

MULTI-
CULTURAL
VISION:
FROM
DIVERSITY
TO UNITY
TO → A
BELOVED
COMMUNITY



National
Community
Church

TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT BEGAN IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST. What made it revolutionary? Among other things, it was multicultural. The Holy Spirit broke down cultural barriers, creating a diverse community defined by unity. On the day the church was born, at least fifteen ethnicities, fifteen languages were represented. That is our history, and that is our vision. The book of Revelation gives us a glimpse of heaven: “A great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, was standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.” The destiny of the Church is multicultural unity.

That vision is not yet our current reality. We live in a broken, fallen world. The sin of racism has manifested itself in many forms throughout human history. We lament the pain and suffering caused by individual and systemic racism, and as the church of Jesus Christ, we are called to be ambassadors of reconciliation.

The Gospel is grace and truth, justice and mercy. We’re called to stand in the gap for the oppressed and the marginalized. If we are humble enough to repent of racism and bold enough to believe for reconciliation, God will shake generational sins and break generational curses. We believe that reconciliation, made possible through the cross of Christ, sets the stage for healing to happen. Virtue signaling, public shaming, and tokenism won’t get us where we need to go. Reconciliation begins with radical repentance and finds expression through restorative justice.

“There was a time,” said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “when the church was very powerful, in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and

principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.”

We are here for such a time as this.

We are here for such a place as this.

“There is **one body, one spirit, one hope**. There is **one Lord, one faith, one baptism**. There is **one God** and **Father of all**, who is OVER ALL and IN ALL and THROUGH ALL.” And that makes us—Black and White, Asian and Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander—that makes us brothers and sisters.

So what do we do now? We do the hard work. We listen. We learn. We lament. We take a posture of humility, recognizing that the experience of our brothers and sisters is not our own. Perhaps I have something to learn of them. We bear each other’s burdens. We hold up each other’s arms in prayer and active solidarity. We give space for processing, for forgiving, for healing.

We are both on a journey and have been for many years. We dream of the day when we are all celebrated for who we are, in all of our multicultural uniqueness. So we invite everyone, no matter where you are on your own journey, to put pride and prejudice on the altar. Surrender to the process. Play the long game.

- Ask anything
- Listen well
- Disagree freely
- Love Regardless!



Pastor Mark & Lora



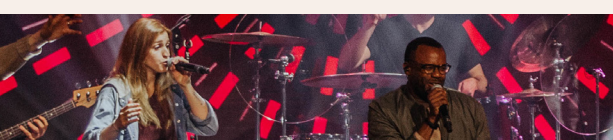
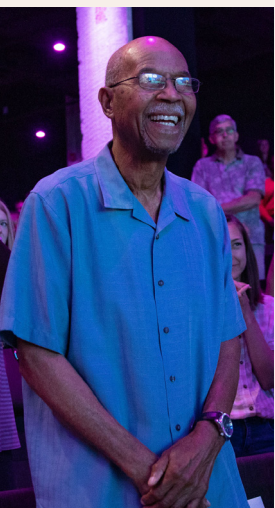


OUR RESOLVE

We are dedicated to becoming a racially and culturally unified church, **valuing everyone without exception**. With faith, a commitment to peacemaking, and strategic partnerships we pursue God's heart for reconciliation. Any form of racism, individual or systemic, breaks the heart of God and should break the heart of the Church.

As followers of Christ who are called to embody His kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven, we are reminded of the prophetic picture that the scriptures paint of every nation, tribe, people, and language gathered around His throne (Revelation 7:9). We strive, in these days, to experience that same unity and love, knowing that in Christ alone we are reconciled to God and to one another (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). It is that message of hope that gives us the strength to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly (Micah 6:8).

We seek to align our resolve by continuing to establish a multicultural vision that moves the church **from a diverse gathering of people, to a unified congregation, to a beloved community**.



OUR HISTORY

8 minutes, 46 seconds.

