-ethnic communities face.

Recognizing and embracing diversity can be one step to forming intercultural communities of faith. But how is this process begun? How do we learn to build bridges across cultures to form the church as God planned it? The next section will look at how a theology and praxis of hospitality can be one approach to building intercultural competence

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113 Colour blindness is philosophy that suggests the best way to counter racism is simply to treat everyone the same, “without looking at your skin colour”. While this seems innocent enough what is merely succeeds in doing is to ignore cultural distinctiveness and treat everyone as “white” under the white codes of conduct and cultural norms. Colour blindness is a subversive form of racism.
in the church. It will begin by defining hospitality and setting it within the context of the church’s biblical and historical mission. A next step will consider the nature of Christian community through a trinitarian lens and situate how this lends itself to building an ecclesiology of mutual hospitality.

**Part II: Theological and Historical Constructs for Hospitality**

**Introduction**

When I was 13 my dad went into the hospital for open heart surgery. His roommate was an Italian man from Niagara Falls who spoke very little English. His wife had to drive 200 km every day to visit him so my mother invited her to stay with us for the 6 weeks of his lengthy hospital stay. We are a family of 8 so changes were made to accommodate this new stranger in our midst. My twin sister and I were relocated from our bedroom upstairs to the basement couches to make room for our guest. It wasn’t easy. We had to move over for this new visitor. We had to share our already limited space with yet another person.

In addition to this, she was different. She wore old dresses and always wore a kerchief on her head. In the mornings she would pull out her Rosary beads and pray in a strange language in hushed and urgent whispers. We were not really church goers so it took some getting used to. Our routines had to change too as mom and Mrs. Mano made frequent trips to the hospital. Needless to say there was more than a little grumbling among my siblings and me.

However, one afternoon I came home from school to an incredible aroma coming from the kitchen. Mrs. Mano had prepared for us one of her favourite Italian family
recipes and we were all invited to the dining room to receive this delicious feast. As our family sat around the table enjoying this strange new food served by our new friend, Mrs. Mano shared stories of her childhood growing up in Italy and how she and her new husband immigrated to Canada after they were married to start a new life. Usually a quiet, reserved person, Mrs. Mano spoke freely and with great animation as we ate. After the meal ended I felt like something had changed. While we were the hosts supposed to be welcoming Mrs. Mano, she had managed to also receive and welcome us! It felt like walls were broken down and a new and deeper relationship had begun. The guest reminded us that we as hosts were not the only ones in the position of extending hospitality. It was a reciprocal act. It was a mutual exchange; and once that exchange was made a true relationship had begun!

**Why Hospitality?**

As TPC continues to become more ethnically diverse, the notion of reciprocal hospitality warrants some attention. In this section we will consider the biblical and theological ramifications of hospitality in Christian community. We will briefly look at the history of hospitality in the church. Then we will explore the concept of mutual hospitality and the role it plays in building intercultural community in the church.

As we have watched the increasing diversity within our community and congregation, the leadership at TPC recognized the need for the diverse cultural groups within its communion to examine and consider the ways in which welcome is extended to

The “other.” The last few decades have seen an abundance of literature supporting the need for the Christian Church to develop beyond “multicultural” and move toward intercultural communities; communities that don’t just give passive acquiescence to their diversity, rather they embrace and celebrate diversity.

**Unpacking Christian Hospitality**

One way to become intercultural communities of faith is through a theology and practice of hospitality. But what is hospitality, and, moreover why hospitality? A quick online search of the word hospitality renders this concise definition: “the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.” Hospitality is, put simply, the welcome of the stranger.

But there is more here than meets the eye. The word hospitality is derived from the 14th Century Latin word *hospes* meaning *guest, host or stranger*. Words like host, hospice, hotel, hospital and hostel all find their root in *hospes*. Indeed the word hospital literally means “guest chamber” or an inn. Hospitality involves offering care, shelter or respect for the stranger. While hospitality in modern parlance has become associated with the entertainment industry, hospitality in its historical sense involves seeking the wellbeing of the “other” with an extension of welcome and care.

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115 The “other” is the stranger: the one who is not like “me”; the one who is culturally different from “me.”

116 By “embracing and celebrating” I mean being aware of, acknowledging and showing an interest in people whose culture is different from us. See: Wenh-In Ng, “Diversity and difference in the work of gender justice” Making Waves: An Ecumenical Feminist Journal 1/1 (Fall 2000): p 17.


In Latin “host” and “guest” are the same word. Coincidentally, this is also true of the ancient Greek language. Xenos means both “stranger/guest” and “host”. One could say that stranger and host can be summarized simply by using the term “other”; someone who is not me. Within the covenant of hospitality, guest and host are in reciprocal relationship. Each of us is guest, host and other at one and the same time in all interactions. Therefore, in this capacity, we have the responsibilities of both guest and host in those interactions as do our interlocutors. To take this one step further, the Greek word for “hospitality” is φιλοξενία (philoxenia). The word can be broken into two components: “phileo” meaning love and “xenia” meaning stranger/host (other). “Hospitality” literally means “love of the other”. Alternatively, the opposite of “love of others” would be “fear/hate of others” which translated into Greek is ξενοφοβία (xenophobia). Hospitality is, quite literally, the opposite of xenophobia.

Christian Hospitality through the Ages

Extending hospitality as a Christian practice has long been part of the church’s tradition. Established on both Old Testament teachings and the teachings of the early church, hospitality was viewed as a necessary part of Christian witness. According to Luke Bretherton, professor of Theological Ethics and Senior Fellow at Duke Divinity School, in the early centuries of the church, hospitality was to be extended to the homeless, poor, widowed, sick and to the stranger. Saint Basil, Gregory Nazianus, John Chrysostom and St. Benedict of the 4th and 5th centuries all became great proponents of sacrificial acts of

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119 Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, under “host” and “stranger”.

hospitality and certain orders in their names remain so even today. Some of the first hospitals were established in these early centuries. Through the Middle Ages (500-1500), largely in Europe, hospitality was taken care of by hospitals, hospices and abbeys and moved out of the domain of the local church.

David T. Hall writes about hospitality during the time of the Reformation in the 16th century. He observes that the early reformers sought to preserve the original foundations of hospitality as were taught and practiced in the early church. John Calvin and Martin Luther both emphasized the importance of hospitality in the Christian life. Calvin and his companions worked tirelessly to shelter refugees and give aid to the poor. Calvin had particularly strong feelings about intercultural hospitality especially when it came to refugees and immigrants. He, himself was a refugee in Geneva so he took steps to create a social safety net for immigrants and other refugees. He offered them educational opportunities at his Academy, and created a social welfare fund called Bourse Francaise or “the French fund for poor foreigners” which provided funds to deacons who

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121 Ibid, 140

122 Ibid, 141


administered care to the countless immigrants and needy souls coming into Geneva at the time.\textsuperscript{125}

The grounding for the Protestant theology of hospitality came from biblical interpretation. Stories of hospitality in the Hebrew Scriptures help give form to our present day traditions of hospitality. In biblical stories where hospitality is extended, a significant or pivotal event occurs:\textsuperscript{126} Strange visitors turn out to be angels,\textsuperscript{127} barren wombs are opened,\textsuperscript{128} miraculous healings occur,\textsuperscript{129} meager supplies seem never to run out,\textsuperscript{130} and people are given new life and healing.\textsuperscript{131} In these narratives where hospitality is extended, God works in the lives of people in a profound way. Hospitality is usually rewarded and inhospitality conversely is not.\textsuperscript{132} In almost all of the Old Testament accounts of hospitality several elements remain the same: food is shared, protection or shelter is provided and a blessing of some sort is received.\textsuperscript{133}


\textsuperscript{127} Genesis 18:1-19 - Abraham and Sarah, through an act of hospitality, have an encounter with angels that promise they will have a child and Abraham will be the father of the Nations.

\textsuperscript{128} Genesis 18:10; 2 Kings 4:16 – Elisha tells a woman who takes him in that she will have a son.

\textsuperscript{129} 1 Kings 17:7-24 - A poor widow extends hospitality to Elijah and her meager provisions never run out and then later her son is raised from the dead.

\textsuperscript{130} 1 Kings 17: 7-24; and in the New Testament John 6:1-15 – Here a boy shares his meagre lunch with the 5000.

\textsuperscript{131} 1 Kings 17: 7-24; and Matthew 8:14-17 – an interesting spin on the hospitality piece has Jesus heal Peter’s mother-in-law who, once revived, immediately extends hospitality to Jesus.

\textsuperscript{132} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 26.

\textsuperscript{133} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 27.
As we consider the New Testament we see hospitality has a similarly strong presence in the Biblical story. It goes without saying that our understanding of Christ is one for whom the concept of “welcome” and hospitality would have been very important. He was an itinerant preacher moving from town to town who would have depended upon the hospitality of the communities into which he came. But Jesus himself set the example of welcoming those who are considered to be “other”. The Gospel stories speak of Jesus welcoming the sick, the lame, the blind and deaf, the widow and the outcast. Jesus welcomed women and men, slave and free, rich and poor, the children and the aged. He welcomed people inside the Jewish Covenant and people outside the Covenant, enemies, but most of all he welcomed those society called sinner. As described by the Gospel writers, he offered hope and the water of life to the Samaritan

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134 Mark 1:40-42; Matthew 8:28-34.


136 Mark 7:31-37; Mark 8:22-30; Mark 10:46-52; including spiritual blindness: John 9:35-41.

137 John 11:1-44; and he even uses the widow as an example of faith Luke 21:1-4.

138 Jesus preached about welcoming and showing love to the outcast, sinner and enemy in Luke 6:27-36.


140 Jesus’ prophetic teaching in Matthew 25:31-46 reveal Christ’s emphasis on welcoming and extending hospitality to the “other”.


143 Matthew 8:5-13; Matthew 15:1-20 and he also washes his Disciples’ feet: John 13.

144 Matthew 5:43-47.

145 Jesus’ parable of the Lost Sheep demonstrates His willingness to receive the sinner. Luke 15:4-7; also Luke 7:36-50.
woman at the well (John 4:1-26) and he offered life in heaven to the thief on the cross (Luke 23:42-43). According to John, Christ did this so that all people would come to know and love God and be saved.\textsuperscript{146}

The early church is encouraged to live in keeping with Christ’s gracious acts of welcome to the stranger. To the church in Rome Paul exhorts: “Practice hospitality” (Rom. 12:13). Later, Paul encourages the Romans to extend hospitality to one another across Jewish-Gentile differences: “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Rom. 15:7). The writer of the letters to Titus and Timothy encourages them to seek leaders in the church with certain qualities, including being hospitable (1 Tim. 3:1-3; Tit. 1:8). The author of 1 Peter has similar advice. Writing to Jewish and Gentile Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor following the Day of Pentecost, the writer exhorts: “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:9). In the letter to the Hebrews, (Jewish converts to the Christian faith), the writer reminds the community to: “Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters.” Then, alluding to Abraham and Sarah who welcomed three strangers resulting in Sarah being promised a son, the writer cautions: “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:1-2). Hospitality would be a focus of the church’s expressions of faithfulness in Christ.\textsuperscript{147} It is evident that hospitality finds its roots in the Bible and has been seen as an important Christian practice for the church. The goal of hospitality is to provide a way for Holy Spirit to work in the midst

\textsuperscript{146} John 6:40; John 20:30-31.

\textsuperscript{147} Pohl, \textit{Making Room}, 31.
of God’s people in order to enable the unfolding of God’s plans for the building of God’s reign.

**A Trinitarian Grounding for Hospitality in Christian Community**

Christian hospitality can be firmly rooted in solid Trinitarian ground. Many theologians have written extensively about the relational nature of the Three-Personed God and the implications of viewing Christian hospitality (“human being-in-relation”) through a Trinitarian lens. German systematic theologian Jürgen Moltmann is one such theologian. Moltmann’s views on the doctrine of the Trinity, that is God “being-in-relation,” go a long way in shaping the notion of hospitality in Christian community. *Perichoresis* is an ancient Greek concept used to define the Trinity. It finds its origin in Eastern Orthodox Theology. The word *peri* means “around” and *chorio* means “dance.” It literally means “dance around.” The three Persons of the Holy Trinity move together in a dance of mutuality and interdependence. They dwell within each other (“mutual indwelling”) and yet still retain their individual identity as a Person in the Trinity. Borrowing from this ancient Trinitarian concept, Moltmann employs the term *perichoresis* to describe human relation as an image of God.\(^{148}\)

Moltmann asserts that the “Persons themselves constitute both their differences and their unity.”\(^{149}\) He adds that this perichoretic unity is not built on hierarchies of the three Persons, but:


If the divine life is understood perichoretically, then it cannot be consummated by merely one subject at all. It is bound to consist of the living fellowship of the three Persons who are related to one another and exist in one another. Their unity does not lie in the one lordship of God; it is to be found in the unity of their tri-unity. It is this “interdependence and mutuality” distinctive of the social Trinity that the welcoming intercultural church can emulate. Moltmann stresses that the mutual interpenetration of the Trinity is the model for the mutual interpenetration of creation. He writes: “all relationships which are analogous to God reflect the primal, reciprocal indwelling and mutual interpenetration of the trinitarian perichoresis.”

Princeton theologian Sally A. Brown cautions against using perichoresis as an explicit analogy of God and the human community because it can trivialize the distinct nature of God as social Trinity. According to Brown, perichoresis describes more of an “indwelling” of the three Persons that cannot possibly be replicated in human terms. She cautions: “The concept of ‘mutual indwelling’ in the divine being has no readily imaginable equivalent in human relations.” That notwithstanding, while there are limits to how humans being-in-relation can compare to God’s being-in-relation, Brown insists “fresh understandings of God’s tri-unity do open new possibilities for self-understanding.”

150 Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 175.


153 Brown, 150

154 Brown, 150
Christian Hospitality through a Trinitarian Lens

There are many different perspectives on the benefits of viewing Christian hospitality through a trinitarian lens. Brown, arguing that affirming God’s tri-unity can be of great benefit to the church as community, identifies three trends of congregational life that a trinitarian perspective can influence.\(^{155}\)

First, according to Brown, God as a perichoretic Trinity; a community of equals joined in mutual reciprocity, is relational. So human individuals created in God’s image are relational.\(^{156}\) Brown recognized the post-enlightenment tendencies toward individualism in congregational life.\(^{157}\) From her perspective, understanding God as social Trinity that is “being-in-relation” can help transform our own self-understanding as humans not made to be alone but rather created for community. Leaning heavily on the perspectives of Leonardo Boff, Brown asserts that humans develop through interrelation with each other and with God. Community which is modeled on an understanding of a God who is welcoming and relational becomes more outward looking and expansive. She concludes:

It is in being outpoured for one another and the world, in giving and receiving power and love with one another and the world, that we bear the image of God who is being-in-relation. Ecclesial life—corporate worship, corporate witness, and the struggle to construct fellowship with those who are (often intractably) Other—is fundamental to Christian identity.\(^{158}\)

\(^{155}\) Brown, 147

\(^{156}\) Brown, 150

\(^{157}\) Brown, 147

\(^{158}\) Brown, 151
A church community formed in this likeness cannot resort to individualistic frames. To use Brown’s words: “the community that corresponds to the God revealed in redemption can never be an inward-turned community of compatible individuals.”

Becoming a community bearing the divine image involves sharing love and giving and receiving power so that all are honoured. It is entering the space of the “other” in solidarity. It is mutual hospitality.

The second feature of trinitarian fellowship is radical equality which challenges traditional power structures and facilitates change.\textsuperscript{159} Canadian theologian Charles Fensham observes that unacknowledged power differentials can get in the way of grounding a missionary ecclesiology in North America. Dominant culture hegemony and intra-cultural power conflicts, “multiple marginalities”, can pose stumbling blocks to forming meaningful community unless reconciliation is achieved.\textsuperscript{160} Approaching hospitality in the church from trinitarian egalitarian frames has an impact on traditional power structures within the church community. From Brown’s viewpoint paternalism and antiquated hierarchies can be replaced by new power-sharing structures.\textsuperscript{161} Justice is achieved as those without a voice are heard and given respect.

Writing about church structure and decision making styles, Eric Law says that an effective organizational structure for a multicultural church community, in Christian terms, is “full of grace.” That means it is Gracious, Reflective, Adaptable, Christ-centred, and

\textsuperscript{159} Brown, 151

\textsuperscript{160} Charles Fensham, \textit{Emerging from the Dark Age Ahead} (Novalis: Ottawa, 2008). 69-76. Reconciliation involves many processes including listening, repentance, and forming “grace margins.”

\textsuperscript{161} Brown, 152-153.
Empowering.\textsuperscript{162} Graciousness involves being open to listen to each other’s thoughts, feelings and ideas without judgment. It is the extending of one’s own boundaries to “consider others’ perspectives and experiences.”\textsuperscript{163} To be reflective is to take time to learn more about our own personal and organizational cultures as a whole and understand the barriers to communication that get in the way.\textsuperscript{164} Being adaptable, means we are able to make changes as contexts and situations demand. Christ-centred leadership processes involve discerning God’s will and seeking outcomes that reflect our understanding of it. Empowering leadership processes seek to give everyone a voice in the process in order that those who are typically marginationed (voices not usually heard) are given room to express ideas and beliefs.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, a trinitarian model for human fellowship manifested in mutual hospitality emphasizes unity-across-difference. According to Brown “nothing is so crucial to the witness of Christian congregations in North America today as broader capacities for pursuing unity while honouring and embracing difference.”\textsuperscript{165} In a world where pluralism and failed multiculturalism projects separate and divide people across cultures, hospitality through a trinitarian lens is most vital for the church in its quest to create intercultural community.


\textsuperscript{163} Ibid. 74

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid, 74

\textsuperscript{165} Brown, 153
Moltmann also stresses the importance of God’s diversity and unity as a model for the community of believers. Moltmann states: “The trinitarian concept of community envisages diversity in unity from the very outset. To create community does not merely mean uniting what is different. It differentiates the One as well...differentiation is one of the essential elements in community.” 166 He continues: “True community is different. It opens up individual potentialities in the greatest given diversity.” 167

Theologian Letty Russell, in her book Just Hospitality, published posthumously in 2009, writes at length about unity in difference. Russell emphasizes the unavoidable reality of differences among people and the important role difference plays in the formation of community. We are created to be different, she writes, and should thus celebrate difference and not neutralize it. She invites us to “reach across” difference to participate in God’s “actions of justice and healing” in our world. 168 She states: “Often we fail to recognize the importance of difference and the ways in which God is glorified through the diversity of persons, cultures and places in God’s created world.” 169 Hospitality and unity in the presence of difference, she says, comes from Christ himself and his example.

From Russell’s perspective, in order to celebrate God’s riotous difference we must do three things: First, “stop essentializing difference” and actively reject stereotypes and flawed visions of what “normal” should be. Secondly, build “relational difference” by letting people be who they are as uniquely created by God. Thirdly, “form coalitions across

167 Ibid, 220
168 Russell, Just Hospitality, 53
169 Ibid, 62
difference" by networking with others to universalize the welcome of the “other” and the marginalized.170 Building unity across difference requires bridge building and communication between individuals and groups; it requires a special kind of hospitality, which this dissertation names mutual hospitality.

**Mutual Hospitality**

My research has led me to understand the importance of intercultural competence toward building intercultural community in a multicultural setting. One important piece to this process is the notion of what I have termed “mutual hospitality”. The concept of mutual hospitality is built upon the social trinitarian nature of the God-head. It describes the unique dynamics of relationship between interlocutors where the agents interact as both “guest” and “host” toward each other. In so doing, interlocutors recognize the inherent worth of the “other.” Difference is not shunned but is acknowledged as a matter of fact between agents. There is a freedom and mutuality in relationship.

This is not a new conceptualization of how individuals could interact in forming community. Jewish philosopher Martin Buber framed the concept in terms of “I-Thou.”171 K. Homi Bhabha framed it in terms of “hybridity” and “Third Space.”172 Eric Law

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170 Ibid, 72-73

171 In his seminal book *I and Thou* Buber examines how human beings engage with the world and the meaningfulness of true community. There are two ways humans interact with the “Other” – “I – It” sees the Other as an object devoid of intrinsic meaning apart from purely utilitarian purposes; whereas “I-Thou” sees the Other in holy mutual relationship. It is through the “I-Thou” relationship that we encounter God. The “I-Thou” relationship is authentic and transformative. See Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, (New York: Scribner, 1958).

172 The essence of Homi K. Bhabha’s Third Space is that there are no binary cultural differences but rather a hybridity where identity and meaning are formed through the Other. Hybridity deconstructs boundaries making culture relative, thus reducing all cultures to the common ground free from hierarchy. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (New York: Routledge Classics, 2004).
characterized it as “The Grace Margin.”¹⁷³ Letty Russell termed it “Just Hospitality.”¹⁷⁴ Jean Vanier named it “Communion.”¹⁷⁵ Vanier’s description of his concept of communion falls in step with mutual hospitality:

This communion is born from mutual trust and acceptance, and the freedom to be ourselves in our uniqueness and beauty, the freedom to exercise our gifts. We are no longer contained and held back by fear, prejudices, or the need to prove ourselves.¹⁷⁶

Mutual Hospitality follows the spirit of these aforementioned conceptualizations. However, one way in which mutual hospitality is distinct from some of the above concepts is the fact that mutual hospitality seeks to resolve the question: “Who welcomes who?” with the answer “All”. All parties in an encounter recognize the “Host-ness” and “Guest-ness” of the other. And it is in that mutual exchange that bridges across difference are built.

¹⁷³ Eric Law, priest and professional consultant in multicultural leadership writes at length about the pastoral dynamics of multicultural Church community. According to Law, there will always be the potential for tension within communities of diversity. This tension arises from the boundaries that individuals create. These boundaries determine who is “in” and who is “out”. In order to engage creatively with those who are considered “other” or “out”, Law says we must create what he calls a “grace margin” within our boundaries. The grace margin is an expanded boundary. It is the place between a community’s “safe zone” where those different are not allowed into the community and the “fear zone” where those who are different are pushed away from the community. The grace margin is where true inclusion is experienced. In the grace margin “authentic revelation, compassionate listening and reciprocal exchange of power” are experienced. It is in the grace margin where mutual hospitality and true intercultural competence exist. Eric Law, Inclusion: Making Room for Grace, (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2000).

¹⁷⁴ The late Letty Russell, feminist theologian, Yale professor, author and Presbyterian minister has much to say about intercultural hospitality to build community. In her book Just Hospitality Russell provides some insightful clues as to how to move toward building intercultural communities. Russell begins by grounding her work in a feminist frame. A feminist hermeneutic of hospitality, she asserts, is different from a traditional patriarchal hermeneutic of the previous eras in three ways: in recognizing 1) that nobody is the “other” so power is shared and given in a balanced fashion; 2) priority is given to the perspective of the outsider by listening to the marginated 3) new possibilities arise by acknowledging God’s unfolding promise as the scriptures reveal. Russell continually brings into her discussion the reality of difference and the important role it plays in hospitality. Letty Russell, Just Hospitality, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 45-49.


