

The Missional Leadership Team (MLT) seeks direction from delegates regarding how to focus our energies in the next year or two with our intercultural efforts. We will seek feedback in our March 2021 regional gatherings, and then update this document with that counsel for our June 2021 Annual Sessions. Do you support these ideas? Some that we should not pursue? Others to be added? Which are urgent?

Growing Our Intercultural Witness

We are a community of congregations
Centered on Jesus
Guided by the Holy Spirit
Acting through Grace, Love and Peace
Engaging the world God loves

“Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. This simple confession unites the church across cultural, national, racial, denominational and every other human-made boundary that separates people from each other” ([Renewing a Vision](#) (RaV)). Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference (IMMC) desires to grow in intercultural relationships and practices that embody racial justice for all people. We are committed to developing an antiracist culture. We strive to effectively and appropriately engage with others across differences.

As IMMC congregations live into RaV, we hope for and anticipate the following:

- Congregations will strengthen their relationships with each other to foster greater affection, understanding, and mutual sharing.
- Conference activities will equip congregations to be spiritually and biblically grounded, led by Spirit-filled leaders, and telling stories and celebrating God-with us.
- Each congregation and its members will grow in capacity for God-centered worship, Christ-like love, and reaching out to their neighbors in Spirit-led witness and service.

We acknowledge that all people are not exactly the same. We commit to own and celebrate our cultural differences as we seek to be transformed through the relationships we build across cultures. The following activities may help us live into the “RaV hopes” while strengthening our intercultural relationships and witness.

Focus Area 1: Ongoing Listening and Learning

- Create a listening team to hear congregational stories of cultural differences & racism.
- Interview congregational leaders of color to hear more about their experience of/desire for/frustration with conference events and structures.

Focus Area 2: Education for Transformation

- Have conference leadership teams complete the Intercultural Development Inventory.
- Aim to have 50% of our congregations complete Widerstand curriculum, a book study, or other efforts to strengthen their intercultural growth.

Focus Area 3: Restructuring for Change

- Establish a new conference-based Intercultural Leadership Team to help lead efforts in the four focus areas, or a task group to do this.
- Perform a “cultural audit” of our conference organization to learn how “white supremacy culture” pervades our organizational structures.

Focus Area 4: Building and Supporting Congregational Capacity

- Provide language translation of key materials and at conference gatherings. Worship in different languages.
- Identify a group of pastors/leaders who could preach on intercultural issues.

- Find ways for congregations of color, or at least their leadership, to connect with each other for resourcing and caucusing.
- Identify/develop worship resources (maybe a series) on intercultural awareness/growth.

“We believe that the church is called to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God... The church today is also called to witness to people of every culture, ethnicity, or nationality... Christians are strangers and aliens within all cultures. Yet the church itself is God’s nation, encompassing people who have come from every tribe and nation. Indeed, its mission is to reconcile differing groups, creating one new humanity and providing a preview of that day when all the nations shall stream to the mountain of the Lord and be at peace.” (excerpt from [*Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*](#), Article 10)

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