

Church of All Nations: Discipling for Outreach (www.CANDO.org)

Our Vision:

- ◆ At Pentecost, a multicultural, multilingual, multinational gathering of people witnessed to the mighty acts of God. Likewise, the kingdom of God is a place where a great multitude from every nation, tribe, and tongue will stand before the throne of the Lamb shouting, "Salvation belongs to our God!" The church is the provisional reality of the inbreaking of God's reign between Pentecost and the coming kingdom, between "the already and not yet".
- ◆ While we recognize the continuing role of the mono-ethnic church in advancing the heavenly kingdom, we also affirm the increasing need for multicultural churches in an increasingly multicultural society to offer hope of racial/cultural reconciliation and healing by living out the gospel of peace. We envision a day when, in the context of a local congregation, each culture can be affirmed as a gift from God, and each culture challenged of inherent idolatries by a beloved community speaking the truth in love.
- ◆ We proclaim that in Christ, there is no Jew or Greek, male or female, poor or rich, black or white, new or old immigrants, Catholic or Protestant, for Christ has torn down all human barriers through the power of the cross.
- ◆ In the increasingly multicultural context that is North America, we dare not limit the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to one race, one class, or one culture.

Our Identity:

- ◆ We are a high-risk, low-anxiety church because our hope is in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ We are committed to being honest, transparent and vulnerable with one another, just as Jesus modeled for us.
- ◆ We are committed equally to sound Biblical teaching, to genuine personal transformation, and to sweeping social justice.
- ◆ We are committed to an ecumenical expression of Christian worship rooted in the early church that is equally rational, sacramental and pentecostal, and to being a church that embraces a global, multi-epistemological future.
- ◆ We are a penitently Presbyterian congregation, appreciative of the many gifts that this tradition has offered to the larger church and to the world, but mindful that denominationalism announces to the world the sectarianism, brokenness and disobedience of the body of Christ.

Our Mission:

- To be a house of prayer for all nations -Mark 11:17
- To make disciples of all nations -Matthew 28:19
- To bring healing to all nations -Revelation 22:2
- To be a witness to all nations -Acts 1:8
- To be a light to all nations -Isaiah 42:6
- To be a blessing to all nations -Genesis 22:18
- To bring renewal to all nations -Colossians 3:10-11

...that we may be a church for others, a church of all nations

Our Ministry:

- To be a church marked principally by love, as we love God and love our neighbors as ourselves.
- To strengthen the bonds of marriage and family as God intended from the beginning, and to honor the baptismal covenant of caring for one another as the body of Christ.
- To be a priesthood of all believers, every one of us testifying to our faith, serving God, and ministering to the poor, the hungry, the infirm, the lonely, the oppressed and the marginalized.
- To empower, equip and encourage believers to serve God faithfully in increasingly complex cultural and ecclesiastical contexts, transitioning the church from institutional preservation to missional purpose in obedience to Jesus Christ, who sent the church into the world for the salvation of humankind.
- To do the ministry of reconciliation, locally and globally, in the church and in the world.
- To promote visible unity among all Christian denominations, and to live into our calling as Christ's church to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic.
- To glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

Our History:

On January 4, 2004 a group of second generation Korean-Americans and a handful of blacks, whites and non-Korean Asians in a historically Korean immigrant church in Minneapolis was blessed by our "mother church" to launch a multicultural community called Church of All Nations. Pastor Jin S. Kim was installed as the organizing pastor. We were chartered with great fanfare – leaders representing every level of our denomination, covered on the front page of the newspaper, congrats from politicians, even featured in two PCUSA videos. No one knew if 100 mostly young Korean-Americans could actually become a Church of All Nations; many thought the name was a bit premature, if not presumptuous. A promising sign was when our congregation received the PCUSA Walton Award for "outstanding new church development" in 2005.