¹⁷⁶ Vanier, 162.
Conclusion

In this section we delved deeper into the nature of Christian community and how hospitality plays a significant role in its formation. We considered the rich biblical and theological grounding for hospitality in the church; and reflected on the nature of hospitality and community through a trinitarian lens. In an effort to cross boundaries of difference between agents and communities in the church, a theology of mutual hospitality was proposed. Practices of mutual hospitality are an essential part of building intercultural competence in community.

The final two sections of this chapter will explore the history and sociological underpinnings of intercultural competence theories as outlined in *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence* edited by Darla K. Deardorff. It will consider the various models presented for measuring intercultural competence and briefly discuss the five categories into which these models fall (Compositional, Co-orientational, Developmental, Adaptational, and Causal Path/Process). For the purposes of this study I have chosen three models from different categories to provide insight into competency measures and goals in a church setting. These models include: Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence (Co-orientation Model) as presented by Stefanie Rathje (Appendix B), The Bennett Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Developmental Model) designed by Milton J.

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177 Dr. Darla K. Deardorff is the executive director of the Association of International Education Administrators at Duke University; Research Scholar in the Program in Education; lecturer; author; and world renowned expert on intercultural competence.

178 Dr. Prof. Stefanie Rathje is a professor of Economic communication, corporate management, intercultural communication, personnel management, and organizational development at the University of Applied Sciences in Berlin.
Bennett (Appendix C),\(^{179}\) and The Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Process Model) designed by Darla K. Deardorff (Appendix D).

**Part III: Recognizing the Need for Intercultural Competence in the Church**

We are living in exciting and challenging times. In the last century global demographic shifts have changed the way humans interact. Developments in transportation and communication sectors as well as migration shifts\(^{180}\) have meant that more and more cultures from every corner of the globe are blending and interacting. The challenges and opportunities global and local demographic shifts pose are great. Consequently scholars in the fields of sociology, business, education, medicine, government, military and other sectors have recognized the need to develop strategies to facilitate appropriate interactions across cultural lines. These intercultural competence strategies are designed to help individuals build skills which will enable them to live and work with others who have different customs, backgrounds and values.

While there has been much discussion and research about intercultural competence in the above sectors, the literature is relatively silent when it comes to measuring intercultural competence in a religious congregational setting.\(^{181}\) Canadian churches, particularly in metropolitan areas, are recognizing the opportunities for multicultural growth because of dramatic demographic shifts in their communities.

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\(^{179}\) Milton J. Bennett is the director of the Intercultural Development Research Institute in Portland, Oregon; a researcher, lecturer and author.

\(^{180}\) There are many reasons for migration not the least of which are war, famine, and poverty.

\(^{181}\) This is particularly true when scanning literature with a distinctly Canadian context in mind.
However, they do not have the tools to guide or measure progress in appropriate interaction across cultural barriers in order to extend welcome.

The next section of this chapter will examine the history of intercultural competence and the theoretical grounding on which most research models are based. It will then examine the five categories and three specific models that may give insight into measuring intercultural competence in the church.

**Conceptualizations of Intercultural Competence**

Following the end of World War II the world began to change rapidly. Globalization meant North America was becoming more involved in trade and diplomatic relations with foreign nations. With tensions still looming between NATO allies and the Eastern Bloc it was never a more crucial time to develop skills in intercultural communication. Diplomats, military, aid workers, governments and corporations would benefit from developing skills to work and communicate cross culturally.

After the founding the Peace Corp, an international aid organization wherein volunteers serve in foreign countries, the U.S. government and sociologists began to understand the need to develop strategies for intercultural communication. It would not be until 1970 that the term “intercultural competence” would find its place in the parlance of sociologists. At that point sociologists were developing theories and models for intercultural competence in many different sectors (business, education, military, government, medicine).

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182 Deardorff, *Sage Handbook*, 8

183 Ibid, 8
To date there are more than twenty conceptual models which have been developed for different contexts. They have been divided into five different categories: compositional, co-orientational, developmental, adaptational, and causal path/process. In the first chapter of *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, Brian Spitzberg and Gabrielle Changnon outline the various categories and the theoretical grounding on which most models are based.

**Theoretical Grounding for Cultural Competence Models**

The purpose of a model is to provide an easily interpreted visual representation of a process depicting an interconnected set of premises that culminate in competence. Almost all intercultural competence models are heuristic in that they are designed to measure individuals in specific contexts (a teacher before a classroom or a Canadian business executive traveling to China to negotiate a deal, for example). While this makes it difficult to consider larger systems like churches, families, or clubs etc., the models can still bring insight into behavioural patterns of groups and individuals within groups.\(^{184}\)

By and large cultural competence models are grounded on the philosophical theories of 18\(^{th}\) century philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant observed that there are at least three core components of the human mind which direct human interaction.\(^ {185}\) These components constitute the ABC’s of the human psyche: Affective (motivation, attitudes); Behavioural (conative skills, actions) and Cognitive (knowledge, belief). Kant believed that if a subject had motivation, knowledge and skills then that subject would be successful in

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\(^{184}\) Ibid, 7

\(^{185}\) Ibid, 7
achieving a set goal. Intercultural competence researchers have concluded that this philosophy can be applied to intercultural interactions. To it they have added two other conceptual themes: Context (the situation and environment) and Outcome (the expected goals, perceived effectiveness and satisfaction). These additional themes help account for the multiple varieties of intercultural encounter.

Each of the models selected for this study fit into one or more of these five categories. The Compositional Models typically present lists of characteristics and qualities that make for appropriate intercultural interaction (i.e., empathy, understanding, willingness, curiosity etc.), while the Co-orientational Models are dedicated to theorising about the success of interlocutors of different cultures, customs, races and languages gaining a common understanding in a “common referential world”. Individuals orient themselves to each other towards a mutual interest. The Developmental Models deal with the stages of growth and progression toward competence over time, while the Adaptational Models have two separate features. They can foresee “multiple interactants” in a process and they can recognize the unique influential dynamic between interactants which requires “mutual adjustment”. Finally, Causal Path/Process Models portray a theoretical linear understanding of intercultural competence. In this case variables at one stage (upstream) in

186 Ibid, 7
187 Ibid, 7
188 Ibid, 15
the process are influenced by and consequently influence the variables following (downstream).

The Three Models in Review

1. Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence

Figure 1: Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence

As stated earlier, co-orientational models place an emphasis in the mutual adaptation of interlocutors in a given setting. The Coherence-Cohesion Model of Intercultural Competence (Appendix B) as put forth by Stefanie Rathje\(^\text{192}\) is a co-

\(^{191}\) Model adapted from Rathje, 263 and Sage Handbook, 20

orientational model that can give insight into organizational cultural dynamics. A unique quality of culture is that within any given culture there can be diversity among its members. Rathje proposes that culture is an important aspect of competence insofar as it creates unity through coherence and cohesion.

A coherence-oriented view of culture understands culture as a mold. It is unifying insofar as it creates “common characteristics” shared by most members of the group. A cohesion-based model is grounded on the notion that “cultures exist within (all) human collectives” (like sports clubs, offices, or churches). Diversity is recognized and valued by the group. The differences within the group are not neutralized but become the distinctive markers of that community’s ethos. In the previous illustration Rathje compares coherence-based and cohesion-based concepts of culture. The achievement of the cohesion-based model (on the right) is that it values the integrity of diversity. While the left model portrays the unifying effects of culture, it presupposes that one overarching characteristic precludes some sort of differentiation. In the context of the church these models can provide insight into how the community understands its own cultural ethos.

2. The Bennett Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Development Models take into account the evolution of competence as a type of growth or maturity over time. The Intercultural Sensitivity model proposed by Milton J. Bennett (Appendix C) presents a linear diagram depicting progression from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism (see diagram below). Bennett proposes that individuals’

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193 Rathje, 260
194 Rathje, 261
attitudes to cultural difference mature from exposure and experience over time. The stages include Denial, Defense, Minimalization, Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration.

Figure 2: Developmental Intercultural Competence Model

According to the Sage Handbook, Bennett’s model can be described in stages moving from ethnocentric to ethnorelative. In the Denial stage an individual views their culture as superior to all other cultures, which are dismissed or illegitimized (e.g. white supremacy movements). In the Defense stage other cultures are recognized but only in an adversarial way (“us vs. them”). To a degree then, culture is essentialized wherein all people of the culture are painted with the same brush (e.g., “all Canadians play hockey”). Defense reversal is when a person abandons their birth culture to fully adopt another culture (Dances with Wolves). Minimalization happens when cultural differences are not recognized. Differences are viewed as a derivative of one’s own culture (e.g., people who

195 Sage Handbook, 21-23
say they are “colour blind” in essence negate the validity of other cultures). In the Acceptance stage individuals come to understand that there are distinct cultures different from their own. Adaptation is evident when an individual is motivated to adapt her behaviour in a fashion that is acknowledged as acceptable in another culture. When an individual begins to construct his identity around his own and other cultural worldviews he has reached the stage of Integration. Both adaptation and integration are equally desirable outcomes. In the context of the church, one can see how a model like this can be useful in a couple of ways. It can be used as a yardstick to measure general competency levels and it can be used as a guideline for monitoring stages of progression.

3. **Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence**

The third model that can be a useful guide for imagining and charting intercultural competence in a congregational setting is the causal path/process model designed by Darla Deardorff (Appendix D). Relying on the conative approach inspired by Kant, Deardorff provides a model that identifies certain attitudes (respect, openness and honesty) that foster intercultural competence. Knowledge and comprehension (cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness) paired with skills (“listening, observing, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting and relating”)\(^{196}\) work together to engender motivation. In this model there are two desired outcomes. The internal outcome involves a change in one’s “frame of reference”. Individuals begin to become more adaptable, flexible, and empathetic.

\(^{196}\) *Sage Handbook*, 32
These processes all work together to produce the desired external outcome of “effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation.”\textsuperscript{197}

The model continually feeds back into itself and the cycle continues ad infinitum based on the premise that intercultural competence is a never ending process requiring continued work.

\textbf{Figure 3:} Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence

\textsuperscript{197} Sage Handbook, 33
While this model was designed for an educational context with individual subjects, there is still much to be learned from it as we consider it from an organizational perspective.

**Conclusion**

It is evident that the aforementioned models can reveal much about the processes of developing intercultural competence. While not designed to address the unique cross-cultural dynamics of a church setting, the models presented by Rathje, Bennett and Deardorff can do much to inform competency goals for a congregation. Congregations like Thornhill Presbyterian Church, which are experiencing significant demographic shifts in their communities and neighbourhoods may well benefit from taking time to discover and interpret their unique multi-cultural status and the processes which make it intercultural. In the next chapter we will consider the method of research utilized to discover what is happening between the congregational members at TPC insofar as how mutual hospitality is extended in this multicultural church community toward building intercultural competence.
Chapter Three
Research Methodology

Part I: The Processes Involved in Interpreting Practices of Mutual Hospitality

Introduction

In the early years of my Doctor of Ministry studies I took a course on Research Methodology. One of the assignments was designed to teach us how to interview, transcribe and code. In order to gain some experience in the area, I decided to enter into intentional dialogue with church members by asking them one simple question: What was your experience of welcome when you first came to TPC? One Sunday after church I was in the Fellowship Hall chatting with people over coffee. During a rather pleasant chat with a non-Canadian born long-time member of TPC, I was asked about my research. I invited her to my office where I shared briefly with her my research intentions. The woman seemed very interested in all I had to say, nodding vigorously as I spoke; so I asked her: “What was your experience when you and your family came to TPC?” Her response came as a surprise to me. She said: “When we first came to this church twenty years ago my husband and I felt welcomed, to a degree. People were cordial . . . they were just cordial . . . in some ways they still are.”

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198 Information gleaned from personal field notes in 2009.
The woman shared with me that the “feeling” in the church back in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s was one of politeness—with an air of cool formality to it.\(^{199}\) While my interlocutor did not feel completely excluded, there was just this feeling of being on the “outside” of the main group in those days. As has happened in many churches of that era, the long-time “pillars” of the church had formed a cohesive clutch of friends who intermingled during church functions and outside the church as well.\(^{200}\) It would be difficult for anyone to break in to the group much less someone of a different cultural background.

As the woman left my office I stood there wondering. From my perspective it appeared that the many new people of different cultures coming to our church at that time were receiving a warm welcome. In fact one of the reasons I had decided to do this research study was because our church was experiencing much multi-ethnic growth while other churches in the neighbourhood appeared not to be experiencing similar demographic changes. I grew more and more curious about how people were interacting across cultures at TPC that made it appear to be a welcoming place for people of all nationalities. As a follow-up to our conversation I decided to consult some of the church historical records.

\(^{199}\) Discoveries from the Focus Group sessions would lend weight to her comments. One participant who has been at the church for more than 50 years stated: “It was very difficult to break into this church….it was very difficult the first year. Yeah, the people were nice, but it was….shaking hand at the door… ‘it’s nice to see ya’ and so on.” Another participant got emotional when stating: “I don’t have a good experience when I first came to Thornhill Presbyterian Church (40 years ago) I was not welcomed…because I was a stranger. I came from a different Protestant religion (Pentecostal)…and…I found it very difficult.”

\(^{200}\) These members were all of the same age, ethnicity (white), education and income bracket. Many of these members lived on the street just behind the church on which the manse is now located. No less than six families raised their children on the street named after one of their beloved ministers, Calvin Chambers. Those who are still living are still attending the church today despite the fact they have moved out of the neighbourhood. Other members of the core group of leaders at TPC lived within a block or two of the church.
Leading up to the Question

If you were to look at the TPC congregational photo directory from 1988 you would see a congregation that was predominantly made up of white, middle-class, first and second generation Euro-Canadians. You would notice only three households (1%) out of the 220 households in the congregation that could be identified as non-Caucasian, first generation Canadians. However, only five years later, the 1993 directory would reveal that the number of non-Caucasian or mixed households had risen six-fold to eighteen out of a possible 225 (8%). It is evident that the cultural diversity at TPC has increased exponentially over the last couple of decades. Presently more than one third (35%) of the membership of TPC joined the church in the last nine years, and 50% of those new members are first or second generation Canadians.

The demographics are certainly changing, but I wonder what else is happening here. Speaking to a Cameroonian-born church member who has only been a part of the church for about five years, I got a very different story from him than I got from the woman in my office seven years earlier. Of the church members who welcomed him and his family he said: “I mean they did everything, you know, just right. You know I think I could

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201 Information acquired from the 1988 church directory from congregational archives as well as personal knowledge of the households in question.

202 Thornhill Presbyterian Church directory, 1993.

203 Nine years is how long my husband and I have been serving the congregation as ministers, so I chose that as the starting point for calculating the demographic changes recently.

204 Church membership roll accessed February 2, 2016.
not help but feel myself at home and...to me this is my church."\(^{205}\) This difference of experience begs the question: What has happened? How has the congregation gone from being merely “cordial” to being a “home” to the stranger? How has welcome been extended? How have gestures of welcome been received? What has been the role of the host and guest and how has mutuality been achieved?

As I stated in chapter one of this dissertation: “Is it mere cordiality? Are cultural groups simply tolerating each other or is genuine community being built through mutual acts of hospitality?"\(^{206}\) In this brief section we got a better understanding of the questions that are driving this research study. This chapter will explain in greater detail the research methodology employed, the interpretive lenses through which the study was viewed, and the procedures of data collection, analysis and interpretation. Before probing more deeply into the process however, I will first provide a brief overview of the possible research methodologies.

**Part II: Outlining the Methodologies**

**Introduction**

In his seminal book *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, John W. Creswell, professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, outlines five specific types of qualitative inquiry for researchers to

\(^{205}\) This comment was made by a member of one of the Focus Groups. Transcript from Monday February 22, 2016, page 7.

\(^{206}\) It is important to note that I am not putting the onus for welcoming on the dominant/majority culture group at TPC. My interests are largely focused on how mutual hospitality is extended across cultural bounds. In this dissertation I seek to give equal voice to new members and long term members, majority group and non-majority group, young and old, male and female. That notwithstanding I do realize the reality of white privilege and the affects it can have on culturally diverse communities.
consider. He suggests that when one is approaching a study there are several ways of going about the research. Finding the approach that best suits the “problem” is the beginning of the research process. The qualitative approaches Creswell details in his book include: Narrative Research, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Ethnography and Case Study. A brief overview of each option will support the decision to pursue this work using a case study method.

**Qualitative Research**

The purpose of qualitative research is to provide a way to generate data in order to interpret and understand specific organizations or human systems in their natural settings. Creswell notes that finding a definitive definition is complicated. He looks to Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln for a definition:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

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Qualitative researchers begin with certain philosophical assumptions and a worldview that will influence and shape the research. Creswell notes several distinct features of qualitative research. 1) The processes of qualitative research are natural and emergent insofar as data gathering, observation and research occur in the setting of those being researched. 2) The researcher does all or most of the data gathering. 3) Multiple sources of data collection are used in order to ensure validity of observations. 4) Research is conducted from “the bottom up” where themes are developed through a series of data sources. 5) Qualitative researchers pay close attention to the meaning the participants give to the problem in order to gain greater insight. 6) Researchers often view the world and the problem or issue through a specific lens that will influence the study and how it is developed. 7) Qualitative research depends on the interpretation of information by both the researcher and participants in the study. This generates multiple approaches to the issue or problem. 8) Researchers take a “holistic” view when assembling the larger picture of the issue taking into account the multiple viewpoints and the complexity of variables in the study. The approach a researcher takes in conducting qualitative research depends

209 Creswell, 16-19. The philosophical assumptions reveal how the researcher views reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what she knows which involves first-hand experience through the emersion of the researcher in the context (epistemology), what role the values and biases of the researcher play in the study and interpretation and reporting processes (axiological), the language used to present the research – “personal” and “literary” (rhetorical), and the process of the research which is “inductive” and “emerging” (methodology).

210 The worldview of the researcher is the belief system espoused by the researcher which will influence the processes of the study. Positivism is usually reserved for scientific research. The Advocacy/Participatory worldview is one in which the researcher seeks to generate positive change in the lives of the marginalized. Pragmatism seeks to understand the outcomes of the research and how it is to be applied. The Social Constructivist worldview is one which seeks to understand the world through listening and discovery so that conclusions are generated from the data.

211 Creswell, 37-39.
on the key interests of the researcher. In outlining the five approaches proposed by Creswell I will explain the rationale for the approach’s relevance to this research interest.

**Narrative Research**

Creswell suggests that the central focus of this approach is the human story. With this approach researchers listen to and watch the story both “lived and told” by an individual. Researchers give a chronological accounting of events or actions and then seek to make meaning out of them. Biographical studies, autobiographies and oral histories are all types of narrative research. Narrative research tends to have a single individual as the focus of the study, and seeks to interpret stories and set them in chronological order to present the bigger picture of a life. In my study the subjects of my research were multiple and I was not looking to report on a single narrative.

**Phenomenological Research**

In contrast to narrative research, phenomenological research has a broader scope. It seeks to understand “lived experiences” of a phenomenon by numerous individuals. Creswell notes that the purpose of this approach is to “reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of universal essence.” Phenomenological research can be either hermeneutical or transcendental. Ultimately the researcher identifies a phenomenon or “abiding concern” and then “brackets out” the

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212 Creswell, 6
213 Creswell, 54
214 Creswell, 58
researcher’s own experiences while gathering data from the individuals who are experiencing the phenomenon.\textsuperscript{215}

After much deliberation and discussion with my peer group and professors, I decided this approach did not quite fit with my research interest or the context of my research base. My intention was not to generalize an experience to a “universal essence” but to listen to and observe mutual interactions between people of different cultures.

**Ethnographic Research**

According to Creswell, ethnographic research is a “qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group.”\textsuperscript{216} This involves the researcher spending much time engrossed in and with the group observing and being a part of their shared cultural experience. I ruled this approach out because narrative research is primarily focused on how a particular culture works. My interests were more aligned to considering the issue of hospitality and intercultural interaction in a congregational setting where there is much diversity.

**Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory is a “qualitative research design in which the inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of a process, action, or interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).\textsuperscript{217} Those participating in

\textsuperscript{215} Creswell, 60

\textsuperscript{216} Creswell, 68

\textsuperscript{217} Creswell, 63
the research share the same experience, or “process” which is then explained with theories that are grounded in the data generated from the field, “especially in the actions, interactions, and social processes of people.”

Creswell presents grounded theory as a complex methodology with various interpretations and approaches prescribed by sociologists in the field. The difficulty with grounded theory is the vast amount of research required to “saturate” the model. It is often very difficult for the researcher to know when “categories are saturated or when the theory is sufficiently detailed.”

Case Study

William R. Myers, in his primer for Doctor of Ministry students entitled Research in Ministry describes case study research this way:

> Case study research does not begin with a fully realized theory about the practice of ministry from which a researcher proves or disproves certain variables; case study research takes certain informing ideas about ministerial practice and, working in natural circumstances..., engages those ideas toward the formulation of a more spirited and coherent practice.

Creswell describes the case study simply as a type of research that “involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system.” This approach to research requires the researcher to explore “a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving

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218 Creswell, 63

219 Creswell, 68


221 Creswell, 73.
multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes.”

Creswell proposes three types of case study: instrumental, collective and intrinsic. In the instrumental case study the researcher identifies a “problem” or “issue” and then chooses a single case to elucidate the problem. A collective case study is one in which the researcher identifies one issue or problem but then chooses several cases to elucidate the problem. The intrinsic case study is different in that the case itself becomes the object of study.

The case study provided a process of research that was well suited to my needs in addressing the issue at hand. I saw my congregation as the single “case”. The multiple sources of data would give me a better understanding of the “problem” and I would be able to hear, see and watch firsthand accounts of the experiences of people. As I interpreted practices of mutual hospitality through the multiple sources of data, I would be able to create a case description and present case based themes.

**Part III: Philosophical Assumptions, Worldview and Interpretive Frameworks**

The process of any qualitative research begins with the researcher situating herself in the project by bringing to the table the philosophical assumptions, interpretive frameworks, worldviews and biases the researcher holds. Creswell asserts: “Good research requires making these assumptions, paradigms, and frameworks explicit in the writing of a

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222 Creswell, 73.

223 Creswell, 74-75.
study, and, at minimum, to be aware that they influence the conduct of inquiry.” In this section I will reflect on those elements I bring to the table which will influence this study.

**Philosophical Assumptions**

The philosophical assumptions, according to Creswell, “consist of a stance toward the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what she or he knows (epistemology), the role of values in the research (axiology), the language of research (rhetoric), and the methods used in the process (methodology). With these assumptions in mind I come to the research table with the ontological assumption that there is more than one way to view reality and that people have different experiences which need to be heard. The many and varied stories and perspectives of individuals should be received, recorded and used within the study. To this end I have audio recorded all Focus Group sessions and transcribed verbatim the thoughts expressed by different people. These quotes are used throughout the study and in the reporting of results and conclusions.