Our nation watched in horror as a knee was pressed on George Floyd's neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds in May of 2020, his body drained of life as officers held back concerned onlookers. What has been experienced and seen for generations by African Americans was made plain to all: racism is not only historical fact but present reality.

Anger, lament, prayer, and repentance led NCC leadership to establish a Multicultural Team to surgically evaluate, design, and implement a vision to move the church from diversity to unity to becoming a beloved community where people of all nations, tongues, tribes, and languages belong together.

- **Building from the Past** - Reflecting an increasingly diverse congregation over the past 24 years of National Community Church's history, we are building off many years of pursuing God's heart for reconciliation:
 - SE Whitehouse & Dream Center - Since 1996, NCCers have been serving and joining the vision set out by Scott Dimock and Sami Morrison, a white teacher and black police officer who sought to be an example of healing, restoration, and action in Southeast DC through many programs such as tutoring, mentoring, and reconciliation lunches.
 - Bridge-Building Small Groups - Since 2013, NCC has offered small groups addressing issues of race. In Fall 2020, we launched 28 groups through Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Reconciliation.
 - Big "C" Church unity - For five years, over 75 pastors in the DMV across racial and ethnic lines have been meeting quarterly to foster trust through prayer, breaking bread, and honest dialogue and partnerships together.
 - Addressing Systemic Issues - Through A1:8 Missions, NCC has been addressing issues affecting marginalized communities in areas of homelessness, affordable housing, the criminal justice system, child poverty, peacemaking, and community development.
 - Listen + Learn - Launched in 2016, Listen + Learn was started to humanize an issues through the sharing of personal stories, from prison reform and returning citizens, to refugees, to most recently in July 2020, a four-part series on seeking to understand systemic racism hosted by Pastor Mark and Lora Batterson.
- **Consulting** - NCC has hired a trusted external consultant team. The consulting team brings a wide range of national experience and will assist with training, facilitation and standardizing new perspectives and processes. The Multicultural Team and consultants represent and value a range of ethnic, racial, gender, and generational voices.

OUR 2020-2021 PROCESS

In 2020 and 2021 National Community Church will engage in a process that nurtures solidarity across racial and cultural lines of division and pursues the love of neighbors who are least like ourselves. Three initiatives have been designed to promote a responsive discipleship reflecting Jesus' announcement of good news to the poor, freedom for the captives, and liberty for the oppressed. We will embody Jesus' charge through the following initiatives:

INITIATIVE 1: AWARENESS & LEARNING IN COMMUNITY

We will continue to focus on Awareness & Learning in Community through:

- Small groups (Be the Bridge and other racial unity and healing efforts)
- Listen + Learn: storytelling events giving the platform to someone who lived the story, in order to bring people to empathy and shift perspectives
- Congregational teaching, sermons, and discipleship opportunities
- Community engagement partnerships to listen to the beauty and goodness of communities first, then discovering needs and impoverishment in ourselves

INITIATIVE 2: TRAINING - STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & PARTNERSHIPS

In partnership with the [BridgeLeader Network](#), we will provide training opportunities for our Executive Leadership Team and staff to increase our multicultural effectiveness. Our focus will be to address the problems of racial differences and create strategies that will help with a path forward. *Training will take place over the course of the next 6-12 months.*

INITIATIVE 3: ORGANIZATIONAL & CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Utilizing our current strategic planning process (StratOp) we will build organizational and congregational capacity and competence. We will accomplish this through:

- Building internal systems (Volunteer & Team Training, Human Resource Processes)
- Embedding multicultural expression in departmental objectives and measurable goals and evaluation
- Our mission's engagement will continue to focus on neighborhood impact, particularly marginalized communities, through justice, compassion, and peacemaking

We will plan to provide a more in depth breakdown of each initiative by early January.



Share your feedback and ideas at

ncc.re/MCT



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NOVEMBER 11, 2020