

# 12 Considerations for Multicultural Church

By Melanie Stone

As the world continues to develop, more countries are experiencing an increase in cross-cultural advancement. Some diversity comes from generations of manifold races within the country, and some diversity comes from people relocating into a country from another nation. There is an appreciation of the beauty in the mosaic of differences within a country – differences in cultures, perspectives, ideas, experiences, appearances, and such. Not everyone within a country embraces diversity or change, which can cause destructive problems for the people of that society; but a nation is enhanced when it adapts to social transformation.

There are churches that desire to assimilate various races and nationalities to be a reflection of their community. *To integrate people of another race or culture, a church needs to be authentic in their motives, intentional in their approach, and committed to their purpose.* The following are twelve areas that churches can consider adapting to become a multicultural church.

## 1. Church Vision

A multicultural church has principles of diversity included in the church vision, causing core values for variance to be embraced and implemented in every aspect of the church. The pastor and church leaders must publicly support and commit to a multicultural vision if it will gather strength and retain longevity.

## 2. Leadership

If you want diversity in your congregation, you need to have diversity in your church leadership. Your leadership should be a team of people who can connect with your congregation to help serve their needs. When you have diversity in leadership, it will communicate that you value variance. It also demonstrates that there is understanding for another culture's needs, concerns, and perspectives.

You don't want to place someone in leadership based solely on their race, but if a multi-cultural church is your desire, ask God for qualified men and women of diversity for your team. In addition, bring in guest ministers of diversity to influence your congregation, men and women that can be given opportunity to express their gifts and be who they are.

## 3. The Message

The platform is a place where the message of diversity should be shared from an honest heart. The Word of God has much to say about equality, unity, and love. The Word of God can also challenge people to make changes in any thinking that is narrow-minded, inspiring men and women in their personal growth.

**4. Worship**

To reach a wide variety of ethnicity, a church must be willing to integrate assorted worship styles. While not every person of diversity favors a particular music style, there might be occasion where expanding worship expression could help to include certain people groups.

It is also beneficial to include diversity in the worshippers on the platform. If the congregation is a mixture of nationalities or races, then having a team of various backgrounds could help people to relate to someone leading them in worship expression.

**5. Children and Youth**

Parents will generally seek for a church where their children's needs are met above their own. If a church has a tremendous strategy for reaching multicultural adults, but neglect ministry to multicultural children and youth, their efforts will be diminished. A pivotal aspect of developing a multicultural church is focusing on communicating the desire for diversity directly to the children and youth. The message of love and acceptance is greatly displayed when we welcome children of different cultures to interact with one another.

**6. Church Location**

If a church wants to be multicultural, the location of the meeting place should be in a diverse community. Locating in the area you are in will not only make it convenient for people to attend your church, but it also sends a message that you want to serve and meet the needs of the community you have chosen. If your church is not in a diverse community, consider starting a campus or small group ministry in the area you want to reach.

**7. Media**

The visual imagery that we choose for our communication sends a message to the people who see it. If you want to have a multicultural church, be intentional to make your designs multicultural. When people see the diversity in your promotions, it helps them to feel that they can belong with this group of believers.

**8. Communication**

Your church may want to reach out to a group of people that speak a different language. There is technology to help bring a solution to translation, both audibly and visually. Also, even if speaking in your primary language, educate yourself on words or phrases that might have different meanings between various cultures so that you don't cause miscommunication or offense.

**9. Lifestyle**

When we reach out to people from different cultures, our aim is to love them for who they are, not try to change them to be like we are. Educate yourself and embrace varying cultural lifestyles. Keep the influence of other cultures in mind in the food you serve, the way the church is decorated, the way you dress, etc. Acceptance is demonstrated in many ways.

**10. Fellowship**

Church is about people. Honest relationships are vital to any church. If you value the people you are doing ministry with, there is an attitude of respect for someone you consider as your equal. Treat people as your partners, not as your recipients. Also watch that you are not showing partiality to someone who is like you.

**11. Outreach**

What you value is what you give to. If you value people in your community, invest in that community. Give money, resources, time, training, etc. Show people that you are reaching out to help them, not to benefit from them.

**12. International Missions**

If we really love all people, we will show it by going beyond our borders – the borders in our city and the borders of our country. It is an honor to be able to connect with ministries in other countries, not with an attitude of superiority, but with an attitude of respect for the work that they do. When our heart is global, it demonstrates our love for all people. Involve people in giving and praying for people in other nations. Offer opportunities to go on mission trips and share those experiences with your congregation.

Diversity is God's idea, designing us as unique individuals and blending us together in unity. Any pure desire that we have for a multicultural church ultimately comes from the heart of our Creator. These twelve points are practical methods to consider for a church that wants to be multicultural; however, they will only be as effective as the authenticity of the people who are seeking the diversity.