I also understand that I, as researcher, bear the epistemological assumption that it is important for the researcher to get as close to the participants as

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224 Creswell, 15

225 Creswell, 16-19.

226 I am employing an understanding of Epistemology from an article by Irene Vasilachis de Gialdino posted in the online journal called Forum: Qualitative Social Research. She writes: “Epistemology raises many questions including: 1. how reality can be known, 2. the relationship between the knower and what is known, 3. the characteristics, the principles, the assumptions that guide the process of knowing and the achievement of findings, and 4. the possibility of that process being shared and repeated by others in order to assess the quality of the research and the reliability of those findings.” Irene Vasilachis de Gialdino, *Ontological and Epistemological Foundations of Qualitative Research* in Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Volume 10, No. 2, Art. 30 – May 2009 [http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1299/3163](http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1299/3163) Accessed August 3, 2016
possible. In the case of TPC, I work and conduct research in the “field” where the participants gather for meetings, worship and events. This gives me ample opportunity to understand participants’ perspective from “firsthand information.” However, one of the limitations to doing research in one’s own “backyard” is that it is possible to run into power imbalances between researcher and participants. I recognize the potential power differentials (real and perceived) particularly across cultural lines. I will be aware of this caution and use multiple strategies of validation to ensure accurate reporting. Specifically, I will triangulate data using different sources and seek out patterns and conflicting sources of evidence.

I assume that the way people perceive “welcome” may be different due to cultural upbringing. I assume that people will speak their truth if given an opportunity to share. Finally, I am approaching this study with the assumption that intercultural competence can be measured and that the results can provide helpful information to guide congregations and their leadership towards improving intercultural dialogue and the extension of welcome. I realize that intercultural competence is a never ending process. I believe the process of research is ever changing as researcher and those researched work together and evolve.

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227 Creswell, 18
228 Creswell, 18
229 Creswell, 122
230 Creswell, 122-123.
231 Yin, 34
Personal Biases

As researcher I also bring personal values and biases to the study. I come to this study as a fifth generation Caucasian Canadian of Scots/Irish/English ancestry. I was raised in London Ontario with my parents and five brothers and sisters in an upper-middle class neighbourhood. I was raised as a “cultural Christian” but did not attend church regularly even though I was baptized and confirmed in the Anglican Church. There was almost no cultural diversity in the neighbourhood in which I grew up. However, I did have one experience around racial/ethnic diversity in my public school.

When I was in grade five there was a new boy who came to our school part way through the year. He and his family were refugees from somewhere in the Middle East. He could not speak much English and my classmates and I thought he smelled “funny”. Those of us in his grade ostracized him. We made fun of his name and taunted him. We left him out of our games at recess. Some of the older boys even bullied him and beat him up after school. As a child I participated in the ostracizing and witnessed the bullying but did nothing to stop it even though I knew in my heart it was wrong. That experience in my early years made me very ashamed of myself. I eventually grew to realize the value and importance of treating others with love and valuing the differences in others.

It was not until I was in my mid-teens that I began going to church. I went to the Presbyterian Church my friend attended. I was a stranger to the church community and they welcomed me. That is when my faith journey began to blossom. Seven years later I went into the ministry. Looking at my early childhood experience through the lens of my

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232 By “cultural diversity” I mean diversity outside of the European-Canadian identity of most of the people in our community at the time.
Christian faith I have come to believe that all people are created in the image and likeness of God. I believe that we are made for community and that unity in the midst of diversity is a true reflection of the triune God. I value diversity in the church as a sign of the heavenly banquet (Isaiah 25:6-9). I believe that it is important for churches to reflect the diversity of the communities in which they are located as much as possible.

**Worldview**

The worldview I bring to this study represents the set of beliefs to which I adhere that guide the processes of the study. I am operating from the social constructivist paradigm which tries to understand and make meanings of lived experiences of others. In the social constructivist paradigm, subjects provide a wide variety of experiences of which the researcher attempts to “make sense.” 233 Because there are many meanings that can be assigned to an issue, it is the researcher’s goal to “look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings to a few categories or ideas.” 234

As researcher I seek to listen to and understand the stories of the participants in my study. Through the process I asked broad questions to give participants ample space to share their thoughts. Taking the history and culture of the participants into account and my own history and cultural experiences, I interpreted the data and results. I view this project through a postmodern lens, meaning that researchers “focus their

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233 Creswell, 21

234 Creswell, 20
critiques on changing ways of thinking rather than on calling for action based on these changes.”

Creswell describes the postmodern perspective this way:

The basic concept is that knowledge claims must be set within the conditions of the world today and in the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations. The conditions include the importance of different discourses, the importance of marginalized people and groups (the “other”), and the presence of “meta-narratives” or universals that hold true regardless of the social conditions.

As researcher with a postmodernist perspective my intention was to listen to the localized, *petits récits* (mini-narratives) of individuals and set those stories within the context of universal or grand narratives of the post-enlightenment era. These mini-narratives better express local truths and the diversity of experiences in a community.

**Part IV: Detailing the Processes of the Action in Ministry**

**Rationale**

The project I conducted took the form of an exploratory qualitative instrumental case study. SAGE publishing describes exploratory case studies this way:

The exploratory case study investigates distinct phenomena characterized by a lack of detailed preliminary research, especially formulated hypotheses that can be tested, and/or by a specific research environment that limits the choice of methodology.

The study I conducted was exploratory because the literature is relatively silent when it comes to cross-cultural interactions in a congregational setting. To date there appears to be

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235 Creswell, 25

236 Creswell, 25

no formal or published documents regarding measuring intercultural competence in the Canadian church. The American literature for measuring/observing/imaging intercultural competence in a congregation is sparse.

While Eric Law, Manuel Ortiz, Mark DeYmaz, Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, Christine Pohl and others have provided much insight into the topic of multi-ethnic congregations, their work is largely based in multiculturalism in the context of the United States. The Canadian context is distinctly different from the U.S. context in which race lines are more heavily drawn. Often churches that are looking for advice on multiethnic congregations are more likely to be bi-cultural (white and Hispanic for example) rather than multi-cultural.

**The Processes of the Action in Ministry**

My exploratory qualitative instrumental case study was conducted within a bounded system (the congregation) over a set period of time (4 months—January 2016 – April 2016) and in a designated setting (TPC).\(^{238}\) I used purposeful sampling to determine the case and the form of sampling to be used.\(^{239}\) Purposeful sampling enabled me to ensure that I would get a core multi-ethnic sampling of the TPC congregation. I employed multiple strategies of data collection, including Focus Groups, observation, archival records, participant observations, physical artifacts and documents.\(^{240}\) I utilized the multiple sources of evidence in order to triangulate the data collected with the purpose of creating a more

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\(^{238}\) Creswell 75; 244; 341

\(^{239}\) The strategy of purposeful sampling involves the researcher choosing certain individuals, sites and sampling forms for the study in order to adequately represent the phenomenon being considered. Creswell, 125-127.

realistic picture of what was happening and ensure validity.\textsuperscript{241} The following are the evidence sources, procedures and protocols I utilized:

1. Interviewing (through Focus Groups):

Following the acceptance of my thesis proposal and approval from the Ethics Review Board (see Appendix E), and with the permission of the session\textsuperscript{242}, I immediately began to solicit Focus Group participants. I chose to use Focus Groups instead of one-on-one interviews for two reasons. First, I recognize that some individuals in a one-on-one setting may feel “hesitant to provide information (Krueger, 1994; Morgan, 1988; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).”\textsuperscript{243} In addition, some culture groups may view clergy in different ways. While some cultures set clergy apart to be revered and not to be challenged, others can see the minister in less formal ways and even as a friend. As the pastor/researcher I would not be able to ensure that all individuals would view me the same way. This could cause disparities with the data results as some individuals may feel awkward telling the pastor their true feelings about an issue. I concluded that a Focus Group would possibly give individuals more freedom to speak candidly or hold back if needed. Secondly, I recognized that the diversity in the congregation included approximately 27 different cultures. In order to give as many people as possible a voice, one-on-one interviews would have taken too

\begin{footnotes}
\item[241] Yin, 97
\item[242] The session is the ruling body of the congregation that is elected by the congregation not only to provide care and encouragement to church members but also to provide “supervision and oversite of all associations of members and adherents connected with the congregation…(as well as oversee) policy and procedures with respect to the use of the church building…” See The Book of Forms, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, section 109.1-109.5, 2010 edition.
\item[243] Creswell, 133
\end{footnotes}
much time. Having Focus Groups would give me the opportunity to involve more participants from various backgrounds in the study.  

**Soliciting Focus Group Volunteers:**

With a view to ensuring a sufficient cross-sampling of cultures in the congregation I decided to establish four Focus Groups. Each Focus Group had approximately seven to eight participants from various cultural groups. The eligibility criteria for all participants were that they had to be over eighteen years of age and they had to have been attending the church for more than six months. I solicited participants through an advertisement posted in the Sunday bulletin on posters placed around the church over the course of three Sundays. I also posted the same advertisement in the winter edition of the congregational newsletter (Appendix F).

Because I was using purposeful sampling I was prepared to approach individuals personally to ensure an appropriate cross-cultural sampling. When necessary, I solicited volunteers in person and by phone with a script (Appendix G) and with a recruitment letter (Appendix H). This resulted in a cross-cultural sampling of 30 individuals who represented approximately 10% of the congregation and nearly 25% of the first and second generation Canadians attending TPC, including some members who are third or more generation Canadian.

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244 This advice was also offered to me by my thesis advisors in my thesis proposal stage.

245 It was my initial intention to have 32 participants. In the end, two participants dropped out before the process got started and one dropped out for health reasons shortly after we began, thus, leaving me with 29 at the end of the study.
Focus Group Membership

The individual Focus Group membership selection was conducted randomly at first. All participants were emailed with dates and times for Focus Group meetings (Appendix I). Participants were invited to select only the dates they could not attend. Once responses came in, we were able to place participants in a group. As it turned out not only did each of the dates get sufficiently filled, all of the Focus Groups were sufficiently diverse in membership. The Focus Groups met over two days (February 20 and 22) at various times in the day for one and a half hours. All but one of the meetings took place in the Fellowship Hall (a space familiar to all participants). Due to room scheduling conflicts, the last group met in my husband’s office (co-pastor of TPC) which is a space that is often and regularly used for meetings. All of the participants in this group had used this space on previous occasions for meetings or Bible studies.

Prior to the Focus Group meetings all members were provided with an interview protocol; a set of seven (7) open-ended questions for discussion (Appendix J) in order to prepare. The questions were as follows:

1. Share with each other a bit about your cultural identity. (Where were your parents born? Where were you born? Do you speak different languages?)
2. Share and discuss how long you have been a part of Thornhill Presbyterian Church and what brought you to this church?
3. Discuss your experience of hospitality that made you want to stay?
4. Do you feel an equal part of this church community with others? Why or why not?

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246 Specific timeframes are important to establish. See Yin, 90

247 All meetings were held with the knowledge and permission of the session and in compliance with the Leading with Care Policy of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. For a copy of the full policy please see: file:///C:/Users/Heather/Downloads/lwc_leading_with_care_policy-1.pdf

248 Creswell, 133.
5. What experiences have you had that have made it difficult to feel welcome or fit in at TPC?
6. In what ways do you or do you not feel your cultural distinctiveness is acknowledged and celebrated at TPC?
7. In what ways do you reach out to others outside of your cultural group to make others feel welcome?

Participants were also given an opportunity at the end of the interview time to add any further comments.

**Focus Group Procedure:**

Upon arrival to the group meeting, participants were welcomed and provided with a name tag and consent form (Appendix K), and invited to share in coffee, tea and muffins. Two members of my Ministry Base Group (MBG) were present to offer assistance, collect signed consent forms and act as observers and “note-takers”. Once all participants had arrived we invited them to sit at a round table. There I welcomed everyone again and introduced the two MBG members. All present gave consent to have the two MBG members as note-takers.

Before beginning I took time to explain the consent forms which detailed the purpose for the study and how the material would be used (and ultimately destroyed). Participants were ensured anonymity and the freedom to drop out of the project at any time without penalty. The consent form also reminded the participants that the Focus Group discussions would be audiotaped and transcribed. After signing and dating the forms, participants were given a brief overview of discussion protocol derived from the “Mutual Invitation” model designed by Eric Law (Appendix L). Following this I presented a short five minute power point presentation explaining the project in more detail (Appendix

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249 Creswell, 130
and then began with posing each question one at a time. Following the Focus Group discussion, the chairperson of the MBG thanked everyone for their participation and stressed the importance and value of their candid sharing. He invited any further comment and then invited me to offer prayer by way of closing.

2. Observation

Direct Observation:

The purpose of observation in this project is to compare and contrast the comments of the respondents to real life behaviours. This helps paint a bigger picture of what is actually happening within the congregation. One of the most easily observable events that occurs at TPC in which cultural groups interact and mutual hospitality can be easily observed is the Sunday morning coffee hour which takes place in the Fellowship Hall every Sunday after church. After obtaining permission from the session of the church to observe and record five Sunday morning coffee hours, I began soliciting volunteers from my Ministry Base Group to assist me. Because I would be assuming the role as pastor on Sunday mornings, I was unable to do formal data collection myself. I did, however make casual observations (as an insider) and record notes later.

Multiple observers

In order to optimize the observational evidence, I decided to use multiple observers. These observers, members of my Ministry Base Group, were asked to try to

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250 Creswell, 134

251 Yin, 93
assume the role of “non-participant” during their observation Sunday.\textsuperscript{252} To that end, the observers did not participate in the social aspects of the coffee hour on the days they were observing. Instead they made efforts to stand off to the side away from people in order to simply observe. Each observer was provided with an observational protocol to record their findings.\textsuperscript{253} On any given Sunday of the five observation Sundays, two observers for that day were positioned in specific locations on the fringes of the Fellowship Hall. One was responsible to record the demographics of the room using a room “map”. That person would use markings to indicate where certain groups or individuals were standing (Appendix N).

The other individual was to observe the interactions between individuals/groups who gathered for the coffee hour. The note taker was instructed to make observations (descriptive notes) reporting the chronological flow of activities in the room.\textsuperscript{254} That individual was also instructed to make reflective notes (Appendix O) which are personal observations about the processes, reflections on what was happening and summary statements about what he or she witnessed.\textsuperscript{255} The congregation was made aware that the coffee hour observation would be taking place in the months of March and April.

**Participant Observation:**

Due to my direct involvement on many levels with church members, I also relied on participant observation to gather data. According to Yin, participant observation

\textsuperscript{252} Creswell, 139

\textsuperscript{253} Creswell, 135-137.

\textsuperscript{254} Creswell, 137-138

\textsuperscript{255} Creswell, 135-138
can be an effective way of information gathering. As a key decision maker in the organization, I fit the criteria to be a participant observer.\textsuperscript{256} The benefits of this form of data gathering include having access to many different groups in the church to which an outside observer would not otherwise have access. As an inside observer I also had a perspective on the real life inside the church. Knowing the people well enabled me to interpret subtle behaviours, comments, facial expressions and nuances from individuals better than a stranger to the church. I was aware of the problems with this form of data collection in that, as an insider I could have had difficulty pulling back the lens as it were to unbiased observations. In the end, the participant observations I gleaned did not differ significantly from the observations of those on the Ministry Base Group.

3. Documents, Archival Records, Physical Artifacts and Other Sources:

During the process of the study, I referred to many documents and archival records that were made available to me by our church historians. Of particular importance were old church directories; membership rolls; community census records; as well as building and room layout maps. Physical artifacts included art work, photographs and craft items displayed in the church. One source of data arose unexpectedly in that many congregation members openly and candidly offered their oral histories to me. There are about twenty or more church members who have reached or surpassed the fifty years of membership mark at TPC. Their collective oral history was rich and helped me interpret some of the demographic shifts occurring. All data gathered (audio recordings and transcripts and notes) were stored in a locked cabinet in my office at the church.

\textsuperscript{256} Yin, 94
Part V: Transcribing and Coding Procedures

Creswell delineates certain general analysis procedures that can be used across all qualitative research projects.\textsuperscript{257} These processes include: sketching ideas, taking notes, summarizing fieldnotes, working with words (making metaphors etc.), identifying codes, reducing codes to themes (noting patterns), counting frequency of codes, relating categories, relating categories to analytic framework in literature, creating a point of view and displaying data.\textsuperscript{258} With these general procedures in mind the data was organized and analyzed.

Transcribing

Transcribing began with the six hours of audio recordings. More than thirty hours of transcribing produced 120 single spaced pages of notes representing the four different Focus Group discussion times. No participants’ names were used in the finished results. To ensure I had recorded the responses correctly, I read the transcripts for each of the four Focus Groups while listening to the audio recordings several times making corrections and adjustments as required.

The Focus Group interviews were transcribed verbatim meaning that every word spoken, including improper grammar, pauses, and filler words (uh, um, ah), laughter and even side comments. To the best of my ability, I made note of any excessive throat clearing or any other tick that would get missed on paper. This was a way of remembering

\textsuperscript{257} Creswell, 148
\textsuperscript{258} Creswell, 149
the mood of the participant/situation when considering the documents later.\footnote{259} Because I would have three other readers who would be coding the documents I wanted to be certain they got the fullest sense of the discussion.\footnote{260}

**Coding the Data**

Coding the data involved several processes. Each Focus Group had gone through all seven questions. Their responses to each other as well as themes and ideas arising from the discussions carried over from one question to the next. I began with each Focus Group as a unit and made general observations and notes of the content and movement of conversations paying close attention to emerging themes. Following these initial readings I approached each of the questions one at a time. I then cut each question out of the Focus Group documents and isolated each question from each of the four transcripts and placed them in seven different piles. I then began coding the data with the specific question in mind.

When coding the data we were looking for themes, concepts, words, and generalizations that arose from the transcripts. I provided a coding guide for each of the coders and myself to follow\footnote{261}. The instructions were as follows:

**CODING**

1. Themes or Topics
2. Ideas or Concepts
3. Key Words

Things to ask ......

\footnote{259} For example is something was spoken in jest or sarcastically, I would be able to recall the intent behind the words.

\footnote{260} Although two of the readers were the members of the Ministry Base Group who assisted me in the Focus Group meetings.

\footnote{261} I had picked this coding guide up at some point in my academic years. The source is unknown.
1. What are we looking for?
2. What is going on?
3. What are people doing?
4. What is the person saying?
5. What is the person not saying?
6. What do these actions and statements take for granted?
7. How do structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede or change these actions and statements?

The coding took several weeks. My personal coding process began by coding for themes, key words, repeated words, repeated ideas and blatant conflicts or discrepancies. I used a series of coloured markers to highlight themes.

After I had completed coding the data I placed seven large pieces of Bristol board on the wall, each bearing one of the survey questions and wrote out my findings categorizing the data in themes. I highlighted repeated themes, outstanding concepts, or dramatic contradictions. The coding volunteers met with me one evening to share and discuss findings. I presented my findings and they responded with their own observations and discoveries. We compared notes, discussed the themes and discovered more themes. We concluded the two and a half hour meeting with some agreement on what we thought the important themes and codes were.

**Coding the Coffee Hour Observation**

After reading the brief reports from my observation team, I focused my attention on patterns of movement, participation/or lack of participation of distinct cultural groups and common themes that emerged from the observers. I also made note of where members of different cultural groups tended to gravitate. My own field notes were referred to as a way of reminding me of the impressions I had throughout the process and any
comments made to me by church members or participants. My own observations also became an invaluable tool in my interpretation of results.

**Data Analysis Spiral**

The processes of conducting data analysis could be best described as what Creswell identifies as a data analysis spiral. According to Creswell this process is cyclical as opposed to being linear. He states:

> One enters with data of text or images (e.g., photographs, videotapes) and exits with an account or narrative. In between, the researcher touches on several facets of analysis and circles around and around.

During the process of this study I reviewed the data from various sources (Focus Group transcripts, observation records, field notes, etc.) looking for themes which stood out. As the data continued to come in over the weeks of observation, I was able to loop back and forth from observation to note taking. This enabled me to categorize themes and then look for multiple sources of evidence in my data bank to support those categories. The processes of observing and recording; re-examining and concluding; discovering and discarding continued as more evidence came in. Data was then categorized under code labels.

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262 Creswell, 150-155

263 Creswell, 150.

264 Creswell, 151.
Chapter Four
The Emerging Results of the Study

Part I: Meeting the Participants

This chapter we will begin the process of unpacking the results of the data collected from the various sources. While the majority of the discussion will revolve around the Focus Group findings, it will also consider coffee hour observation results, participant observation notes, artifacts and field notes as needed. First order themes that have emerged from the data will be explored and conclusions will be drawn based on the triangulation of data and the reports of three other raters who codified to ensure reliability.

To begin the study I solicited thirty volunteers from the congregation to populate four Focus Groups. The volunteers were not only diverse ethnically; they were diverse in gender, age, ability, socioeconomic, educational and religious background. They also differed with respect to the years they have spent in Canada, their citizenship and their tenure at the church.  

265 In preparing to conduct the study I determined that it would be important to ensure I had as much diversity among the volunteer participants as possible. While this study is specifically focused on intercultural/cross-ethnic exchanges of welcome, one cannot forget the complexity of human cultural identity. In his seminal book entitled, Seeing Ourselves: Exploring Race, Ethnicity and Culture, Carl James, the Jean Augustine Chair in Education at York University in Toronto, reminds us that cultural identities are “multiple, ambiguous, relational, inconsistent, and performative.” In addition to ethnicity, James adds social class, race, age, ability, sexual orientation, spirituality, and sex (gender) locations which contribute to identity creation in individuals. Outside of those personal factors, according to James, are social psychological factors (which include “perception, motivation, communication, attitude, cultural capital, and personality”), and social structural factors (including occupation, citizenship, generation, language, politics, region, urban/rural, immigrant, majority/minority, religion, education, and career). While it is outside of the scope of this dissertation to delve too deeply into the various interconnecting factors that make up a person’s cultural and social identities, suffice it to say it is important to at least acknowledge the complexity of identity as we meet the participants. See: Carl James, Seeing Ourselves: 46-47. (Appendix P)
The following Tables demonstrate the diversity of the participants with respect to age, gender, nationality, religious background, length of time in Canada, and length of time at the church. The basic group demographics are as follows:

TABLE 1: Age and Gender of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 presents a picture of the gender and age demographics of the Focus Group participants. Before one male participant withdrew from the study for health reasons, the group was almost evenly balanced from a gender perspective with sixteen women and fourteen men. With the present ratio of 16:13, there is still a relatively even balance between males and females. The reader will note that the participants cover a broad age group. Forty-one percent of participants are forty-five years or younger and fifty-nine percent of participants are over forty-five years of age.

