



# J2a

## multicultural church, intercultural habit

### Locating the Document

This short document is drawn from the longer paper “From *multicultural* to *intercultural*: Transforming Mission and Ministry” which was presented and discussed at Mission Council in May 2011.

### The intention of the Document and what it asks of Mission Council

- Seven years after our 2005 ‘multicultural church’ declaration it is timely that we reconsider and affirm where the declaration has moved us to.
- The changing context of mission/ministry, what it means to be ‘church’, and our need to deepen the ways we live justly and what it means to be an inclusive church demand this.
- This document seeks Mission Council’s endorsement to reframe our aspirations and give renewed/refocused direction to ways of living out these aspirations.
- Hence, the newly named focus: “multicultural church, intercultural habit” to underscore this dynamic and ongoing journey

### The implications

- The document locates the developing nature of RJMM as integral to vision2020.
- It is mindful of the need for collaborative work across the church and towards project oriented (short-term) initiatives, working with synods, local congregations and our resource centres for learning to enable the aspirations to take stronger rooting.
- This renewed theme will allow for greater focus shaped by contextual realities, passion/energy and available resources (internally and externally) in developing transforming partnerships:
  - it will be time-based, will be funded in partnership, geared towards local/synod ownership, take a variety of shapes and will be measurable.
  - there will be a strong emphasis on church-growth, evangelism, justice, identity and spirituality.
- As a bonus: the deepening of “an intercultural habit” will also contribute to how we hold our theological and other diversities together in one house with many connecting rooms.

## *multicultural church, intercultural habit*

We are all cultural beings. Cultural influences largely shape everything we do. By culture we mean all that shapes the whole of our life. Our understanding and experiences of God and our faith are shaped by the interweaving and dynamic nature of culture(s). We respond to the invitation of God in Christ as people situated in context(s). Hence, our view will always be partial and limited by our cultural influences. Together, however, we are better placed to catch a larger and generous view of God and God's purpose for us. This is why it is imperative that we work towards creating *intercultural spaces* and model *intercultural habits* to deepen our life together. The story of God taking on human form in a Palestinian Jewish cultural being/context through Jesus, that then moves outwards through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit into a variety of neighbouring cultural contexts, affirms both cultural diversity and the calling to an intercultural habit, as a way to live out "fullness of life" as an ecclesial community of the Spirit.

An intercultural church is premised on the abundant generosity of God made real through Jesus Christ. In modelling a habit of generous lives...

1. we will be open, trusting and joyful to the leading of God's Spirit
  - [Vision Statement 1 *Spirituality and Prayer*] [Acts 2:5-11; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18]
2. we commit ourselves to deepening our discerning and re-reading of our biblical and theological bases for our intercultural life together
  - [Vision Statement 1 *Spirituality & Prayer*; Statement 2 *Identity*; Statement 6 *Evangelism*] [Isaiah 56:6-8; Isaiah 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-7; Ruth; Matthew 1.1-17; Acts 10]
3. we will affirm new and different experiences, recognizing a variety of expressions of the one faith
  - [Vision Statement 5 *Hospitality & Diversity*; Statement 3 *Christian Ecumenical Partnerships*] [Genesis 1:26; Psalm 133:1; Matthew 28:19; John 17:11, 23; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27; Galatians 3:27-29]
4. we will journey beyond our cultural comfort zones and boundaries
  - [Statement 8 *Global Partnerships* & Statement 4 *Community Partnerships*] [Jonah; Matthew 15: 21-28; 28:19-20; Mark 7:24-30; Genesis 28:10-19; Acts 8: 26-40]

5. we will seek to become an enlarged, inclusive, welcoming, and justice-seeking community
  - [Vision Statement 2 *Identity*; Statement 9 *Justice and Peace* & Statement 10 *Integrity of Creation*] [Psalm 148; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:3-5; Revelation 7:9; Micah 6:8]
6. we will engage in transformation of heart, mind, structure and policy, seeking habits that redress power imbalances, challenge systemic injustice, generously cultivate diverse leadership, and seek full participation of all
  - [Vision Statement 7 *Church Growth* & Statement 9 *Justice and Peace*] [Luke 19:1-10; John 10:10; Acts 10:34; Romans 12: 1-2; Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 8:27-33? Luke 1:46-55; Luke 4:16-30; Romans 16: 1-16]
7. we will work intentionally towards mutuality in giving and sharing for all of us are in need and all must be inconvenienced for the sake of the other and the gospel.
  - [Vision Statement 1 *Spirituality & Prayer*, Statement 5 *Hospitality & Diversity* & Statement 9 *Justice & Peace*] [Luke 7:18-23; Luke 10:25-37; John 4:1-39]
8. we commit ourselves to the constant habit of self-examination, life-long learning, and reflection through on-going education, training, monitoring and evaluation of our intercultural engagement.
  - [Vision Statement 1 *Spirituality & Prayer*; Statement 2 *Identity*; Statement 7 *Church Growth* & Statement 9 *Justice & Peace*] [I Corinthians 9:1-33; 2Corinthians 5:16-20; Philippians 3:12-16]

Mission Committee /RJMM  
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