Today, our attendance is consistently over 200, and we are now 38% Asian, 38% white, 20% black, and 4% other. We are one of a handful of congregations in the US with no ethnic majority. Inside each of these categories are many cultural groups (Korean, Vietnamese, Hmong, Filipino, African American, Liberian, Kenyan, South African, Sudanese, Northern and Eastern European). But we actually have even more denominational diversity than ethnic diversity, and draw as many Catholics, Episcopalians and Lutherans as we do Pentecostals, Baptists and Evangelical Free.

Our highly visible commitment to ecumenical unity may be one reason why the vast majority of our new members have no Presbyterian background. We have people from very conservative Northwestern College in St. Paul (where Billy Graham once served as president), to United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, one of the most liberal seminaries in the country. We also draw equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats, and we address politics, racism, the economy, war and peace head on.

Our central mission is to do the ministry of reconciliation, and it is happening in all kinds of wonderful ways here. For instance, in January of 2006 we moved from our "mother church" to a declining white PCUSA congregation (Grace/Shiloh-Bethany Church) who had plenty of space. We rented for a few months, but then Grace Church asked if they might merge with us. At the end of July they had a congregational dissolution after being founded in 1884, and all of their members became members of Church of All Nations, handing us the keys and the title to the building.



Incidentally, 1884 is the year that PCUSA missionaries first arrived on the shores of Korea. So we came full circle, historically speaking. Not one Grace member left after the merger – praise God! One of the key reasons for this union was that Grace members recognized that Church of All Nations is a multicultural community, and the surrounding population had been increasingly multicultural for years. Therefore it made sense for Grace to merge with a multicultural congregation in order to more effectively reach an increasingly diverse population.

We witness many signs of growth in our midst, but the most important thing is that people are filled with joy, hope and genuine love for each other across all kinds of lines, crossing barriers erected by both church and society, history and culture. In May we launched our building renovation campaign on the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the current building. For decades now, Grace Church members have prayed that their sanctuary would be full again, and that the building would be restored to its original condition. Who knew that God would answer the prayers of this typical, small white church through a young, multicultural church? Who knew that a brand new congregation would own a beautiful, sizable building overlooking a gorgeous lake debt-free within three years of its existence?

We live in the time between the “already” and “not yet”. Our church also sees itself between Pentecost in Acts 2 and the coming kingdom in Rev. 7, when all nations, tribes and tongues will glorify God together in one voice. We feel called to be an ecumenical church that embodies the major spiritual roots of the early church – to be simultaneously Rational, Sacramental and Pentecostal. We are also convinced that only intentional movement away from rigid denominationalism toward visible unity will lead the global church to recover its identity as one, holy, catholic and apostolic. We are a high-risk, low-anxiety church where anything is possible, including the possibility of failure. The only poverty we fear is the poverty of imagination. We feel so blessed with God’s abundance and grace. With humans, this is impossible. Thanks be to God who makes all things possible!

Our Prehistory:

The Church of All Nations emerged from the Korean Presbyterian Church of Minnesota (KPCM) in January of 2004. KPCM itself was established on Jan. 1, 1991, a merger of two Korean Presbyterian congregations. KPCM’s roots, however, can be traced back to 1955 when 42 Korean graduate students at the University of Minnesota organized a Bible study group at Bethany Presbyterian Church (today, Stadium Village Church). This group steadily grew and became a community that not only provided for spiritual needs, but also functioned at times as the center of Korean cultural activity in the Twin Cities.

An effort to start a makeshift English Ministry was led by English speaking leaders of the Korean Presbyterian Church of the Twin Cities. Starting in 1983, the Sunday School and worship services were both conducted in English.

On June 1, 1999, Pastor Jin S. Kim of the Korean Community Presbyterian Church of Atlanta was called as Associate Pastor at KPCM. The growing cultural diversity of the English Ministry led our congregation to wonder about the rationale for continuing as a Korean immigrant based church. Pastor Jin cast the vision and provided the theological foundation for the multicultural, ecumenical church that would be launched in 2004.

“The church is the church only when it exists for others.”
-Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 1945