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266 One participant, a male over 75, withdrew at the beginning of the process for health reasons.
Table 2 below similarly shows a relatively even balance in the group with respect to amount of time participants have been in Canada:

**TABLE 2: Length of Time in Canada**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>&lt;10 years in Canada</th>
<th>&gt;10 years in Canada</th>
<th>Born in Canada</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 below gives us a sense of the tenure of participants at TPC. Nearly half (42%) of the participants have been at the church for five years or less. There appears to be no correlation between the years spent at the church and the years a person has been in Canada. It should be noted, however, that of the people who have been at the church for ten years or less (which represents 59% of all participants in the study), all but one was born outside of Canada.
TABLE 3: Years in Thornhill Presbyterian Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>1/2 – 5</th>
<th>6 - 10</th>
<th>11 – 15</th>
<th>16 - 20</th>
<th>21 - 25</th>
<th>&gt;25</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4: Birth, Culture, and Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Parents/Family Culture</th>
<th>Birth Religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>Christian Evangelical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>American US</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Christian/Evangelical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Chaldean</td>
<td>Christian/Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>East Indian</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Christian/Anglican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>Ghanaian</td>
<td>Christian/Charismatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Jamaican</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>Christian/Pentecostal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Buddhist/Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Cameroonian</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Taiwanese</td>
<td>Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>Trinidadian</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>Guyanese</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>Christian/Brethren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Christian/Anglican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tehran-Iran</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>Muslim/Christian/Pentecostal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Cameroonian</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>Christian/Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4 the majority of participants are from Christian backgrounds (22/29). Those who claimed to be Christian were diverse: two Evangelicals, one Catholic, eleven Presbyterian, four unknown Christian denominations, two Anglican, one Charismatic, three Pentecostal, one Brethren and two who did not identify a faith. Of the participants who claimed another birth religion two participants are/were Muslim; two
were/are Hindu; and one was Buddhist. In total participants represented four different religions and within the Christian religion they came from at least seven different denominations.

**Part II: Themes that Emerged from the Data**

This section will probe more deeply into the Focus Group transcripts to identify and examine patterns that emerged from the data. The validity of the findings was tested by measuring them against the Coffee Hour Observation data as well as the field notes collected and the reports of three other raters. The themes that emerged presented some of the key elements of the practices of mutual hospitality. This section will examine the results generated from each one of the questions.

**Question One Coding**

The Focus Group discussions began with an invitation for participants to share about their cultural identity. Carl James reminds us that self-identity plays an important role in how a person navigates through society and life. He states:

...identity is fluid, incomplete, and always in process, embodying both possibilities and limitations in terms of how individuals understand themselves and each other, and how they experience and live their lives.\(^{267}\)

James asserts that there are numerous factors which influence a person’s cultural identity. He writes:

...shaped by life experiences, histories, geographies, and encounters, as well as racial, ethnic, class, and gendered locations—and mediated or influenced by socializing agents such as family, school, etc....—identities are always in flux, and

\(^{267}\) James, 46.
constructed and negotiated by individuals who are incomplete subjects in a perpetual process of becoming.\textsuperscript{268}

However, despite the multitude of factors influencing a person’s sense of identity, it is through their sense of identity that individuals derive a “sense of being, of community, and of belonging.”\textsuperscript{269} Table 5 illustrates each participant’s personal sense of cultural identity vis-à-vis their birth country, age and the years spent in Canada.

**TABLE 5: Participants’ Cultural Self-identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Yrs. In Canada</th>
<th>Identifies as….</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Canadian by choice”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td>“Canadian-Trinidadian”\textsuperscript{270}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>“Universal citizen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“South African-Canadian”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>“Trini-Cadian”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>U.S. American</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>“North American”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>“Torontonian” (Canadian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Canadian-Malaysian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Canadian (Welsh, Scot, German)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{268} Ibid, 48
\textsuperscript{269} James, 48
\textsuperscript{270} The definition we were using for hyphenated identities is the culture named last in the hyphenated title is the culture the individual situates themselves with most.
| 10 | Canada     | 46-60 | Life | “2nd generation Canadian”
|    |            |       |      | “we identify culturally as British-
|    |            |       |      | Canadians...though I acknowledge
|    |            |       |      | that I am ethnically Chinese”
| 11 | Ghana – West Africa | 18-30 | 3 | Ghanaian
| 12 | Jamaica    | 61-75 | 34 | “Jamaican-Canadian”
| 13 | Iran       | 46-60 | 23 | “I’m Iranian”
|    |            |       |      | “I’m different”
| 14 | Canada     | 61-75 | Life | “just Canadian”
|    |            |       |      | “Pennsylvania Dutch” “mostly Irish”
| 15 | Canada     | 61-75 | Life | 6th generation “Canadian”
|    |            |       |      | “kept my English, Irish, Scots
|    |            |       |      | roots”
| 16 | Canada     | 18-30 | Life | 3rd gen...“Canadian primarily...”
|    |            |       |      | “...with an Hungarian ethnic
|    |            |       |      | background”²⁷¹
| 17 | Japan      | 61-75 | 4 | “Japanese”
| 18 | Cameroon   | 31-45 | 5 | Cameroon
|    |            |       |      | “visited Germany, US, now Canada”
| 19 | Taiwan     | 31-45 | 28 | “I do identify myself both as...from
|    |            |       |      | Taiwan and from Canada”
| 20 | Trinidad   | 61-75 | 26 | “citizens of both Canada and
|    |            |       |      | Trinidad”
| 21 | Guyana     | 31-45 | 42 | “both Canadian and Guyanese”
| 22 | Scotland   | >75   | 64 | “I feel very strongly about being
|    |            |       |      | Scottish.”
| 23 | England    | 61-75 | 50 | “Torontonians”
|    |            |       |      | “British-Canadian” “Canadian”

²⁷¹ The participant went to Hungarian school, speaks Hungarian in the home, eats Hungarian food and has taken
Hungarian dance.
The “identifies as...” column of Table 5 reveals the multiple ways in which individuals in this study articulate their sense of cultural identity. In Chapter five the above data will be analysed further and conclusions will be drawn based on findings.

**Question two coding**

Question two asked participants how long they had been at the church and what brought them to TPC. The Focus Group participants’ tenure at the church spanned from six months to more than fifty years (see Table 3 above). In all but one case the participants claimed they or their families were “seeking a church” when they found TPC. The only respondent who did not claim to be seeking a church was the one who had been at the church since birth. Figure 4 below reveals the reasons people gave for first deciding to come to TPC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Self-Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>“Korean”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Tehran/Iran</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>“Torontonian”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>“Korean”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“originally from Cameroon” “although legally I’m a Canadian citizen now”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td>“I’m Canadian born” “Canadian of Ukrainian descent”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Canadian-Ukrainian Speak Russian, Ukrainian, bit of Eng.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 28 participants who were shopping for a church it appears that denomination was the biggest factor (41%). Of those who indicated that denomination was important, all but one participant were born outside of Canada. The one participant, who was born in Canada, was the daughter of a Ukrainian minister who led a Ukrainian Presbyterian church in downtown Toronto in which she was raised. It is evident that the Presbyterian missionary movement had some effect in countries like Cameroon, Ghana, Guyana, Trinidad, Sri Lanka, Korea, India, and the Ukraine. Two of the respondents were Scottish and English respectfully. It must be added that for those who fall under the category of “denomination”, two individuals stated they were not actually Presbyterian (Catholic and Charismatic respectively). It was their wives who were Presbyterian and who
encouraged them to “give it a try”. Both men stated that once they tried TPC they never looked back.

Of those individuals who came to TPC by invitation, one was a Korean Presbyterian; one was an Iranian Muslim; one was a Malaysian Hindu married to a Christian; and one was an Indonesian Evangelical Protestant.

Of those who indicated the location of the church was what initially brought them to the front doors, three were from different denominations (Pentecostal, Chinese Christian Church, and Non-Denominational Evangelical). In each case they stumbled across the church and felt drawn to “try it out”. One prayed in the parking lot every day for one week before entering the doors. Five of the seven respondents indicated that they had a list of churches to try but after coming to TPC they “threw the list away” and never tried another church.

Three participants indicated that what initially brought them to TPC was the need to have their children baptized. These requests were not recent. Two were more than forty years ago and one was sixteen years ago. Only one respondent was at TPC because she was born into the church.

Once individuals entered the church there remains the question of what got them to stay. The reasons why they stayed had to do with how they experienced hospitality at TPC, which will be addressed in question three.

**Question three coding**

The third question for the Focus Groups asked participants to discuss their experiences of hospitality which made them want to stay at TPC. Several first order themes
People

In response to question three, an overwhelming number of respondents (27/29 – 93%) spoke about their positive experiences with people in general or with individuals who they named specifically. Of the two who did not identify positive experiences, one respondent stated that when she came to the church forty-five years ago she was “not welcomed” because she was “a stranger”. She concludes by saying:

I stayed….and I am so glad that I have, because now I can welcome the stranger. I can see them a mile away, and I make sure that they come to coffee hour. I introduce them. It is so different from the way I became a member (45 years ago).

The other individual stated that when he first came to the church less than ten years ago, he felt a degree of loneliness during coffee hours. Their negative experiences made both respondents more conscious of the needs of the stranger and both individuals can be witnessed reaching out to visitors at the church.

Leadership

Of the majority who stated that people made the difference in extending welcome, eleven of them specifically identified the ministers, both present and some past, as being an integral part of their experience of hospitality. Other respondents stated that the ministers “set the example” for hospitality and “it all stems from the leadership….and how it is put together that people walk through that door and say ‘Hey, I feel welcome here!’” Four participants added that the message preached by the ministers was also very important to their experiences of hospitality in the church. One respondent stated that the
Sunday morning message from the ministers is “central” to “hospitality in the context of the church”. In her opinion the message sets the tone for the social interactions within the congregation.

Not only were the ministers mentioned as being key to welcoming the stranger, other leaders in the church were named too. Fifteen people in the congregation were specifically mentioned by name as being helpful in making the people feel welcome across cultures. The fifteen people named included two past members now deceased and thirteen current church members, nine of whom are part of the present leadership at TPC (session, board of managers, music ministry, Women’s Missionary Society). Those in the congregation who were specifically mentioned were males and females of different age groups (twelve to eighty-nine years old), and cultural backgrounds (Canadian, Iranian, English, Chinese, Scottish, Indian and Jamaican) and tenure in the church (five to fifty-five years membership).

These individuals mentioned by name reportedly extended hospitality in several ways according to respondents. They showed an interest in people’s lives. They were helpful in directing newcomers from a different country for whom English was a second language to someone who could speak with them in their mother tongue. These individuals also are reported to have accompanied a newcomer to the coffee hour and introduced them to the ministers and other church members who may have something in common with them. These individuals also reportedly encouraged involvement in church groups inviting newcomers to groups or events inside or outside of the church. One woman who speaks little English said:
when I just started attending...TPC...after service....a person who was beside me encouraged me to sing in the church choir and introduced me to (the music director)............ Without her encouragement I wouldn’t have been in the choir, and, I wouldn’t have been...here (laughs)....because I’m.....yeah....and......of course, I feel....a feeling of hospitality

For those who did not mention anyone specifically by name, the majority stated that members of the church extended welcome by taking an interest in them and introducing them to others: “I don’t have a single individual that kind of reached out...” says one participant, “.....but I recollect quite a few people approaching us and kind of welcoming us and, um, that has kind of continued, yeah.” Another participant stated his family was welcomed by people of “all ages.” He knew he fit in when he was asked to serve on the search committee for a new minister after only being at the church for “four or five months.” He exclaimed “that really....clearly....demonstrated that everyone is important in this church....newcomers and people who have been here for decades!” That his gifts were recognized and he was trusted for his opinion made a difference to how he experienced hospitality.

Inclusion

As the above respondent felt included even though he had only been at the church for several months, others had similar experiences of being welcomed. A few individuals claimed that they were “made to feel welcome” despite being “different”. One respondent exclaimed: “I wasn’t made to feel like an outsider, even though I’m of a different religion (Hindu).” Another woman said: “They welcomed me even though I’m physically disabled...but they don’t look that (sic) at me.” In both cases, “welcome” involved people approaching them, speaking with them, asking questions, inviting them to
participate in parts of the worship service and other programs and introducing them to others. Both individuals now are involved in ushering and taking up the offering.

**Gestures**

Practices of hospitality which made people feel welcome also involved physical contact and gestures. Key words and phrases (first order codes) that arose frequently from the data from question three include: “open arms”, “embracing arms”, “smiles”, “handshakes”, and “hugs”. These first order themes were carried through many of the questions.

**Children**

Another expression of hospitality identified by respondents was the open welcome of children at TPC. One woman whose four children ranged in age from six to eleven years said:

> From the first day I came here it was so good, it felt so welcome, even the kids….every Sunday they’re waking me up from bed “Mom we have church to do! We have church to do!” because they love the Sunday school, and um.......yeah the pastor Heather...and Tom.

The welcome that children receive, according to respondents, comes in the form of Sunday school programmes, youth groups, youth choir, praise band and youth centred events. It was also noted that congregational members and the ministers also make concerted efforts to speak to the children in the church and encourage them. One Korean participant stated that she was impressed how much encouragement the children at the church got because in her experience with churches she has attended, children typically got more criticism than praise. She and others also remarked positively on the participation of the youth in the Sunday morning worship services.
One young Focus Group member who grew up at TPC from birth said she appreciated that through her years growing up at the church she was able to contribute “greatly to the different aspects of the church”, particularly in the area of worship. She stated: “If I wanted to make a change, there is like a path for me to make that change, there are people who listen...” It meant a great deal to her that the youth have a voice at the church. Mutual hospitality with the youth at TPC, which is a cultural group in itself, means that young people are valued for their input and involvement.

The younger children in the church are made to feel special too. Participants observed that after worship on Sundays during the coffee hour one of the ministers speaks with the adults while the other minister walks around the Fellowship Hall with a decorated pail full of suckers for the children. The children and minister engage in conversation and exchange hugs and fist pumps. One participant commented: “My granddaughter loves it here! She gets the lollipops....and the attention she gets too. She likes to do things when she’s here.”

In summary, the Focus Group participants identified people, programmes and the pastors working together to make their children and grandchildren want to come to the church. Because the children want to come to the church, the parents and other family members come as well.²⁷²

²⁷² In one case a Korean mom was bringing her 9 year old son to TPC while her 16 year old stayed at the Korean Church. She was torn between the two churches. The 9 year old boy was determined to come to TPC because he liked church and Sunday school and the youth group. Consequently, his mother would drive him to TPC early Sunday morning and go to the Korean Church where she taught Sunday school and her teenager played in the Praise Band. Finally the 9 year old had enough and told his mother and his older brother that they need to worship together as a family and TPC is the best place. Both mom and her teenaged son agreed to come. It was not long before the teenaged son began playing in the Praise Band and the mom joined the choir.
Family and Home

Hospitality extended toward children adds to the themes of family and home which emerge from the data for this question as well. The words “family” and “home”, (which were mentioned fifty-two times throughout all the data across all questions), were not just in reference to an individual’s personal family and home but also with reference to the church being a family or home.

In question three alone “family” and “home” were collectively mentioned twenty-six times. Several people specifically stated about TPC: “This is my home”, “I felt at home”, and “its home.” One new member concluded his answer by stating: “That’s probably one of the reasons why you are having such success at this church is that uh, it is....you feel like you’re at home. You feel you’re....we’re all part of God’s children and uh....and we’re all part of the family of Thornhill Presbyterian Church.”

In addition to references of the church being like a home and the family of God, there were other codes identified which advance the theme. Three people referred to one elderly man in the church as “Uncle” Clark. Another man stated that when he came to the church lonely and missing his family who were still in his home country, a woman at the church “kind of mothered” him to make him feel better. He concluded: “I just felt comfortable.....It all just clicked together. So yes, this is my home.” Another family who came to Canada from Cameroon identified a Jamaican woman in the congregation stating “she was to us as a mom” and they told their daughters they could call her “grandma.” They claimed that she provided them with food, attended to their needs and offered them comfort as they settled in to the congregation.
Personal Experience:

Feeling welcomed into the church was a very personal experience for some.

One young man appreciated the personal touch he and his wife received when coming to TPC. He described his amazement that people knew his name and made very personal comments to him. He summed up his first visit to TPC this way:

Uh-mm the hospitality....ya, I would say it’s...it was very great. Um, it got to a point.....I had people mentioned my name, and I asked my wife “Did you tell them who I am? Did you mention my name to them?” She was like “No”. It started when we came in and everyone wants to come close to find out who you are, where are you from, your name, do you live around, and that was said.... Just the very first experience, some could see I said Joseph, and I would forget “Oh, I spoke to this person early on.” And from the pastors, from the members of the church, especially one person, Clark, he......the first time we came in here, he told me that my wife was going to give me a son. That was the first thing he said and I’m like “Woah!!” (table laughter)......and basically, it was one of the reasons why I moved, um, my wife is working for the government, and um, I was also working back home (Ghana). We had a long distance relationship, and it wasn’t working, she was growing up...she wanted a baby, so I had to relocate and come here, so, I mean, when I came, I said “hello” ....what......and then Uncle Clark said “What’s your name” “My name is...this..” We exchanged pleasantries and then, straight away he said “Your wife is going to give you a child.” I’m like “Wow! I guess this is the place!” (laughter) Ya, but, uh, the experience is so great....so, so great, even after baby Joseph was born, people still call us, “We have gift....” People...when we come home...it’s like we are Christ in one body....It’s so welcoming. It’s so fun in here. After church people come in here (the Fellowship Hall where coffee hour is held) and exchange pleasantries....find out how your week was, how was work? Did it go well? I mean, it’s, it’s one of the best experiences I’ve had.

Joseph’s experience of welcome upon his arrival at TPC was augmented by the deeply personal and almost prophetic comments of an elderly man. The elderly man spoke directly to his felt needs and desires for his life which made his experience coming to TPC very moving for him (especially when his wife soon after announced she was pregnant and then bore him a son!).
Others have experienced the deeply personal dimensions of hospitality. One respondent, Mary stated:

yeah, when I....came here, I was a Muslim. So, I was coming to church just to have experience. Just to learn more about people and Charlie (a new member of TPC) was....uh, keep asking me “come, come, come” and uh, I was very.....strong....in what I was believing (being Muslim)....so I didn’t want people to bother me. I just wanted to come, sit there, and talk with my God and enjoy the environment and leave....but people keep coming and talking to me (laughs, table laughs). Say “hello”, “hi”, “hey you’re new here”, “what’s your name” and, and, I was like, uh,....a little....OK and not OK (chuckle) because, eh, I was feeling like “Why these people they wanted to know me?” (chuckle) “Why they’re trying to, eh...know who I am, and where I’m coming from?”....and why not just leave me alone and let me experience what I’m experiencing (laughs). So, but, eh, in the other hand... it was good because.....little by little I start to feel like I am welcome in different way. I’m not a stranger.

In Mary’s opinion, people reaching out to her even though she was different made a strong impression on her. Her experience of hospitality had multiple dimensions. It was the interactions she had with people speaking to her in church; it was her growing awareness of welcome in the coffee hours; and it was hearing the Christian message from the ministers that helped make her come to realize she was not a stranger. She continues:

...... that was very interesting, that was very interesting! Even though after the eh.....what do you call the name of the......after the worship, eh, to come to have coffee, (coffee hour) I was very uncomfortable to come and sit here and eat because I was feeling like “It’s not my place to come and sit down and eat.” Oh I’m so, what do you call, eh...I’m not here for eating (chuckles)(group laughter). People they are gonna think that “Oh, she’s coming every week...every week here, and she is eating here and she liv....(laughter)... So uh, but, uh-mm after a while.....same people.....they were approaching me and, uh, I was feeling like “Oh my god, uh....it’s look like!...” I, I felt that they are neutral! They are not nosey people to find out who I.....am I and what I’m doing here, and they were just trying to say “You’re Welcome! Come back! Next week, come back. Don’t get like uh....don’t be a stranger.” So, eh-mm, and, eh, by coming back and eh, listening to Tom and Heather and reading the Bible, that hospitality eh, was.....opening door for me. That’s why I’m sitting here now.
A “Feeling” in Worship and the Community

For many, the experiences of hospitality they had generated what they identify as “a feeling”. Fifteen respondents claimed that upon attending worship at TPC for the first time they felt the following: “at peace”, “welcome”, “comfortable”, “at home”, “good”, “God giving us a hug”, “peace and calm”, and “a feeling of hospitality.” One respondent who was trying to put it into words concluded: “it’s just a feeling”. Three individuals claimed that when they came something “clicked”. For many (8 participants) the feeling was connected to God and something they experienced at worship or in prayer. For the most part the feelings that people had upon coming to TPC were positive, however, two members mentioned that it is possible to feel a “cold” reception at the church but they both stated that the best way to solve this problem is to get involved.

In the responses to question three some first order themes have begun to emerge. Themes arising from the data include: people, ministers, leaders, leadership, inclusion, gestures, children, family, home, feeling, and names. Several of these themes continue to present themselves elsewhere in the data.

Question Four Coding:

Focus Group participants were asked whether or not they felt “an equal part of this church community with others”. When asked the question, the majority of respondents (23/29 – 79%) said an unequivocal “yes”. Every one of those who said “yes” stated that it was mainly because of their involvement in groups that made them feel equal. Three responded “yes” but stated that they would feel more equal if they “joined a group” or “got involved” in the church. One individual stated “I don’t feel unequal” and another
participant passed on the question. Overall, the majority of participants (90%) saw “being equal” as connected in one way or another to being “involved”.

One respondent stated that while he does consider himself to be an equal part of the congregation he still carries “a shadow of racism over (his) heart” from experiences of racism he had as an Iranian living in Europe before coming to Canada. He concluded:

I was welcomed (at TPC) more than I deserved by many member of this church. Different skins…many of them Caucasian…but yet…uh…when I walked through those doors…beyond the smiles and the skins I feel that I am walking into a white man’s institution.

**Question Five Coding:**

The fifth question asked participants to name experiences they have had that made it difficult to feel welcome or fit in at TPC. Once again the majority (16/29 – 55%) stated that they had no experiences that made it difficult for them to feel welcome or fit in. Ten respondents (35%) stated that the only thing that was standing in the way of them fitting in was the fact that they had not gotten involved. The top reasons these participants gave for not being involved in the church included not having or making enough time and not having a clear idea what they could do in the church.

Being involved in some way was important to most people’s sense of feeling welcome or fitting in. One young woman stated that when the senior youth group “kinda *(sic)* fell apart” a few years earlier she “felt like the community from my age group fell apart” and the youth of the church “lost our place a little.” A sense of community and belonging seems to be an important part of feeling welcome.
It was interesting to note that many people when answering this question took ownership of their experience of receiving and giving welcome. One woman replied:

Well... I didn’t think I had any bad experiences here.... Um, from my heart I would say that uh, you know we have to welcome others, and then others welcome us...you know it’s a two way street. I....so far, all the experiences are really nice ones...good ones...that’s why we keep coming back!

