

CULTURAL VIBRANCY



The **Book of Discipline** states that “The purpose of the Annual Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.”

Our **baptismal vows** ask us if we “accept the freedom and power God gives [us] to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?”

The Michigan Conference vision seeks to “equip and connect through Christ-centered mission & ministry, bold & effective leaders, and vibrant congregations.”

Creating a **Cultural Vibrancy Plan** for our conference is not only in line with the mission and vision of our denomination and conference or our vows in baptism and membership but is most importantly our call to uphold and serve as a living witness to the Gospel!

Exploring new opportunities.

Key Steps:

- Administer IDI assessments and organize people into Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism trainings
- Consult, strategize, and offer resources based on results
- Encourage mentorship opportunities, coaching, learning communities

2022 Goal: 25% of the conference congregations are engaged in “Intercultural Competency” / “Anti-Bias and Anti-Racism” assessment and have begun implementation.

- **2019 Benchmark:** *To have six IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) facilitators who are working with two congregations each.*
- **2019 Benchmark:** *Facilitators have administered the IDI with conference staff and key conference decision making groups.*

Resources Include:

- Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Assessment and Followup
- Implicit Bias Workshops
- Critical Conversations
- Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist Workshops
- Trauma Training
- Truth and Racial Healing Circles
- Learning Communities /Accountability Groups
- Family Systems Theory
- Coaching
- Podcasts
- Vital Conversations Series
- Book Studies
- Videos

Tools & Resources:

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a self-assessment tool used for personal development and change while Crossroads Training (Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism or ABAR) involves the systematic analysis and power dynamics needed to create institutional change. These two tools are not exhaustive of one another but work in tandem together to help identify particular reference points used to provide additional tools and resources for further growth and learning.

Cultural Proficiency as Discipleship Pathway:

The entirety of this plan is not designed to be a linear set of programs that has a specific start or finish, rather it seeks to be a cultural practice of a discipleship pathway that integrates culture, faith development, and discipleship. This process includes not only conference leadership and various boards and committees, but clergy and laity in the local church, and affiliated organizations as well. The tools used in this strategy are not only to help identify particular growth points within an individual/team, but to help move people toward an anti-biased/anti-racist identity that seeks to diversify worship experiences and leadership as a collective whole.

Opportunities for Coaching:

In addition to the training, assessments, and resources we will be exploring a coaching component to be offered for an individual or team level. Coaching is a co-creative partnership in which a coach supports and accompanies a coachee as to uncover the idea, thought, or belief that holds everything in a stuck place. Using questions, a coach and coachee enter into a process which assists the coachee in discovering limiting beliefs, assumptions, and/or expectations they hold. Through exploring new ways of thinking about the situation(s) and developing a plan to apply insights, a coachee works towards achieving their desired outcomes and goals. Unlike counseling, spiritual direction, mentoring, teaching, or consulting, coaching challenges the coachee to think differently and discover a new perspective which, in turn, invites and initiates movement toward action.

Ready to take the next step?

Contact Rev. Brittney Stephan, Associate Director for Multi-Cultural Vibrancy, to discuss how our Michigan Conference Cultural Vibrancy Team can work with you and your ministry setting to move toward a more vibrant, effective, and healthy ministry.

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