Others also stated that they really need to do more to make others feel welcome. One respondent suggested that sometimes the greeters at the church doors need to smile more. She concluded:

...but if they are not smiling I just smile and say “Good Morning” and, you know, extend my hand to be shaken.........it’s what you make it and it’s how you feel and how you treat others. You smile. Once you smile...once you smile other people will smile back and, and you know, be friendly. That’s what I say anyway.

Those who found it difficult to receive and extend welcome claimed that “language barriers” and “cultural differences” were the top reasons. One respondent said she felt “uptight” because of language barriers that caused “awkward silence” and made others feel “uncomfortable”. However, she found great comfort in being greeted by church members who said hello to her in her mother tongue.

A respondent who is from the Euro-Canadian culturally dominant group (who immigrated to Canada from the UK more than 60 years ago) replied tongue-in-cheek to the question: “What experiences have you had that have made it difficult to feel welcome or fit in at TPC?” The person replied with a chuckle: “When you’ve been here since 1966 (table laughter) it’s the other guy needs to feel welcome!”

Another respondent who was born in Taiwan but has lived in Canada since he was fifteen confided: “not all members extend welcome.” He stated that it is possible for a
person to stand in the coffee hour and not speak to anyone. The reason he knew this is because he had that experience himself when he came to the church for the first time less than ten years earlier. The Coffee Hour Observation reports reveal that there is some racial division in the Fellowship Hall during coffee hour which will be discussed in more detail later.

**Question Six Coding**

When asked about whether they felt their cultural distinctiveness was “acknowledged and celebrated” in the church, nearly half of the participants (48%) felt their culture was celebrated and recognized. Many stated that they appreciated the numerous worship services and church events which incorporated different languages, cultures and customs. They also appreciated the fact that children from all different cultures participate in Sunday morning worship services. Several claimed that the coffee hour was a time of cultural celebration because of the different cultural foods served. One respondent claimed that when she saw a book written by an Iranian woman featured in the church library, she felt her culture was being validated. Another respondent was moved that people greeted her with the word “hello, how are you?” in her own language.

Most of the respondents agreed that the members and the ministers at TPC demonstrated genuine interested in their culture by asking questions about their culture and engaging in dialogue. One participant who is from Ghana said:

Oh...my cultural distinctiveness has been acknowledged, um, an example is when Rev. Heather came (to our) home, um before the baptism (of their son), to find out about my culture (and) my background, to be sure how we do things before the day...yeah, I think that’s great.
While the majority of respondents felt their cultural distinctiveness was recognized at TPC, nine of the twenty-nine participants (31%) felt strongly that cultural distinctiveness does not necessarily need to be celebrated. “I guess I’m very...proud of my cultural identity, whatever it has evolved into...” states one participant, “(but) I don’t think it necessarily needs to be celebrated...”. Another respondent said: “I’m not even sure that I particularly would want a cultural distinctiveness to be acknowledged” Another participant concluded: “…it’s a pity that there is this cultural distinctiveness, ok, as...cuz, we’re all one...But I think we all acknowledge and celebrate each other’s cultural distinctiveness in the church in a very positive and loving way”. Figure 5 below illustrates the responses.

Figure 5: Is your cultural distinctiveness celebrated
The question of cultural distinctiveness caused some individuals to ask: What is cultural distinctiveness anyway? One participant who came to Canada from the Middle East at the age of eleven comments on his identity: “I’m not sure what my cultural distinctiveness is, um, growing up here in Toronto, I identified with many different cultures.” Another individual who was born in Taiwan stated: “I don’t feel very distinct culturally from many Canadians” because many Canadians are born outside of Canada like he was. Others claimed that cultural distinctiveness does not need to be acknowledged because we are all united by our love for God.

Four participants (14%) stated that they actually prefer the Canadian church leadership structures and worship styles over the churches from their home culture. A participant who was born in Trinidad but has lived in Canada for more than forty years stated: “I try to adapt and live the way I should as a Canadian.” Two Korean participants stated that their culture is very hierarchical and they prefer the Canadian church culture which is more relaxed and where men and women share responsibilities. With regard to worship styles, one Cameroonian participant said:

Thornhill is very, very, open to new things for learning about other cultures...I would not like it to change to, to what I’m used to....Because I’m coming here, I do not expect to actually come here and then uh, see or witness or worship the way it is done back home. As a matter of fact I would even say that I went back home and I went to church...I wasn’t very impressed with the service, it was too long! I thought, I’m not used to this anymore because I felt like it changed, you know from what I used to know.

At this point it is important to highlight a slight disparity in the responses by the respondents who said they preferred Canadian culture. Field note observations have revealed that these participants actually do place a value on their culture. Each of them has
participated in culture sharing activities within the congregation. They have brought cultural food, sung cultural songs at special church events, and shared their cultural traditions and protocols with the ministers to help us when we meet others of their culture.

When speaking about a friend who has stopped coming to TPC, one Korean participant explained that when the woman was absent from church one Sunday nobody called her to find out why or ask how she was doing. It was explained to us that our failure to call her was counter to her Korean cultural experiences and so it offended her. The other Korean participant agreed with her:

**K1:** In Korean church, usually, if you’re absent, uh, Minister, or the leader of s.....uh the leader of small group...uh, called you....“Why didn’t you come, uh last Sunday?” “What happened?” “Is there a problem?” “Can I, can I pray for you?” Or, “Can I visit uh, you, your house or your work place or can we meet at café?”

**K2:** Yeah, that’s right! A lot of things!

**K1:** I know in here (meaning this culture) that could be a private area, but uh, that’s uh, yeah different uh style of culture, yeah. That’s little bit uh difficult in here.

Another Cameroonian family has twice now organized and led an “African style worship service” at TPC in the last three years in order to give people an African worship experience. While these participants intimate that they “prefer Canadian worship”, and are “very impressed” by it, and they “enjoy that equal church culture” of the Canadian church.

When addressing the question about whether individuals felt their cultural distinctiveness was acknowledged and celebrated at TPC, two participants indicated that as English Anglophones they were not excluded per se, but they did feel parts of their cultural identity were not being acknowledged. One Canadian born respondent claimed that her ancestral Ukrainian culture is being lost because those close to her who share her ethnic
background are dying. She said she felt “lonely” because she has nobody to speak to about the culture she was raised in anymore. Another English born participant stated that the Presbyterian Church spends a lot of energy celebrating its Scottish roots through events like the Burns Supper but she feels her “Englishness” is not necessarily celebrated.

In summary, one hundred percent of respondents had no serious misgivings around the issue of their cultural distinctiveness. Some felt that their cultural distinctiveness was acknowledged and celebrated. Others felt that they were happy with their own sense of cultural identity (whatever that may be) and did not feel it necessarily needed to be “celebrated” (cf. Figure 5). The remainder of participants felt a need to have their multiple identities acknowledged. They loved their Canadian identity but had a need to have their ancestral/birth identity acknowledged or celebrated too. Those who felt their cultural distinctiveness was celebrated identified worship services, the use of language, involvement, respect, curiosity, the welcome and inclusion of children, people taking an interest by asking question and making connections, and coffee hour communications as being integral to their experiences.

273 The Burns Supper is an annual event held at TPC to herald and celebrate Scottish heritage specifically through the music and poetry of Robbie Burns. At these events traditional Scottish fare is served, the haggis is piped in and participants watch highland dancers and then participate in Scottish country dancing. This tradition was initiated about 40 years ago by the minister at the time who himself was Scottish. As the face of the congregation changes some individuals are beginning to question whether this event is reflective of our church anymore. Some have observed that fewer a church members are attending and those that do attend are white. Presently, due to attendance and cost The Congregational Life Committee decided to hold the Burns Supper every other year. The committee has recognized the need to create new traditions around the diversity at TPC and has recently held a multicultural potluck and talent sharing evening. The event had record attendance and represented the diversity of members. Prior to initiating this new event, the organizers of TPC’s Annual Congregational Christmas dinner decided that more needed to be done to attract diverse cultures. What once used to be a traditional Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings has become a turkey dinner and multicultural potluck where people from all cultures are invited to bring food from their cultural background. In addition to this, different cultural groups were invited to sing a Christmas song from their culture or share something about Christmas in their birth country. Response to these recent adjustments to traditional events has been overwhelming.
Question Seven Coding

The final question for the Focus Groups asked: In what ways do you reach out to others outside of your cultural group to make others feel welcome? The themes that emerged from this question were similar to those emerging from other questions. Three themes that were prominent in responses included: Oral communication, body language, and involvement.

Oral Communication:

Twenty-two of the participants (76%) said they reach out to others outside of their cultural group by speaking to someone different from them. They do so by trying to “welcome”, “encourage”, “ask questions”, take an “interest” in others, try to “understand their background”, “use people’s names”, and “introducing” the person to others who may speak their language.

Body Language:

Eight of the respondents (28%) stated that they reach out by offering a “smile” or a “handshake” to those who are different from them or new to the church. One individual of Iranian background stated that he “touches on the shoulder or back, hugs, kisses and shakes hands” with people of different cultures in the church.

Involvement:

Six of the respondents (21%) indicated that they reach out to others by getting involved and volunteering. By serving in the church, they claimed they were able to meet people and interact in ways they would not otherwise have been able to. Five participants (17%) said they “haven’t done enough” or they “don’t reach out”. The
individuals who stated that they did not reach out revealed that they had language barriers, time restrictions, shyness/introversion and fear of failure as reasons for not welcoming the stranger. However, it was interesting to note that once again respondents agreed that welcome is “a two-way street.” The following is an exchange between participants of three different cultures (Caucasian Canadian, Iranian and Ghanaian):

**Canada:** I think I’ve been a little afraid to approach people with a name that I’m afraid I can’t pronounce, or an accent that I might not understand. I think there’s some xenophobia or some cultural phobia, so I’m timid about approaching people that I think might be different, and I might have difficulty (chuckle) so I just kind of don’t take the plunge but I should.

**Iran:** I thought this is our fear…if we came for (sic) another country…

**Canada:** Oh no!

**Iran:** We don’t know how to speak perfect English, know the….

**Canada:** works both ways! (table laughter)

**Iran:** It’s all about getting to know people.

**Ghana:** Yes!

**Iran:** When you get to know people around you then you….feel comfortable and you start to open up.

In this brief exchange we see individuals engaging in mutual hospitality. They begin by being honest with one another. In the dialogue the interlocutors reveal their vulnerability which in a way gives the other power. This leads the participants to conclude that they really are not that different from one another. Their fears are very much the same. Trying to find a way to communicate across difference is a mutual affair.

**Other Emerging Themes**

**Coffee Hour**

Upon conducting an overview of repeated themes across all questions, some common themes emerged. It was remarkable to note how many people spoke about their experiences with coffee hour following the worship service. Seventeen people (59%) spoke
at length about the experiences of welcome, warmth and companionship they had in the coffee hour. Many of them specifically stated that the coffee hour was a time to “meet” others, “interact”, “introduce”, “welcome”, “exchange pleasantries”, “ask how your week was”, “reach out across difference”, “get to know” and “feel a part of the community.”

It is evident that coffee hour has become a very important part of the Sunday morning experience for people at TPC. Individuals or family units are invited to sign up for a date and provide food for that Sunday. On an increasingly regular basis coffee hours have become cultural celebrations as members of different ethnic groups serve their cultural foods. Cakes appear for family celebrations including birthdays, anniversaries, graduations and milestones. Coffee hours are highly attended by members, adherents and visitors of all ages and cultures. In many ways coffee hours have become an extension of the worship service and the place where practices of mutual hospitality occur.

Hugs

Another word that emerged time and again was the word “hug”. Twelve people (45%) stated that they felt welcome when they came to the church because of the “multiple hugs” they received from a minister or other members of the church. However, they did not just speak about receiving hugs. They also found comfort in giving hugs. One respondent stated:

since the first time we came here we felt very welcomed, uh, all the smiles...and shakeha....uh....handshakes....uh, and I was surprised actually...uh that uh, Canadian culture not too much about hugging, it’s very European which is close to me...uh, I was told don’t hug everybody, just respect the space (laughter). Don’t go kissing three times, just, you know, just see how people feel about it (laughs). But I felt that the hugs were not....there was no really, um, um, barriers and people were hugging sincerely everybody and I felt, ok, so there’s a little different atmosphere here....it’s not just CANADIAN, it’s a different cultural, uh setting here,
Another respondent who has spent her life in the church after coming to Canada with her family from Guyana when she was two revealed her experience of hospitality: “I would say it really comes to the ministers being welcoming...I mean Reverend Heather is the first minister I’ve hugged. I’ve never really ever hugged a minister before!” The beauty of a hug is that it is a mutual experience. It is difficult to receive a hug without giving one back. Feelings of care, welcome and inclusion are shared by many in the congregation who often express it with a hug.

**Difference**

The third theme that seemed to arise on a regular basis was the theme of difference. The terms “different” and “difference” were used 138 times throughout the data. The terms were largely used with reference to culture, ethnicity, language, context, religion, generation, experience, feeling, people, forms of hospitality, and a feeling of being different. In light of this, many of the Focus Group discussions centered on three things: recognizing difference, appreciating difference, and learning how to be a diverse church community.

All of the participants involved indicated their awareness of the unique community that has blossomed over the years at TPC. Participants noted how they were different either with regards to colour of skin, physical ability, age, religion or cultural background. It is also evident that for most people diversity is valued through inclusion, curiosity (question asking), attention and culture sharing. Seventeen participants (58%) spoke at length about the importance of diversity in the church. Eight participants (28%) stated that it was the diversity of the congregation that made them want to stay at TPC.
Three individuals said that even as we are diverse, we are also “connected” by our shared love of God.

For a few individuals there remained the question of what do we do with that diversity. A couple of participants indicated they did not know what questions to ask a person of a different culture. One Caucasian woman who was afraid to “step on anybody’s feet” or “hurt anybody’s feelings” said she wished she had a list of questions to ask people of different cultural backgrounds. Another woman said that she wished everyone would just wear their nametags so people could communicate better. One elderly person from the historically culturally dominant group observed:

I see all the different races all around me and I don’t know them...they sit.... Most of them tend to sit along the wall .... And uh, it’s a pity because it’s very, very difficult sometimes to, to approach people who are in a bunch....which they are......and with good reason....because they don’t feel secure themselves...in a church they don’t know.

This observation and the previous comments bring to the foreground a reality that still exists to some extent at TPC. That reality is a sense of insecurity, awkwardness and uncertainty that exists between cultural groups in taking the initial steps to cross boundaries of difference.

From the initial in-depth coding of the Focus Group transcripts there emerge themes that can give insight into the acts of mutual hospitality exchanged within a multi-ethnic church community. Before analyzing these themes further we will now move on to consider the coffee hour observation data.
Part III: Coffee Hour Observation Results

The coffee hour observations took place over five Sundays in the late winter and early spring of 2016 (February 28, March 13, March 20, April 3 and April 10). On each of those dates two volunteers from the Ministry Base Group would position themselves in the Fellowship Hall to observe what was happening on a human interaction level. One volunteer would record demographics of the room on a pre-drawn map of the room. The other volunteer would record their observations of what was taking place between individuals or groups during the coffee hour. This person would make descriptive and reflective notes on a form provided.

The data results revealed that for the most part people tend to situate themselves in the same spot Sunday after Sunday. What is interesting about this phenomenon is that it appears the newer people to the church\(^{274}\) (particularly those who are visible minorities of Asian and some African descent) tend to sit on one side of the room in a row of chairs against the wall. It is noted that Caucasian new members do not sit along the wall as do the non-Caucasian new members.\(^{275}\) Directly across the room from them, sitting on the stage, is a group of long-tenured members of various cultures.

Seated at one of three circular tables at the end of the room is often a clutch of elderly Caucasian women (a mix of short-tenure and long-tenure). The table to the right of them often has a multi-ethnic gathering of children and some seniors (mixed tenure).

\(^{274}\) By “newer” I mean they have come sometime in the last 6 years. The phrase “short-tenure” will likewise, for the purposes of this study, imply those at TPC for fewer than 6 years. “Long-tenure” will apply to those at TPC for those who have been at TPC for 6 years or longer.

\(^{275}\) In other words, those sitting on the chairs along the wall are all newer members who are non-white. Longer tenured members of all cultures sit and stand elsewhere as do new Caucasian members.
Another table beside them to the left is often the landing spot for the Cameroonian families who have been here between four to nine years and a long-tenured Indian family. It has been observed that visitors to the church on any given Sunday tend to locate themselves somewhere between the entry doors and the coffee pot or close to the food tables in the centre of the room. Figure 6 below gives a general sense of the average coffee hour room demographics.

**Figure 6: Coffee Hour Room Demographics**
Most of the coffee hour observers concluded that the food tables in the centre of the room seem to function both as a dividing line between non-Caucasian short-tenure members and long-tenure mixed culture members but it can also serve as a focal point which draws people to the middle of the room particularly Sunday morning visitors.

Some of the observers noted the movement of key long-time members and the ministers engaging with visitors, making rounds and speaking with people of different cultures. However, it was reported that there was not a lot of cross-cultural interaction with the newer non-Caucasian members seated along the wall on the left side of the room.

Observation notes indicate there was some intentional movement by a few individuals to approach and speak with those who are on the fringes of the room. Much of this outreach is done by those who are in the leadership of the congregation and who are a mix of cultures. One of these people is an elderly Indian ex-missionary and church elder who intentionally approaches new people of different cultures. An older Caucasian man (not a church leader) has been making an effort to sit with a couple of the newer Korean women and their children. Another church member was overheard asking two Iranian women if they spoke Farsi. He then told them he loved Persian food which resulted in them having an animated conversation about culture and food.

As reported by the observers there is a visible divide between the short-tenure non-Caucasians (Korean, Taiwanese and Cameroonian) and the long-tenure church members of a number of ethnic groups which includes short-tenure Caucasians. This phenomenon was not only noted by the Coffee Hour observers, but also the Focus Group participants from all cultural backgrounds commented on the phenomenon as well. One
Cameroonian participant, who has been in the church just under ten years, observed that there is too much cultural segregation in the coffee hours and that people need to mix more.  

After making Sunday observations, the Coffee Hour observation group agreed that everyone needs to “mix it up” a bit more. Two of the participants in the study (one a member of a Focus Group and the other a coffee hour observer who are both Caucasian long-tenure members) recommended that the chairs along the left wall should be removed and tables added. Several others involved in the study agreed. The reason for this action, they explained, is that additional tables would create more opportunity for communication across cultures and it would stop the new-tenure non-Caucasian members from “sitting in a line.” No mention was made about setting up tables for the long-tenure mixed-ethnic members who sit on the stage in a line. It was determined to not make any changes until the research and dissertation were completed.

Since the completion of the action in ministry, I and others have observed that many of the volunteer participants in the study are beginning to behave differently in coffee hour. More individuals from the Focus Groups as well as members of the coffee hour observation team have been seen discussing ways to cross boundaries of culture during the coffee hour. Some have been observed making intentional steps to communicate to those different from them during coffee hour.

276 While this study did not consider seating patterns in Sunday morning worship services, it has been observed by the researcher that there is not as much cultural clustering in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. There is evidence that while many members habitually sit in the same seat from Sunday to Sunday; the demographics of the sanctuary reveal a mixing of cultures. The reasons for this are varied, but it is known that some long-tenure Caucasian members intentionally seek out and sit with short-tenure, non-Caucasian members and adherents or visitors. Also, it has been observed that as people get to know one another they actually move to sit with different people from Sunday to Sunday. Further study and research would need to be conducted to uncover reasons for this phenomenon.
Summary:

In this chapter we coded the Focus Group responses and the coffee hour observations. The themes and common threads that emerged from the research gave insight into what individuals deem as being important to their sense of belonging in an organization like the church. The emergent themes include: people, family, home, children, ministers, leaders, individuals, involvement, programs, coffee hour, hugs, smiles, handshakes, open arms, worship, interest, encouragement, message, leadership, welcome, language, and diversity. Other first order codes that emerged include: feeling, approaching, asking questions, speaking, directing, greeting, accompanying, showing, introducing, encouraging, listening, belonging, participation, difference, fear, shy, introvert, avoid, criticize, lack of involvement and getting involved. The initial data is rich but needs further analysis. Chapter 5 will seek to answer the question “what is this data telling us about interpreting practices of mutual hospitality toward building intercultural competence at Thornhill Presbyterian Church?”
Chapter 5
Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation of the Results

Introduction

Mounted on the wall outside the chapel at TPC is a picture painted in the mid 1980’s by local artist and church member Rosemary Herbert. The painting was commissioned by another church member, Alex Brown\textsuperscript{277}, the grandfather of six and a half year old Jeremy Brown who was tragically killed in an accident a year earlier. The 36 x 48 inch painting, entitled \textit{Jesus and the Children}, is rendered in subtle hues of blue and green and earth tones giving the entire scene a pastoral feeling. The portrait depicts a tender moment where Jesus is crouched before five children who have gathered around him. Placing their hands on his arm, his lap and his robes, the children appear to be listening intently to Jesus as he cradles one child’s face in his hands. Another child holds a small bouquet of wild flowers to present to him. What makes this portrait unique is the setting. Herbert situates Jesus and the children at the pond which is located across the street from TPC. In the painting the pond and the church fill in the

\textsuperscript{277} Permission has been given by the family to use real names.
negative space behind the scene. The most significant feature of this beautiful painting is the children. The boys and girls gathered around Jesus are diverse in culture and age and have a striking resemblance to some of the actual children in the Sunday school at that time. And standing right beside Jesus, holding his arm, as if beckoning him to come, is little Jeremy Brown. The keen eye would observe that the background details and edges of the painting are unfinished. The artist was intentional about leaving the portrait unfinished, stating she left it so because Jeremy’s life, too, was unfinished.\textsuperscript{278}

The painting is a beautiful tribute to a little boy who was an active part of the Sunday school and congregation of TPC.\textsuperscript{279} But I believe this portrait has other things to tell us. I believe the portrait might just be telling us something deeply profound about the ethos of Thornhill Presbyterian Church: diversity, children, family and faith.

The previous chapter described how the Focus Group discussions provided a depth of insight into how people of diverse cultures view themselves and the world around them. The Focus Group questions were designed to draw out the experiences and feelings participants had with respect to their cultural identity and distinctiveness, their experiences of receiving and extending welcome and hospitality, and their experiences of involvement

\textsuperscript{278} Information gathered from Thornhill Historians in an article they composed for the congregational newsletter, The Open Door, June 2011.

\textsuperscript{279} This is a photograph of Jeremy with his younger brother helping serve at the annual Good Friday Breakfast in 1983.
at TPC. Themes that emerged from the data were multiple and shed light on practices that either contribute to or could detract from exchanges of mutual hospitality at TPC.

This chapter will reconsider the results presented in chapter four and provide an analysis of the data. It will begin in part one by revisiting questions one and six of the Focus Group discussions that address participants’ sense of cultural identity. Part two will analyse the first order themes that emerged across all data, specifically with a view to isolating key components of practices that may be considered mutual hospitality.

The final section will view the data through the lens of the models of intercultural competence used in this study to see what if anything these models can tell us about intercultural competence at TPC. As stated in chapter two of this dissertation, there are as yet no frameworks for measuring intercultural competence on organizational levels and specifically within a congregational setting. In fact, most of the Western models that do exist are primarily designed to measure the intercultural competence of individuals in a specified setting. That notwithstanding there is still a great deal to be learned from the models that do exist. Particularly this chapter will consider the data results in light of basic components found within the Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence. It will also enter briefly into dialogue with The Bennett and the Rathje models.

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Sage, 265
Part I: Analysing the Results

The Second Order Theme of Cultural Identity in Questions One and Six

One might assume that the more time individuals spend in a country the more they would come to identify themselves with that country. The Tables below reveal that the shaping of one’s cultural identity is a process that occurs over time.

**TABLE 6: Self-Identity of Participants Living in Canada 10 Years or Less**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Birth Culture</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
<th>Hyphenated Canadian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Birth Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. African</td>
<td></td>
<td>South African-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>“North American”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroonian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroonian</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cameroonian-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 6 we see that of the participants living in Canada for ten years or less, only one self-identified as “Canadian by choice”. Two identified as hyphenated
Canadians\textsuperscript{281} and one simply identified as “North American”. The respondent who identified as being “North American” indicated that he believes “people are people” and he does not wish to be identified with any sort of “nationalism.”\textsuperscript{282} Whatever the case, it is evident that 70\% of the respondents who have been in Canada fewer than 10 years do not self-identify as “Canadian.”\textsuperscript{283}

**TABLE 7: Self-Identity of Participants Living in Canada More than 10 Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Birth Culture</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
<th>Hyphenated Canadian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Birth Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Universal Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trinidad-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jamaican-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I’m different”</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Taiwanese-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Trini-Cadian”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guyanese-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scottish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ukrainian-Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{281} The term “hyphenated Canadian”, according to Carl James “refers to a person who identifies his or her ethnic origin as Canadian, along with the ethnic origin of his or her ancestors.” James, 91.

\textsuperscript{282} This participant was born in the United States.

\textsuperscript{283} It is unknown how many of these individuals have Canadian citizenship which could play a role in how they identify themselves.
Table 7 sets out the difference in participants’ cultural self-identity for those who have lived in Canada more than ten years. Nine of the twelve respondents (75%) who have lived in Canada longer than ten years claimed to have “Canadian” in their understanding of self-identity (three of those participants (25%) identify as being “Canadian” only, and six of those participants (50%) claimed a hyphenated identity). One respondent, despite having lived in Canada for 64 years, staunchly insisted he was (only) Scottish, stating: “...obviously I feel very strongly about being Scottish. What am I to do? I was born there. I grew up there. I went to school there....then I came here...”

Two respondents of the group articulated a different sense of self-identity that needs to be considered. One participant who was born in Sri Lanka, grew up in Fiji and then spent an “equal amount of time” in Canada admits:

...currently I don’t particularly identify myself with any particular culture. Um, even though I’ve been in Canada the longest, I still have, uh, pretty....I guess, I um...strong roots to Fiji which I considered, uh, to be my....uh...um...I guess....um....the country that I identified myself most with for a long time, but of course over the...um...last little while...that has kind of...um...I guess...uh...waned a little bit. I consider myself more of a universal citizen, I guess, for lack of a better way to put it...

Her ambiguous self-identity demonstrates how cultural identity can be negotiated particularly if an individual has cultural signifiers (skin colour, accent, facial features) that mark them as “other” than white. Carl James points out that while all racial identities are negotiated, white people, as “the dominant racial group” tend to have a proclivity to see “white” as the “norm—hence, ‘colourless’—while identifying non-whites in terms of colour or in terms of attributes related to skin colour.”

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284 James, 55
Moreover, sometimes, Caucasians will try to deny race or act blind to race. Colour-blindness, James suggests, may be an attempt to draw attention away from a person’s own white racial privilege.\textsuperscript{285} However, James also points out that colour-blindness is not something only claimed by the dominant culture. James says:

Indeed, like whites, schooled in the discourse of multiculturalism, racial tolerance and democracy, racial minority members of society also use colour-blindness as a framework to understand their experiences and the social world. This is evident in statements such as “I am human” or “We are all human beings”\textsuperscript{286}

This inclination is evident in the respondent who self-identified as Iranian but also as “different.” After speaking about her country of origin and coming to Canada twenty-three years ago she concluded:

...my daughter, she born here in Canada and with her coming to my life, eh, through her I start to learn different angle of the culture of the Canadian people. And, eh, very interesting journey. And when I listen to different people from different culture, its look like, uh, they are helping me to gain more about, uh, how...to be more tolerant, and how to accept...and to accept myself first....that uh, yes, I’m different...so as other people.

Her view that we are all equally “different” helps normalize her experiences in a different culture than her birth culture. Another participant explained that when his son was feeling rejected by peers because of the colour of his skin, he told the lad: “The only way you can solve that is just tell them that you are a human being and that you carry the same blood they do like everybody else.”

One American-born Caucasian man put a finer point on cultural identity and Christian spirituality when he said:

\textsuperscript{285} James, 57
\textsuperscript{286} James, 5.
“You know, when I am talking to somebody, it’s not that I don’t see the colour because that would be a lie, right? It would be a lie to look at somebody and say “I don’t see the colour of your skin.” It’s different from the colour of my skin. But what I do see is that you add as much, if not more, value than I do, because we are to humble ourselves as individuals and especially as Christians to look at each other and say, you’re a person, I’m a person, we’re all made in the image of God. So you know, you have an insight, you have an ability, you have things that you bring to the table that I may not, and so, being able to interact, and being able to piece that together and respect that and understand that, that’s what growth is, that’s what growth is, that’s what life is, that’s what learning is. That’s it.

Hyphenated Identities

Upon reviewing the data in Table 7 it becomes evident that while an individual can live in Canada for over a decade, there is still a sense of value placed on their culture of origin. By creating a hyphenated identity, they show an affiliation for or connection to both cultures. James suggests:

We might think of the hyphen, then as representing the interlocking ethnic and national identities of the bridging of ...(a person’s ethnic cultural)...identity and her Canadian identity constructed in a society with a mixture of ethnic groups that contribute to the Canadian culture she experiences every day and by which she lives.\(^{287}\)

While it is understandable why an immigrant forms a hyphenated identity, Table 8 below illustrates that even the Canadian-born individuals in this particular study can see themselves as something other than just purely “Canadian”. Of the seven participants who were born in Canada, every one of them added qualifiers to their Canadian identity. Even if they were 6\(^{th}\) generation Canadian, every individual saw themselves through multiple lenses.

\(^{287}\)James, 86
### TABLE 8: Self-Identity of Participants Born in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Birth Nation</th>
<th>“Canadian”</th>
<th>“Hyphenated-Canadian”</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Ancestral Culture that was acknowledged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Canadian-Trinidadian”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Welsh, Scot, German)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>“British-Canadian”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“but ethnically Chinese”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I’ve kept my English, Irish and Scottish roots”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“just Canadian” “Pennsylvania Dutch” “mostly Irish”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; gen.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“but ethnically Ukrainian”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 gives us a sense of how Canadian-born individuals describe their identities when asked. In all cases the participants not only identified as Canadian, but they added other cultural factors which they deemed important to mention with respect to identity. This begs the question: What does it mean to be “Canadian”? James asserts being Canadian no longer means being a white, Christian of European descent.\(^{288}\) “What we have observed” he concludes “is that difference—particularly racial and ethnic difference—contributes to the kinds of experiences and social relations that affect individuals’

\(^{288}\) James suggests that a “typical view among many Canadians is that ethnicity is an identity marker of “Other” Canadians—people not of British origin.” 61.
development of a Canadian identity.” He further states that individuals “adjust their identification with the symbolic components of an ethnic group according to needs and the contextual demands of the situation.” Individuals sometimes claim identity to a particular culture within the Canadian culture if they believe it will be to their advantage. James states:

This sense of identity, belonging, and security that individuals achieve through their ethnicity is dynamic and based on a perceived difference, sometimes constructed in relation to a constructed sense of Canadian identity and culture.

It was interesting to note that the sense of cultural identity articulated by respondents was not so much dependent on how long a person lived in a country, or even where they were educated, but where the person felt their sense of identity was developed. This was often in the home. A respondent in her late forties who was born in Guyana but raised in Canada said: “we moved here when I was very young (2 yrs.), so I grew up in the Canadian school system (yet) I consider myself both Canadian and Guyanese.”

Another respondent, who has lived in Canada more than twice as long as she lived in England, commented about being “home sick” after leaving England. She then identified a city in Ontario as their “Canadian home” but said she can’t seem to stop “feeling English.” She admits that when she is in Canada she calls England “home” and when she is in England she calls Canada “home.” One participant who was born in Canada spoke more about her Ukrainian culture and the sense of loss she felt from not being able to speak

\[289\] James, 80

\[290\] James, 62

\[291\] James, 62
Ukrainian or advance the Ukrainian culture. In all cases, the amount of time spent in Canada did not outweigh the innate sense of personal cultural identity for each individual.

**Cultural Self-Awareness and Cultural Other-Awareness**

This section took a close look at the complexity of cultural identity addressed with questions 1 and 6 of the Focus Group questionnaire. Articulating a sense of cultural self-identity/awareness proved to be a meaningful and enlightening experience for all involved. During the process of the Focus Group discussions around identity, individuals became animated and often shared a great deal about their life and experiences. Many of them went back to their childhood to help explain their present sense of cultural identity.

Most of the respondents shared deeply personal stories in the process. These stories served to give insight and to create bonds between participants as they learned about one another and shared about themselves. At the end of the Focus Group discussions participants stated how meaningful the experience was for them and how they wished “we could do this more often.”

The purpose of looking at identity is to get a sense of the cultural dynamics at play in a community where multiple cultures are interacting. The expectations individuals bring to the table in terms of how they wish to be treated can arise from their understanding of where they fit into the larger cultural picture of the whole (organization, community, country). As stated at the beginning of this section, it is through a person’s sense of identity that they develop a feeling of belonging in community.

The analysis of the data reveals that each participant in this study has a unique understanding of their own sense of cultural identity. These identities are
constructed (and being constructed) and depend on a number of different factors working together to make them what they are. The research data revealed that many of the individuals who have lived in Canada for more than ten years see themselves as having a hyphenated sense of identity. Recognizing the various aspects of different cultural influences on their lives appears to have made their sense of identity multi-dimensional. Considering culture is multifaceted and complex and cultural identities are highly negotiated, it is not surprising that the identities articulated by participants in the study were unique to each individual. Referring to his oft-cited Identity Diagram (cf. Appendix P) Carl James reminds us:

Lodged in this dynamic cultural web of intersecting relationships with various groups and institutions... (as seen in the diagram), individuals perform, construct, and negotiate their respective identities so that they are able to fully participate in a multicultural Canada, and have their contributions acknowledged and their aspirations realized.²⁹²

The processes of the Focus Group discussions and the coffee hour observation times also resulted in enhanced cultural other-awareness. As participants listened to and watched others they began to come to an awareness of the stories and experiences of those they heard. While the data revealed that participants already demonstrated they had some skills and knowledge of cultural other-awareness (shown in first order codes like curiosity, asking questions, and listening), the processes of the study certainly heightened that awareness. When three Focus Group members shared openly about their fear of communicating to others different from them because of language barriers, one member came to me after and said: “I didn’t realize others are as nervous (to

²⁹² James, 46
speak) as I am.” The researcher also had moments of growth. Listening to the Korean participants explain to the group about the importance of calling and following up on absentee Korean parishioners was a new learning and strengthened a developing cultural other-awareness. It will be established later in this chapter, that cultural self-awareness and other-awareness are key factors in the development of intercultural competence.

**Part II: Identifying Practices of Mutual Hospitality**

The data gathered from the Focus Group questions in chapter four revealed several themes and common threads that came to the fore. It was through the analysis and discussion of these themes that certain specific practices of mutual hospitality began to become evident. As stated in Chapter two, practices of mutual hospitality are:

the unique dynamics of relationship between interlocutors where the agents interact as both “guest” and “host” toward each other. In so doing, interlocutors recognize the inherent worth of the “other”. Difference is not shunned but is acknowledged as a matter of fact between agents. There is a freedom and mutuality in relationship.

Table 9 below illustrates conceptual components and subcomponents emerging from the data that can fit into the definition of practices of mutual hospitality. The component of awareness, with its subcomponents demonstrates knowledge of the self and other. The components of Respect, Inclusion, and Embrace along with their sub-components demonstrate the ascribing of worth to the other.
### TABLE 9: Listing of Key Components relating to Mutual Hospitality Emerging from the Data

**Awareness**
- Sense of self identity
- Acceptance of complex identities
- Cultural self-awareness
- Cultural other-awareness

**Respect**
- Value
- Curiosity
- Trust
- Using names
- Seeking understanding
- Asking questions
- Sharing
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Openness
- Listening
- Vulnerability

**Inclusion**
- Invitation
- Involvement
- Introducing
- Empowerment
- Trust
- Ownership
- Belonging
- Volunteering

**Embrace**
- Love
- Hugs/Touch
- Compassion
- Inclusion
- Welcome
- Mutuality
• Warmth
• Care
• Unity across difference / under God as common denominator
• Family
• Home

Table 10 illustrates some of the components and subcomponents arising from the data which can become barriers to mutual hospitality.

**TABLE 10: Listing of Components and Subcomponents as Barriers to Mutual Hospitality**

**Awareness**
- Lack of cultural self-awareness
- Lack of cultural other-awareness
- Unawareness
- Lack of understanding
- “colour blind”
- Stereotyping

**Actions**
- Withdrawal
- Avoidance
- Silence
- Not taking the initiative
- Criticism

**Attitudes**
- Fear
- Shyness
- Apathy
- Cultural superiority
- Bigotry (ageism, sexism, racism, ableism, classism)

The above Tables, while not comprehensive, certainly shed light on the various actions, behaviours, and attitudes identified in Focus Group interviews that indicate or contradict cross-cultural practices of mutual hospitality.
Overarching Themes

Identifying these components of mutual hospitality is the first step toward discovering larger themes. Data results indicate that these components and sub-components point to several first order themes including: Family, Involvement, Worship and Coffee Hour (Spirituality), and Inclusion. These can then be summarised into one overarching theme of belonging.

Family

With respect to the theme of family, the data revealed that having a sense of belonging through family is important to respondents. Participants indicated that a focus on children and youth fortified their experience of belonging. Whether it was a parent seeking baptism for a child, a young family looking for a community of faith, or grandparents looking to get their grandchildren involved, most respondents agreed that there was a special place for children and youth at TPC. They articulated an appreciation for the encouragement, nurturing and inclusion of children and youth in all aspects of church life.

Many of the respondents commented on the involvement of children and youth of various cultures participating in worship ( ushering, greeting, collecting the offering, reading Scripture, playing an instrument or singing in the Praise Band, Junior Choir, and participating in other parts of the liturgy). Data reveals that the involvement of children and youth in worship was “an attraction” for respondents. The involvement of children and youth not only emphasised the diversity in the congregation, it also added significantly to a feeling of TPC being a “family church.”
The naming of family went beyond children and youth. First order codes reveal that even among the adult members, family-like bonds were evident. Exchanges between individuals generated more intimate ties between people who became like a “mom” or “uncle” or “grandma” to immigrants whose families were in distant lands. These bonds opened doors of close relationships. Cross-cultural family relationships were also deepened over shared meals, invitations to dinner, home visits, asking questions and taking an interest in another’s life, gift giving for significant events (the birth of a baby) and offering assistance (pastoral and monetary) in times of difficulty. Three members of the church tutor from their homes a Korean church attender who is trying to learn spoken English.

**Involvement**

Another essential aspect of belonging revealed in the data was a sense of being involved in and with the community. Invitation by leaders and other church members to those not in the dominant cultural group gave newcomers of all cultures a feeling of belonging and worth. The data showed that when people got involved they felt more an equal part of the community. This involvement was in all aspects of church life from participating in Sunday morning routines (ushering, greeting, bulletins, collection, reading scripture, participating in choir or praise band), to serving in leadership roles on the boards and committees of the church. Participants specifically stated that it was imperative that people of different cultures be given leadership roles in the decision-making groups of the congregation. There was general agreement that when people of diverse cultures took
leadership roles in the church and participated in worship services they became more visible, representative and their voices were heard.

Data also revealed that those who claimed not to be involved felt they would feel more a part of the community if they made an effort to get involved or if the leadership of the church would identify which gifts are needed to further the church mission and then ask them to be involved in a specific task. It must be noted that as a result of Focus Group discussions about involvement and belonging at TPC, two individuals who had not otherwise been involved stepped forward to serve on the board of managers and in the Sunday school respectively.

Worship and Coffee Hour

Data results indicate that one of the most important contributing factors to a sense of belonging was the worship service followed by the coffee hour. Participants indicated that when they were “hurting”, “lonely”, or seeking to grow in faith the worship experience brought them comfort and made them feel “at home.”

Prayer in worship and outside of the worship time generated a feeling of closeness to God and others. During the prayers for the people the minister often asks the congregation for prayer requests. At that point worshipers voice their concerns. Often people ask for prayers for specific needs in their countries of birth. Prayer becomes a unifying experience and the petitions of all are brought before God.

The sermons also play a part in making worship meaningful for worshippers. Participants of all cultures reported that the message from the ministers spoke to their real needs. Similarly, music in the worship service was uplifting and often included music from
different cultures. There was an overall feeling of spiritual growth attributed to these experiences.

The feeling of belonging was enhanced by the large number of individuals of various cultures involved in leadership from Sunday to Sunday. On any given Sunday there are approximately fifty-five individuals of diverse cultures involved in the worship service (senior choir, organist, junior choir, accompanist, praise band, ushers, greeters, duty elders, readers, sound system, offering and clergy). There are another ten or fifteen people are involved in the Sunday school, nursery and coffee hour bringing the total number of people involved on Sunday mornings to at least seventy people. So many people of different ages, abilities, genders and cultures lend to the sense of diversity and inclusion at TPC on Sunday mornings.

Special worship services which involved church members speaking other languages were identified as having a bonding effect for worshippers. One such experience was on Pentecost when people from nine different countries prayed the Lord’s Prayer in their mother tongue all at the same time providing an experience of glossolalia. A respondent who participated in that event indicated that she had a feeling of connection to God and the church community from that experience.

Sunday morning worship services would not be the same without the coffee hours at TPC. Coffee hours have become a very important part of the overall worship experience. They are highly attended, very lively and full of food and drink. Participants reported that it is during the coffee hour that connections are made and relationships are established. In this sense, coffee hours have taken on a sacramental feel. As the community
gathers to break bread at coffee hour the community is strengthened. Bonds are formed across difference, and relationships are deepened. Many of the participants shared in the Focus Group discussions their unique coffee hour experiences and the ways those experiences changed them. One woman said it was in the coffee hour where she actually came to realize that she was “not a stranger” at TPC. Another man stated that his coffee hour experience made him feel like he was actually a part of God’s family when people asked him to share how his week went.

Observation results revealed that there is some need for more cultural mixing during coffee hour, however it is also an observable fact that intra-cultural bonds are being made particularly between people of the same culture who do not know each other. These bonds are as valuable as cross-cultural bonds and should be nurtured and encouraged. They allow for people who have to speak English the rest of the week to speak their own language with others in their church home.

**Inclusion**

The second order theme of inclusion equally plays an important role in generating a feeling of belonging at TPC. Inclusion involves the acknowledgement of diversity in the community. Practices of mutual hospitality demonstrate the awareness of difference and appropriate responses to it. The data revealed that participants of all cultures (ages, abilities, genders) were keenly aware of the diversity within the congregation. While some admitted that they did not know what to do about the diversity at times, the majority felt that it was apparent that their diverse backgrounds had value and they valued the difference in others.
Diversity at TPC is acknowledged particularly through those taking an interest, asking questions, learning and using names, sharing experiences, introducing, and making connections. Sometimes it is only as simple as providing a book in the church library which represents a non-western viewpoint or placing a colourful centerpiece on a coffee hour table that is in keeping with a particular cultural festival. It can be as elaborate as a congregational multicultural potluck which gives people the opportunity to share cultural foods, music, dance and customs.

Figures 7-10 below illustrate the coding process of first and second order codes leading to the overarching code of belonging.

**Figure 7: Second Order Code: Family**

- “Family”
- “Home”
- “Children”
- “People”
- “Ministers”
- “Uncle”
- “Grandma”
- “Mom”
- “Hugs”
- “Smiles”
- “Handshakes”

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Connection of family
Connection to the Church family
Connection through the personal touch
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BELONGING THROUGH FAMILY
**Figure 8: Second Order Code: Involvement**

Introduction
Invitation:
Programs
Bible Study
Sunday school
Choir
Praise Band
Committees
Coffee Hour
Ushering
Shy
Afraid
Too Busy

**Figure 9: Second Order Code: Worship and Coffee Hour**

**Worship**
“Message”
“Prayer”
Music
Sunday school
Sunday Morning Discovery
(study group)

“Visiting”
Praying for
“It’s a feeling...”
“God”
“God giving us a hug”
Something “clicked”
Pastoral care
Connected thru love of God

**Coffee Hour**
Connections
Relationship building
Sharing
Communion
Fellowship
Learning
Personal touch (hugs etc.)

**Belonging through involvement**

- **Being Involved**
- **Not being involved**

**Connecting to God**

**Spiritual connection**

**Personal Connections**

**Spiritual Belonging**
The Centrality of Belonging

The overarching theme of belonging clearly emerges from a synthesis of the first and second order themes in the data. Individuals feel connected through people, worship, involvement, and through valuing difference and being valued. Feeling welcomed, included and loved gave people the sense of being a part of the church family. Indeed, many people articulated their feelings of connection by metaphorically describing their experience in terms of “home” or “family.”

Practices of mutual hospitality generate the feeling of belonging and contribute to a growing, healthy and vibrant intercultural community. Mutual hospitality reinforces the sense of connectedness people feel when individuals feel valued, included, appreciated, and heard. This happens through person to person contact; and it happens through involvement in programs as well as in worship.
Part III – Practices of Mutual Hospitality and Intercultural Competence Models

What is the desired outcome of interpreting practices of mutual hospitality? What implications do practices of mutual hospitality have on the multi-ethnic church and what is at stake? Appropriate and effective communication across diverse cultures is at the heart of building the multi-ethnic church. But what does appropriate and effective communication look like on an organizational level? In the context of the church, ascertaining individual competency measurements are highly improbable. The question remains if it is still possible to “take the temperature” as it were, of the intercultural competence waters in a congregational setting. Borrowing from the basic framework of intercultural competency models with particular reference to the Deardorff Process Model, I will consider the elements common to all the frameworks in light of the conclusions of my research.

A previous description of the Deardorff Process Model (Appendix D) revealed some common elements shared by most intercultural competence models. These elements of intercultural competence include the “A, B, C’s” of cognitive processes: Affective (Attitudes); Behavioural (Skills) and Cognitive (Knowledge). Deardorff adds internal and external outcomes to her model. Viewing the research data through the lens of these elements will shed light on intercultural competency at TPC.

According to Deardorff, attitudes that are essential in the development of intercultural competence include “respect, openness, curiosity and discovery.” 293 These attitudes demonstrate an individual’s preparedness to step outside their comfort zone and

293 Sage Handbook, 32
become vulnerable. Respect and openness establish reciprocity in relationship that gives
the other an equal footing. Curiosity and discovery furthers the notion of equality by
showing the other that they are valued and important. My research results indicate that
attitudes of “respect, openness, curiosity and discovery” were evident in participant
responses. The dialogue between the Canadian, Iranian and Ghanaian participants
highlighted in chapter four, illustrates their willingness to make themselves vulnerable by
sharing insecurities and offering comfort and assurance to their interlocutors who also
shared vulnerabilities. Codes that arose from the data that would fall into this category
include: curiosity, value, respect, empathy, openness, honesty and listening.

Second, Deardorff defines knowledge as cultural self-awareness (how one’s
own culture has influenced one’s identity), cultural other-awareness (understanding
something of the cultures of others), and deep cultural awareness (having knowledge of
others’ worldviews). While knowing a language is important, it is not necessary for
intercultural competence. The data from my study showed that participants were able to
articulate their sense of cultural awareness/identity in relation to others. While some
members asked questions and sought understanding of the cultures of others, there is
evidence that more knowledge could be acquired by participants. This can be achieved
through culture sharing activities or conversations, friending others, eating meals with
others, home visits, invitations, and taking time to get to know others at church events.

Finally, the skills in Deardorff’s model include: “to listen, observe, evaluate;
to analyze, interpret and relate.”294 Participants in the research study gave evidence of

294 Ibid, 33
possessing some skills. They were curious to listen to and learn from the stranger. They observed, sought to understand, showed compassion and empathy. One respondent said it best when she stated that she “tried to put myself in the other person’s shoes” when reaching out across cultures. Once again skills can be developed on a congregational level through interpersonal contact between cultures and culture sharing activities.

The Deardorff model progresses from knowledge and skills to internal and external outcomes. According to Deardorff the desired internal outcome is what happens within the individual and can be identified as greater empathy, a move toward ethnorelativism, adaptability and flexibility.295 The external outcome which would be desired is intercultural competence which is defined as “effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation.”296 On an organizational level it would be difficult to measure internal outcomes for individuals, however it is plausible to witness external outcomes on a grander scale viewing the organization as a whole and how individuals interact within the organization. The designing of a model for congregational use could employ the three basic elements of Attitude, Knowledge and Skills to serve as guides to organizational progression.

Overall, it appears the basic elements of Deardorff’s model can certainly be applied on a congregational level to give a sense of the stages of development toward intercultural competence. To apply this to a congregational setting it would be advisable to arrange to have a significant cross sampling of the membership and/or the leadership to get the clearest picture. More will be said of this in the next chapter.

295 Ibid, 33
296 Ibid
When considering the results in light of the Bennett and Rathje models, there is evidence that these models can provide some insight into congregational intercultural competence measurement. Situating the data along the developmental scale from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism as proposed by Bennett (Appendix C) some assumptions can be drawn about the general overall competency. From the data I was able to situate individuals on different spots along the linear scale. While there was no evidence whatsoever that anyone was in the Denial stage, there is some evidence that two participants demonstrated Defense tendencies by using “us/them” language when describing the changing cultural dynamics in the church. Other evidence from the data suggests that two participants may fall into the category of Minimalization when they made comments like: “we are all alike,” and “we are just the same.” The majority of people demonstrated characteristics in accordance with the Acceptance stage. They were able to articulate a clear sense of their own cultural identity and acknowledge the difference in others. Two participants stated that their time in Canada has intensified their personal cultural distinctiveness and the distinctive culture of others in Canada. Several of the participants in the Focus Group interviews demonstrated that they wished to become more effective in communicating across cultures. They articulated ways that they hoped to accomplish that goal. One participant vowed to meet new people every coffee hour. Another stated she would listen more to others different from her. Figure 11 below gives a visual portrayal of the above description.
There is evidence from the data as shown in this diagram that the majority of respondents demonstrate a level of acceptance. It can be extrapolated that this cross-sampling of the congregation is likely to suggest this is where the congregation in general would be proportionately. The results shown on the Bennett model support the insights and conclusions drawn from using the Deardorff model as a lens. There is some evidence that levels of intercultural competence are high.

Giving consideration to Rathje’s model (Appendix B), a cohesion-based concept of culture, where culture is like “glue”, would be the desired external outcome for an organizational setting like the church. However Rathje’s model, which conceptualizes
interactional achievement, provides only a philosophical basis for considering culture and does little to serve the utilitarian purposes of this study.

It is important to remember Deardorff’s caution. The journey toward intercultural competence is a never ending process. Developing skills for intercultural competence is ongoing and never fully achievable. This is most true for the context of a congregation that is always in flux with membership ebbs and flows and leadership changes. But that does not mean it is impossible to apply some of the key elements of intercultural competency models to a congregational setting.

**Limitations of the Study**

The study provided a great deal of information which proved to be informative, however one serious limitation lies in the fact that there is, as yet, no model to measure intercultural competence on an organizational level. The research of this study relied on existing models which were designed to measure individual competencies in specific contexts. Further to this are the inherent issues around trying to measure competence on an organizational level. Organizations are constantly in flux with movement of people in and out and leadership changes. Taking the intercultural competence “temperature” of a congregation may provide some insight but can never be definitive.

Another limitation has to do with the vast differences from one congregation to the next. The results and conclusions of this study may not be applicable to other congregations and the communities in which they exist. How will this study apply to congregations that are mono-cultural ethnic communities (Chinese, Guyanese, etc.) who are trying to reach out to Caucasian Canadians?
Summary

In this chapter we looked closely at the data generated from the questions and observation times. A detailed analysis of the materials revealed numerous first order codes that generated some themes leading to one overarching theme. The coding shed light on certain elements of the practices of mutual hospitality. Practices of mutual hospitality foster a sense of belonging in the community. This creates a sense of family or home, ownership through involvement, deepened spiritual life and inclusion through unity across difference. The processes of mutual hospitality are the responsibility of all involved. In the sixth chapter we will draw some final conclusions from the study and consider practical actions the church and its leadership can take to develop practices of mutual hospitality toward building intercultural competence in the church.
Chapter Six
Toward Interculturally Competent Community

Introduction

This communion is born from mutual trust and acceptance, and the freedom to be ourselves in our uniqueness and beauty, the freedom to exercise our gifts. We are no longer contained and held back by fear, prejudices, or the need to prove ourselves.\(^{297}\)

A few years ago I had the opportunity to visit the L’Arche Daybreak Community in Richmond Hill with a friend who had been volunteering there.\(^{298}\) During our visit we were taken to a recreation room where I met one of the core members\(^{299}\) named Mike. He was a middle aged man in a wheelchair. When we were introduced, Mike firmly grasped my hand in his and pulled me close. In a halting and low voice he said something to me which I was unable to comprehend. The volunteer beside him saw my confusion and explained what Mike had asked me: “He wants to know if he can be your brother, because his brother died.” I was deeply touched by his request and immediately responded: “Yes, of course you can be my brother.” Mike and I hugged and after a brief conversation with the volunteer my friend and I left the room to continue our tour of the facility. Later that day I thought about what Mike had said to me. His request struck a chord. Mike was not asking something of me—if I would be his sister, as I would have expected from somebody who lost a sibling, he simply wanted to be a brother to me. His question was not one that sought personal

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\(^{297}\) Vanier, *Becoming Human*, 162

\(^{298}\) L’Arche Daybreak Community mission statement is “We are people, with and without developmental disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together. We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another.” [http://www.larchedaybreak.com/about-us/](http://www.larchedaybreak.com/about-us/), accessed Nov. 25, 2017.

\(^{299}\) A “core member” is a resident living in the L’Arche community. Mike is a fictitious name. The story is true.
satisfaction and benefit; it was one that simply sought to give love to me, unconditionally. I, as the Other, was important. He wanted to be a brother. It occurred to me, this is what community is! It is self-giving love that crosses the boundaries of difference to create a sense of belonging. It is being a brother and a sister.

Community is at the heart of this study. God’s people are called into community and into communion together. Intercultural competence in the multi-ethnic church and exchanges of mutual hospitality are for the purposes of building communities of faith. Saint Augustine believed that the word communion (and community) could be broken down into two parts: com- "with, together" + unus "oneness, union." The biblical and theological underpinnings outlined at the beginning of this dissertation demonstrate the importance of God’s people being united together across difference in God’s name. The triune Godhead serves as the model for a united human community. When Jesus prayed “that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you,” He prayed for that unity in diversity for all who would follow Him. The apostle Paul encouraged unity amid diversity in the fledgling communities of faith to which he wrote. The greatest image of all is the image of the heavenly banquet described in Isaiah and referred to each time the community of God’s faithful come together to receive the Sacrament. God’s people will come from “east and west, and from north and south, (to) sit at table in the kingdom of

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301 By united I do not mean uniform or uniformity but rather people being united across difference and one under the banner of Christ.

302 John 17:21
God.”

It is in this spirit of communion and community that the conclusions and implications of this study are grounded.

Learnings from the Study

Practices of Mutual Hospitality

From the beginning this study has sought to address two overriding questions: What is happening among the congregational members at TPC to make this multi-ethnic church community thrive? Secondly, how “well” we are doing? What do intercultural competence theories and models reveal about the practices of hospitality at TPC? In the processes of case study research to answer these questions many discoveries were made. The previous chapter looked more deeply into the data to shed light on these questions. It was revealed that practices of mutual hospitality contribute to an overall sense of belonging in the church which makes people of diverse cultural backgrounds want to stay. The feeling of belonging is experienced in four specific ways.

First, it is experienced through a deep sense of family connection in the church, where all ages are valued and welcomed. Children in particular are given a voice and place. Individuals who may be separated from loved ones in other countries seem to have found a home at TPC through the formation of personal family-like bonds with other church members.

Second, individuals also feel a sense of belonging through being involved in the worship, mission and life of the congregation. Involvement seems to instil a sense of

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303 Luke 13:29
belonging and ownership not otherwise experienced. It also helps strengthen connections between people and build relationships.

The third source of belonging is engendered through worship and coffee hour times. Diversity in worship leadership gives those present from other cultures a feeling of inclusion and representation. Diverse leadership in worship goes beyond just ethnicity; it also includes the involvement of people of different ages, genders, and abilities. The study revealed that coffee hour has become an extension of the worship experience making it almost like a sacramental act. Interpersonal connections during coffee hour give individuals a sense of spiritual belonging. The breaking of bread together solidifies bonds. Diversity is often celebrated in coffee hour. Food is often provided by church members who bring cultural dishes from their home countries. Often birthdays, anniversaries and special culture- specific celebrations are recognized by the community.

Finally, a sense of belonging is engendered through the recognition of and celebration of the congregation’s diversity. Diversity is acknowledged in all areas of church life including, special church events, worship, coffee hours and programming. Acknowledging that in our differences we are united to each other by our common love of God gives people a deep sense of belonging in the church.

**Intercultural Competence**

The practices of mutual hospitality which contributed to the sense of belonging can be measured using elements from models of intercultural competence to gain an awareness of competence. While it is understood that intercultural competence frameworks are not designed to measure organizational overall competence, we were still
able to identify some practices of mutual hospitality at TPC. When looking closely at the components related to practices of mutual hospitality, many of them matched the components of attitudes, knowledge and skills in the Deardorff model. The Deardorff model, a model designed to measure individual competence in the education field, was able to provide a lens through which corporate intercultural competence levels could be viewed. The Bennett model also provided some insight. The Bennett model was easier to employ simply because it involved placing individuals on different parts of the linear model and gaining a sense of the larger picture. The analysis of the data through this lens indicated that there was a tendency toward what Bennett terms “acceptance”. The Rathje model was only helpful in providing a philosophical perspective on how culture can be viewed.

Once practices of mutual hospitality have been identified and interpreted where do we go from there? What are the implications of a study like this for TPC and other communities of faith? To that end this next section will consider some practical actions the church and its leadership can take to develop practices of mutual hospitality toward building intercultural competence in congregations. Then we will consider next steps for TPC and for the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC).

**Part II: Some Practical Actions**

**Introduction**

Recently our son had some friends over to our house to “chill.” I was amazed to discover that among the 5 of them, their immediate ancestry spanned 4 continents and represented 3 religions. Despite their obvious differences of skin colour, accent and food restrictions, they were all pretty much indistinguishable as typical young guys who like to
eat a lot and play video games. My son has learned how to be who he is and respect others for their differences while at the same time sharing things in common with them. That is what I believe the church needs to do in an increasingly diverse world, and it raises significant questions.

How will we welcome others different from us into our communities and our churches? How will we create spaces where those different from us feel as comfortable in the church as we feel? As we share our common unity in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, how will we learn to value the differences in others? Part II of this final chapter will consider six practical actions that TPC has undertaken or begun to take that other churches can model based on the findings from this study which will enhance the building of multi-ethnic communities of faith.

1. **Establish Good Leadership:**

The data from this study revealed that good leadership is important to building multi-ethnic communities of faith. Respondents identified specific people in leadership roles at TPC who made a difference to their experiences upon first coming to the church. Leaders included elders, people in worship leadership roles and the ministers.

An important aspect of establishing good leadership is to seek to have leadership that reflects the diversity within the congregation. As stated in chapter four the leaders who were specifically identified in this study represented men and women of several different cultures and age groups. Diversity in the leadership of a multi-ethnic faith community is of the utmost importance. However, the process of discerning God’s call for good leaders in the church is not about picking diverse leaders simply for the sake of
diversity. Leaders should be selected for the gifts they have and their desire to serve the community in faithfulness.

The leaders who were most effective in fostering intercultural interactions and growth at TPC took intentional actions that had significant results:

a. Pay Attention: Leaders within the congregation seem to make a point of being aware of who comes through the doors of the church on any given Sunday. One elder in the study even claimed: “…I am glad I can welcome the stranger. I can see them a mile away, and I make sure that they come to coffee hour; I introduce them.” Perhaps what would be most helpful is to have one or two individuals assigned to specifically look for the stranger who comes to church on Sunday morning.

b. Make Introductions: After welcoming the newcomer the leader would often introduce that person to one or two others who may have something in common. At TPC we are fortunate to have many people who speak many different languages. It is often not that difficult to introduce a newcomer to someone who speaks their language. Introductions can make some meaningful connections. A respondent new to Canada from Japan commented on her experience after meeting someone on her first Sunday at the church. She said, “a person who was beside me encouraged me to sing in the church choir and introduced me to Gloria............ Without her encouragement I wouldn’t have been in the choir, and, I wouldn’t have been here!”

c. Engage with Sincerity: When meeting a new person it is helpful to engage by asking simple questions. The right questions will make a difference. Several respondents in the study stated that when they first arrived at the church greeters asked them for
their names and enquired if they had been to TPC before. Upon their return to the church people seemed to remember them and continued to ask them meaningful questions. One participant stated about her first several Sundays at the church: “everybody were asking “how you doing” and what was interesting, people were actually, sincerely interested...“where are you from?” “Who you are and what your background...and what you have to say. So it was great...great experience.”

d. Accompany: In many cases some leaders at TPC have offered to sit with a newcomer and then ensure that person gets to the coffee hour after worship. Of particular importance is the coffee hour. Of his experiences with the coffee hour Sam remarked:

One thing that was different at this church from the Catholic churches that I went to growing up was, in those churches we just went and listened to the sermon and then we left and you know, it wasn’t because we didn’t want to interact with the people...,just with the time or whatever their issues were...but here..., um, the lunch hour...or the coffee hour, um...was really a good experience. And just by giving more, you get more back.

It had a positive effect on newcomers of all cultures when people extended an invitation and accompanied them to the coffee hour.

2. Become Multi-ethnic before you are “Multi-ethnic”

During the processes of this study we considered the importance of cultural self-awareness and cultural other-awareness. Having an understanding of one’s own identity strengthens a sense of “being, of community, and of belonging” to use Carl James’ words. As this happens on the individual level it can also happen on the corporate level.

Over the years we have come to realize that TPC is no longer a neighbourhood church. At one time most of the members lived within walking distance or a few minutes’ drive of the
church building. Today some of our members drive up to forty-five minutes to come to church. Our church, which is nestled in the middle of a mostly white, upper-class Jewish neighbourhood, no longer reflects the neighbourhood in which we are immediately located. However, we still reflect the demographics of the cities of Vaughan and Markham in which Thornhill is located.

Part of becoming multi-ethnic church is to think, act, plan, vision and be multi-ethnic. The processes of this research study gave participants, volunteers and the congregation at large an opportunity to recognize and acknowledge how diverse the congregation is. As more discussion ensued, members and leaders began to embrace the diversity at TPC and claim it as part of our unique identity. Since embarking on this study more than eight years ago, the congregation has grown to value its cultural diversity. Ethnic diversity is considered when offering programs, studies, and church events (E.S.L. classes are now offered, members offer in home language tutoring, the Women’s Missionary Society studies about Canadian Indigenous communities spurred mission projects, education and awareness, and coffee hours and special church events celebrated cultural diversity). One of the most important steps to take is to communicate the fact that you are a multicultural congregation in the church mission statement, on other printed material and on the Church website. Communicating your diversity can help attract people who may not have otherwise considered the church.

3. Plan for Diversity

Unity is not about making everyone the same. Unity is learning how to accept and value the difference in others. When offering concluding remarks at the end of one
Focus Group discussion one participant stated: “mutual understanding between people with different cultural backgrounds starts with recognizing differences.” Sometimes this takes intentional work. Sessions and committees of sessions seeking to take diversity seriously should engage in intentional times of reflection and discussion about the emerging demographics of their congregations and their local communities. Discussions should centre on how to reach out to people of diverse cultures and how to welcome them when they come.

When considering the attitudes, knowledge and skills of intercultural competence processes it would benefit a congregation to engage the leadership in cultural diversity training events. Planning events where congregational members can come together in times of culture sharing can also give church members the attitudes, knowledge and skills to learn to communicate across difference.

4. **Try New Programs and Studies**

Many congregations offer ESL and conversational English classes for the community. When this began in our church several years ago the three women holding the classes often outnumbered attendees. Now, five years later, the classes are full. Several people who have attended those classes have come to church and stayed. Other options include holding Vacation Bible School Soccer camps for kids for whom soccer is a national sport. At TPC we have begun a tradition at our annual Christmas congregational dinner to have people of all nationalities sing a Christmas carol or song in their mother tongue. Many have come to the event dressed in clothing from their culture. Noticing a surge of young Korean families coming to our church we held a “Games of the World” night with our youth
group focusing on Korea. There we had the new Korean members of our church teach some traditional Korean games to the children of the junior youth group. It was fun for all, but it also helped the Korean kids feel more at home.

Other options for congregations to do something different include engaging in Bible study techniques that have a different perspective when it comes to considering the scriptural message from the eyes of others. Eric Law offers the Kaleidoscope Bible Study method and can be accessed on line. Likewise The United Church of Canada offers a Postcolonial Bible Study technique in their resource called That All May Be One, available through the United Church Publishing. When I offered this study to members of my Ministry Base Group one member, a biblical scholar and significant leader in the PCC, remarked that he had never looked at scripture in that way before.

When asked what advice they had to give regarding building intercultural competence in the church, members of Focus Groups suggested pairing a long time church members with a new person to help them feel welcome. Presently that TPC try to pair individuals who speak the same language but this suggestion was a more cross-ethnic one.

A final suggestion centres on mission. In a congregation that consists of many people from all over the world there are great opportunities to engage in mission in a very meaningful way. When global issues affect individuals personally because they are happening in the nation of their birth, there are opportunities to connect, learn and educate in new and different ways. When the Ukraine was in political turmoil some of our Ukrainian

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members were approached by others to share their thoughts and concerns about the issues. These were moments of outreach and pastoral care.

5. Celebrate in Worship

Worship is the central act of Christian life and witness. Worship is the way we express our devotion and love for God. It is in worship that our spirits and souls are renewed and enlivened. But we do not all agree on the best way to worship. That is because there is no one right way to worship God. When discussing worship with Focus Group members I was surprised to learn that for many who came from distant lands, Canadian Presbyterian orders of service looked much the same as other countries. What was different between them seemed to be the length of the sermon and the music. In our worship services we make a point of paying attention to different cultures in the selection of our music. The Presbyterian Book of Praise contains several hymns that have Hungarian, Korean and African translations. It is not uncommon to hear amid the congregational singing some of our Hungarian and Korean members singing the hymn in their mother tongue. The praise band, with its different instrumentation often seizes the opportunity to play music of different cultures.

Beyond the music is the need to provide a worship experience that is inclusive of all through the use of language in liturgies, prayers, readings and the celebration of the sacraments. Mark Liebenow, in his helpful resource, *And Everyone Shall Praise*, provides readers with useful and creative liturgies that are “inclusive and
multicultural.” This practical book offers guidance for worship committees and leaders in the planning and language of inclusive worship, and hands-on resources for the seasons of the church year. In a similar manner Maren and Maria Tirabassi, in Before the Amen: Creative Resources for Worship, have provided practical and versatile resources for inclusive worship for seasons of the church year and special services.306

Two African families in our church have also organized and lead an African style worship service. Members of the church truly enjoyed dancing their offerings up the aisle and singing the simple yet beautiful acapella African praise songs. In services like these different percussion instruments are used because most global hymns were not intended to be played on the organ.

6. Celebrate Together with Food

As stated earlier in this dissertation one of the highlights for most people of all cultures at TPC is the Sunday morning coffee hour. Participants reported that the coffee hour was a time to eat, share, talk, listen, catch-up, and connect. In many ways it is a form of the sacred act of Holy Communion. Coffee hour has become such an important part of the community’s life, members sign up to provide food for special events or cultural celebrations. During the Moon Festival, for example, mooncakes abound. To celebrate a birthday one of our Indian families will provide trays of samosas. For our annual Christmas potluck we feast on food from twenty-seven different countries. On World Communion


Sunday we had a liturgy of the breads and presented breads from around the world and placed them on tables around the Communion Table. After the breads were brought up the aisle by members of the church from different countries, we remembered each country in prayer, making note of specific concerns of the country. After the worship service, the congregation gathered in the Fellowship Hall where we shared the breads during the coffee hour. Recently TPC has opted to turn our annual Burns Supper (a celebration of our rich Scottish heritage) into a biannual affair and on the off year we have a multicultural foods congregational potluck to celebrate all of our various cultures.

The above six practical actions represent some of the actions TPC has taken over the last eight years of this study. The process of transformation is gradual. We do not change for change sake. Change toward intercultural competence occurs slowly as the Spirit draws us together across difference to create new community. The journey toward intercultural competence is a never ending one. There is always room for growth. Therein lies the question asked in chapter one: “Where do we go from here?”

Part III: Next Steps for TPC

This study has provided a great deal of insight to the researcher, participants, leadership and parishioners at TPC with respect to intercultural competence. The significant learnings presented in Part II above give evidence that the congregation is making progress in nurturing multi-ethnic community. But where do we go from here? The Deardorff and Bennett models have provided a picture of the church’s progress toward competence but competence is never fully achieved. The Deardorff Model indicates that more can be done
to continue to develop attitude, knowledge and skills. The following are three strategies for the leadership and congregation of TPC to consider as we move forward:

1. **Conduct Annual Focus Group Discussions:**

   One of the biggest surprises of this study was the success of the Focus Group process. The Focus Groups were diverse in cultural make-up, gender and age groups. The groups provided a safe space for participants to share their stories of life and faith with others. People shared openly and candidly. The process of mutual invitation provided the opportunity for all participants to speak or not speak as they chose. All participants agreed that the Focus Group discussions were beneficial and inspiring. Participants shared laughter and tears as barriers of difference were lifted and relationships of trust formed. Participants commented that they had been able to make connections with people they had never met in the church before. Many said it was the first time anyone had invited them to share their story. They all said they wished they could do it again.

   A plan to conduct annual Focus Groups at TPC would entail following the same procedures used for this study. The purpose for holding Focus Group discussions would be clearly laid out as providing participants with an opportunity to share their experiences, thoughts, and ideas for further developing intercultural competence at TPC. The sessions would follow in the same manner and time frame as the Focus Groups did for this research project. A set of questions would be provided to participants ahead of time for consideration. Notes would be taken and a team of trained volunteers would provide a synopsis of the notes for discussion and analysis.
The anticipated results from conducting these Focus Groups discussions would be two-fold: first, it is hoped the process of discussion would engender a spirit of fellowship across cultures among participants and second, the overall findings would give us a sense of the intercultural competence level of the church community. It is understood that, as of yet, there is no official model for measuring intercultural competence. The designing of and testing a model is the topic of another dissertation. However, using Deardorff’s framework of intercultural competence including the specific elements of attitude, knowledge and skills mentioned previously in this dissertation could serve as a beneficial tool of measurement.

2. Forming Partnerships across Difference:

One recommendation that came from the participants of the Focus Groups was the need to facilitate the forming of relationships across cultures in the church. One participant said she longed to have her inner church relationships continue outside the church:

I have many friends in this church but my relationships end just at church. I don’t know where they live. I don’t know anything about them, which I wish, I mean, I could visit them sometime...uh, they visit me, I see how their culture is.... We, you know, learn from each other. That is one thing I really wish it could....I want a closer relationship with people...know where they live.... I wish my kids had that opportunity. They didn’t have the chance to meet their grandparents, my parents are passed away so what they want is a parent they can visit like a grandparent.... that would be something they would appreciate.

Others indicated similar desires to make meaningful connections with people. Several participants suggested that we try a programme of pairing individuals or families of different cultures. These families/individuals would meet occasionally for meals, visits or shared activities outside the church. They would also offer support to each other and check-
in with each other. The benefits of creating bonds with church members outside the church are immeasurable. Partnerships would foster the sense of belonging and would particularly give new immigrants the emotional and spiritual support they need when coming to a new country.

In addition to one-on-one partnerships, cross-cultural relationships can be motivated through a process of creating covenant groups. In the 1990’s TPC leadership created covenant groups for bible study and several of them are still meeting together today. The Christian Education committee of the session can re-address the establishment of covenant groups with a view to fostering spiritual growth as well as cross-cultural relationships at TPC.

3. Leadership Discernment, Discussion and Prayer

One of the most poignant moments of the study process was when one participant stated that when he came to TPC for the first time he could not help but notice: “when I walked through those doors...beyond the smiles and the skins, I feel that I am walking into a white man’s institution.” What is a “white man’s institution”? How does the mainline church in Canada cease to be a “white man’s institution”? Is it even possible? It would benefit the leadership of the congregation (session, board of managers, and committees of session) to spend time reflecting on the ways TPC may look and feel like a “white man’s institution” to the stranger. Is it in pictures or artifacts around the church or is it simply a feeling people get? The leadership at TPC has begun to consider ways to preserve its rich history yet make room for other histories to come in. Moving a quilted wall hanging from the entrance of the church to the chapel made way for a new and modern church
welcome sign. Processes of discernment, discussion, prayer and reflection are advisable for the leadership of TPC to usher in gradual change. To this end the session could host a day-apart workshop to discuss the opportunities and challenges of cultural diversity at TPC. Continuing to seek out, train and encourage leadership from members across cultures would also help provide some balanced representation in all of the committees and groups within the church.

Something for the Denomination

As noted in chapter two, the PCC has spent decades trying to address the opportunities and challenges associated with multi-ethnic churches. The feedback from the Ezekiel Forum and the resulting Justice Committee’s task force provided the impetus for the national church to put cultural diversity as a priority for future planning. The eleven initiatives proposed and approved at the 2011 General Assembly are a first step. Ethnic and racial diversity training and seeking to encourage the involvement of ethnic and racial minorities in all levels of church governance can go a long way to spur on the change that is needed. However, seeking parity in leadership still does not address the ever growing need to build multi-ethnic congregations within the PCC. There are three potential opportunities arising from this study that would benefit the denomination:

The Development of a Bible Study: The processes of research and writing this dissertation provided me with many moments of clarity. One such moment occurred when examining the biblical and theological groundings for multi-ethnic communities of faith. As often happens when exegeting texts for a sermon, the researcher comes to a deeper understanding of the powerful messages of hope, healing and reconciliation the scriptures
hold. Often buried under the surface of the text are new truths that can be found through prayerful study. The biblical and theological analysis for this dissertation helped me to see the church through a different set of lenses. A bible study on the subject of God’s plan for unity in diversity in the church could prove to be helpful for congregations experiencing demographic shifts in their communion.

**The Development of a Study Guide:** A study guide arising from the contents of this dissertation could be designed to help grow existing multi-ethnic churches or plant new ones. The study guide would provide not only a biblical and theological basis for multi-ethnic churches but it would also provide helpful strategies to sustain their growth. The agencies in the National Church and presbyteries would benefit from such a study guide when considering new church plants in regions that are experiencing population growth from immigration.

**Intercultural Competence Workshops:** Presently there are congregations in the PCC that have grown to become multi-ethnic communities of faith. The research and findings of this study could be used as the basis of a workshop for congregations to examine their own levels of intercultural competence. At these workshops church leaders could share their own experiences of leading in a multi-ethnic church and learn from the stories of others. The workshop would provide participants with the tools to measure and develop intercultural competence in their own churches.

A further brief word needs to be said about our three theological colleges in the PCC. As noted earlier, it is evident our seminaries are taking steps to respond to diversity, not only among their faculty, staff and students, but also through programmes
and annual seminars offered to students and the public. It is recognized that the colleges have established degree program courses in place to offer students, however, perhaps syllabi in the pastoral areas such as preaching, worship, Christian education and pastoral care, could contain required readings (articles, books) related to the multi-cultural church. Many congregations are ill prepared to deal with the dramatic shifts in demographics in their neighbourhoods and their own declining membership. Pastoral leadership that has been prepared to lead in this great time of change will be invaluable to the church of the future.

The Final Word: Why is this study so important?

One question asked of me throughout the research and writing of this project was “Why?” Why am I doing this research and why is it so important. This study is important because it gives the mainline Canadian church new opportunities to consider ministry and mission in an increasingly multicultural Canada. The multi-ethnic church is not only an image of the unity and “oneness” Jesus prayed for in John 17, it is also a reflection of the image of heaven portrayed in Revelation 7:9 where “every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” are gathered together before the Heavenly throne. It is to this the multi-ethnic church can aspire. It is the image of heaven on earth. In the Canadian mainline church, particularly in urban and suburban areas, a multi-ethnic church agenda can breathe new life into communities of growing diversity. Building multi-ethnic faith communities can help cross boundaries of difference and demonstrate the love that Jesus Christ himself extended to the Other.
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**Journals and Periodicals**


_______ “Reading through New Eyes: A basic introduction to reading Scripture from a feminist, postcolonial perspective for anti-racism work” in *Making Waves*, (Summer, 2004)

Peters, Rebecca Todd. “Decolonizing our Minds: Postcolonial Perspectives on the Church” in *Gender Justice and the Church: Women’s Voices and Visions*, edited by


Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions

**Multi-cultural**: Consisting of different cultures.

**Cross-Cultural**: Insinuates some connecting/interaction between cultures

Some Cross-Cultural dynamics can have power differentials between dominant cultures and other cultures where other cultures are defined in and through the dominant culture.

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**Inter-Cultural**: there is appropriate and effective interaction between cultures. Interactions give evidence of mutuality, reciprocity, equality, respect, understanding, and equity. Individual cultural identities are valued. Individuals can be themselves and celebrate the uniqueness of the “other”. 
Appendix B: Coherence-Based, Cohesion-Based Concept of Culture by Stefanie Rathje

Appendix C: The Bennett Model of Intercultural Sensitivity\textsuperscript{309}

\textit{Development of Intercultural Sensitivity}

\textit{Experience of Difference}

\textbf{Ethnocentric Stages}

- First experience is not to experience the difference.
- Polarization of us/them.
- False sense of cultural sensitivity, assumes we are all the same.

\textbf{Ethnorealative Stages}

- Growing awareness of one's own culture and recognition of the other.
- Recognition that one needs to be effective in interactions with others.
- Internalizing two or more cultures — typically takes 3+ years.

Appendix D: Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence


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Appendix E: Ethics Approval

PROTOCOL REFERENCE # 32354

December 2, 2015

Dr. J. Dorcas Gordon
KNOX COLLEGE

Rev. Heather J. Vais
KNOX COLLEGE

Dear Dr. Gordon and Rev. Heather J. Vais,

Re: Your research protocol entitled, "Beyond cordiality: Interpreting practices of mutual hospitality toward building interculturally competent community at Thornhill Presbyterian Church"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHICS APPROVAL</th>
<th>Original Approval Date: December 2, 2015</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Expiry Date: December 1, 2016</td>
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<td>Continuing Review Level</td>
<td>1</td>
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We are writing to advise you that the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted approval to the above-named research protocol under the REB’s delegated review process. Your protocol has been approved for a period of one year and ongoing research under this protocol must be renewed prior to the expiry date.

Any changes to the approved protocol or consent materials must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation. Any adverse or unanticipated events in the research should be reported to the Office of Research Ethics as soon as possible.

Please ensure that you submit an Annual Renewal Form or a Study Completion Report 15 to 30 days prior to the expiry date of your current ethics approval. Note that annual renewals for studies cannot be accepted more than 30 days prior to the date of expiry.

If your research is funded by a third party, please contact the assigned Research Funding Officer in Research Services to ensure that your funds are released.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Brower, Ph.D.
REB Co-Chair

Jeffrey Steele, Ph.D.
REB Co-Chair
Did You Ever WONDER . . .

What does it mean to be in a MULTICULTURAL CHURCH?

Do we value diversity at T.P.C?

Are we respectful of cultural difference?

How are WE doing?

We are looking for volunteers
to participate in a half-day workshop
to discuss INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE
(Rev. Heather’s Doctoral Thesis Study)

On Saturday June 27, 2015 from 9:00-1:00

The workshop will involve a short questionnaire and group discussion.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older

Please contact the church office at admin@tpchurch.net
Or contact Rev. Heather at hvais@tpchurch.net
Appendix G: Phone Solicitation Recruitment Transcript

Hello ________________, I would like to invite you to participate in a project I am doing to help me with my Doctor of Ministry studies.

• As you know, over the past few years I have been studying at the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto in the Doctor of Ministry program.

• My area of research has been in multiculturalism in the church and learning more about intercultural competence in congregational settings.

• The nature of a Doctor of Ministry degree is to have a specific research interest in the context in which the student is serving.

• Over the last couple of decades Canada has become more and more multicultural, this is particularly true of the GTA, and the church is beginning to reflect those demographics. Thornhill Presbyterian Church is one such congregation that has become increasingly multicultural.

• I am particularly interested in exploring the multicultural aspects of Thornhill Presbyterian Church.

• It is important that we learn how to be a community of welcome and equality despite diversity.

• I would like to find out how interculturally competent we are at TPC.

• How well do we welcome the stranger?

• In order to conduct my research I will need to involve numerous people from the congregation and I am wondering if you would like to be a part of it.

• It will involve filling out a very brief questionnaire and meeting with a group of others on a Saturday morning.

• Your confidentiality will be strictly observed and you can withdraw at any time.

• I would like to gather all my information this summer.

• I will follow up this phone call with a letter describing the details of this project.

• Do you have any questions?

• Thank you for considering this request.
Appendix H: Recruitment Letter

Rev. Heather Vais
94 Calvin Chambers Rd.,
Thornhill ON
L4J 1E7

June, 2015

Dear

I am writing to you as a follow-up to our phone conversation regarding my Doctor of Ministry research project. Thank you for agreeing to be part of this study. As you know, over the past few years I have been studying at the Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto in the Doctor of Ministry program. My area of research has been in multiculturalism in the church. The nature of a Doctor of Ministry degree is to have a specific research interest in the context in which the student is serving. Over the last couple of decades Canada has become more and more multicultural, this is particularly true of the Greater Toronto Area and particularly Thornhill. Local churches are beginning to reflect those demographics. Thornhill Presbyterian Church is one such congregation that has become increasingly multicultural. The question that I have is “Are we managing our diversity well?” How interculturally competent are we? Is our congregation an open and welcoming place that is inclusive of all people despite difference? How do we see ourselves?

To gain some understanding of this topic I have arranged a Saturday morning gathering of 20 or 30 others from the church representing different cultures. The day will look like this:

9:00 – 9:30 Participants arrive – coffee, tea, hospitality.
9:30 – 9:45 Participants fill out a brief questionnaire
9:45 – 10:30 Welcome, explanation of purpose for gathering, introduction to intercultural competence and other information. Answer clarifying questions.
10:30 – 10:45 Coffee BREAK
10:45 – 11:45 Guided Focus and Feedback Group discussion and sharing
11:45 – noon BREAK
Noon – 12:30 Re-group into large group for feedback, check-in, comments
12:30 – 12:45 Re-do survey

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this project. I believe the results of my research will help us at Thornhill Presbyterian Church learn more about ourselves and how we can grow to serve Christ in the future.

In Christ,
Rev. Heather J. Vais
Appendix I: Focus Group Email

Email Transcript for Focus Group Time and Date Selection

Dear Participant Volunteer:

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my research study towards the completion of my Doctor of Ministry degree. It has been a long time in the works but it has all been worth it. As you know, my area of research interest has been multiculturalism in the church. More specifically, I have been keenly interested in a rather new phenomenon known as “Intercultural Competence”. That is a big term which basically means how well people communicate and extend welcome across cultural difference. While research is done in the education and business sectors, there has been no research done on the congregational level that deals with intercultural competence.

We know that TPC is a multicultural church – but are we interculturally competent? How well do we extend welcome to those different from us? Do we feel welcomed by others across cultural differences?

To learn more about how interculturally competent TPC is you will be involved in one of 4 Focus Groups. There will be approximately 32 people involved in this study representing at least 21 different cultural backgrounds at TPC. Some of you are first generation Canadians (born in another country but now living in Canada). Others are second generation Canadians (parents born in another country). And some are third generation or more Canadians.

Focus Group sessions will take place either on:

- Saturday February 20, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. OR from 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- OR Monday February 22nd from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The fourth group time is to be decided.

PLEASE look at the dates and email me back ONLY with the dates you absolutely CANNOT attend.

Once I have your responses I will make up the Focus Groups and let you know when your group will meet.

Please find attached a few documents for you to read: YOU DO NOT have to do anything with these documents at this time. I am sending them just to get you thinking. You will sign the consent form on the day of your Focus Group meeting, ONLY if you choose to participate.

1. A consent form that you will be asked to read and sign on the day of your Focus Group
2. A copy of the questions you will be discussing in your group.

I am deeply grateful to you all for your willingness to participate in this study.

If you have any questions please contact me.

Blessings
Appendix J: Focus Group Protocol: Observations about Intercultural Hospitality

Date:
Place:

Welcome and project description (freedom to withdraw without penalty)

Focus Group Questions:

1. Share with each other a bit about your cultural identity. (Where were your parents born? Where were you born? Do you speak different languages?)

2. Share and discuss how long you have been a part of Thornhill Presbyterian Church and what brought you to this church?

3. Discuss your experience of hospitality that made you want to stay?
4. Do you feel an equal part of this church community with others? Why or why not?

5. What experiences have you had that have made it difficult to feel welcome or fit in at TPC?

6. In what ways do you or do you not feel your cultural distinctiveness is acknowledged and celebrated at TPC?
7. In what ways do you reach out to others outside of your cultural group to make others feel welcome?

Do you have any further comments you would like to add?

Thank you for participating in this Focus Group. As you are aware I have recorded this discussion and will be transcribing it. If you wish to see a copy of the transcribed interview I will make that available to you. I want to remind you that this information is confidential and your identity will not be disclosed. All records will be stored in a locked cabinet only accessible only by me and destroyed following the approval of my thesis.
Appendix K: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form for members and adherents of Thornhill Presbyterian Church participating in the Doctor of Ministry research project of Heather Vais entitled Living Pentecost: What does the Deardorff Process Model of Intercultural Competence say about the intercultural competence of Thornhill Presbyterian Church.

I ___________________________ agree to participate in a group workshop conducted by Heather Vais for the purpose of doing research for her Doctor of Ministry research project.

I am aware that the purpose of the research is to learn how people of different cultures relate to one another at Thornhill Presbyterian Church.

I am aware that Heather Vais will be the only researcher involved in the study but will have members of the church help facilitate group discussion.

I understand that all information collected will be treated with confidentiality.

I understand the research will be conducted between June 27, 2015 and September 30, 2015 with a special information workshop on Saturday June 27th.

I understand that my name will not be used in any of the results of the research.

I understand that my participation in the project is completely voluntary and I will be able to withdraw from the project at any time prior to Heather Vais codifying and reporting the results.

I understand that I will be asked to fill out an anonymous questionnaire.

I am aware that there are no risks to me in this research and that the benefits may be in the form of a greater sense of congregational identity once the study is complete.

Name of Participant__________________

Signature of Participant ______________________

Date ___________________________ Day/month/year

Researcher /person taking the consent________________________

Date ___________________________ Day/month/year
Appendix L: Mutual Invitation

The Process:
In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:

The leader or a designated person will share first. After that person has spoken, he or she then invites another to share. Whom you invite does not need to be the person next to you. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share.

If you are not ready to share yet, say “I pass for now” and we will invite [you to share later on]. If you don’t want to say anything at all, simply say “pass” and proceed to invite another to share. We will do this until everyone has been invited.

We invite you to listen and not to respond to someone's sharing immediately. There will be time to respond and to ask clarifying questions after everyone has had an opportunity to share.

(from The Wolf Shall Dwell With the Lamb by Eric H. F. Law)
Appendix M: PowerPoint Presentation

Being Intercultural Church Community

Beyond Cordiality

Interpreting Practices of Mutual Hospitality
Toward Building
Interculturally Competent Community
at Thornhill Presbyterian Church

Why do we want to build IC church?

Biblical Imperative:
Tower of Babel and Pentecost

Some background . . .

City of Vaughan population – 316,000
50% of this growth from IMMIGRATION

Why do we want to build IC church?

Biblical Imperative:

• “And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to Minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, … these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer…for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.” (Isaiah 56:6-7)

• “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ… he is Lord of all” (Acts 10:34-36).
• only 48% of Thornhill residents claim English as their mother tongue.

• The remaining 52% of residents speak Korean, Hebrew, Farsi, Italian, Cantonese, Russian, Tagalog, Mandarin and others (meaning cultural differences)

The Canadian Reality

• In 1950 eighty percent of Canadians were of English or French descent

• By the turn of the 21st century there were more than 200 ethnic origins in Canada

• 50% of Canada’s population growth from immigration

• By 2025 ALL of Canada’s growth from immigration

T. P. C. reality

• Originally European Canadian (English, French, Dutch)

• 2015 – of 205 households, 99 are made up of first or second generation Canadians

We are Canadian but MORE!

• Korea, Malaysia, China, Italy, Japan, Indonesia, Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago, various islands in the Caribbean, the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland), The Netherlands, Hungary, Greece, Slovakia, South Africa, Cameroon, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Armenia, Lebanon, Guyana, India, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, United States and Jamaica.

Other churches in Thornhill

• A survey of other Protestant denominations in Thornhill reveals that FEW are as culturally diverse as TPC

The Question?

• What is happening at TPC that makes us unique?
• what does it mean to be respectful and inclusive church?
• What role does hospitality play in building multicultural community?
• how do practices of mutual hospitality develop intercultural competence in community?

Mutual Hospitality

“I understand hospitality as the practice of God’s welcome embodied in our actions as we reach across difference to participate with God in bringing justice and healing to our world in crisis.”
Letty Russell, Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference.

Mutual hospitality is the extension of welcome between individuals despite difference.

Re-visiting Guest / Host
Xenos = guest/stranger + HOST

Xenophobia – Fear of the stranger

Philoxenia
  – Love of the stranger
  = Hospitality

Intercultural Competence

• “appropriate and effective communication and behaviours in intercultural situations”

The purpose of Focus Groups

• To share our experiences of receiving “welcome” particularly as it is experienced across cultural difference at TPC.

• To share our experiences of extending welcome.
Appendix N: Map Of Fellowship Hall

- Tables
- Food Tables
- Juice Table and Kid’s Snacks
- Chairs
- Kitchen/Coffee Centre
- Stage Stairs
- Stage Ledge
## Appendix O: Observational Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COFFEE HOUR OBSERVATION</th>
<th>(length of observational activity – 60 minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Notes</td>
<td>Reflective Notes</td>
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Appendix P: Carl James’ Identity Diagram

This figure represents the interconnectedness of factors that contribute to an individual’s cultural or social identities which altogether contribute to lifestyle, behaviour patterns, worldview etc. Moving outward from the cultural identity circle, 1) Personal factors or characteristics are those intimately connected to an individual’s personal being; 2) Social psychological factors are interrelated to personal characteristics as well as 3) the Social structural factors that are shared by group members or members of the society. Through societal institutions socialization or learning takes place, cultural norms, values etc. are transmitted and informed, and behaviour patterns developed. Essentially, individuals’ lives are mediated by the social and cultural structures in which they are enmeshed. It is worth noting that spirituality, identified as a personal characteristic, refers to, in the words of the Dalai Lama, “those qualities of the human spirit—such as love and compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, a sense of responsibility, a sense of harmony—which bring happiness to both self and others.” And religion is “concerned with faith in the claims to salvation of one faith tradition or another, an aspect of which is acceptance of some form of metaphysical or supernatural reality, including perhaps an idea of heaven or nirvana. Connected with this are religious teachings or dogma, ritual, prayer, and so on” (cited in hooks, p. 178).