

UNITY AND DIVERSITY:
HOW A BILINGUAL-MULTICULTURAL CONGREGATION
REFLECTS THE NATURE OF THE TRINITY IN UNITY AND DIVERSITY

by

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ABSTRACT

Unity and Diversity: How a Bilingual-Multicultural Congregation Reflects the Nature of the Trinity in Unity and Diversity

By

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This project used the lenses of adaptive change, transculturation, church size theory, love the stranger, led by the Spirit, unity and diversity in God's family, *imago Trinitatis*, and *missio Dei* to study how action research interventions might affect a culturally diverse congregation. It was found that understanding culture is complicated, homogeneous units typically stay apart but do come together, crossing boundaries of homogeneity is difficult, ongoing education helps for transculturation, transculturation comes mostly through conversation, and people can experience Trinitarian equality through transculturation. In short, the Common Culture of a Community is Cultivated in its Context through Conversation and Communion.

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ALC	Augustana Lutheran Church
AR	Action Research
ELCA	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
DMin	Doctor of Ministry
ECHO	Ecumenical Community for Helping Others
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English for Those Who Speak Other Languages
IBM SPSS	International Business Machines Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LCA	Lutheran Church in America
MDCS	Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Congregation

The congregation studied in this research is one of two congregations of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod (MDCS) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) offering weekly worship in both English and Spanish languages. This congregation will be referred to as St. Luke's, a pseudonym, throughout this paper. Its nature as a bilingual-multicultural congregation makes it an interesting place for a research project around Trinitarian identity. My time with the congregation began in 2012 when I was called to serve as senior pastor. This research was conducted from 2017-2018.

There were four pastors on staff with only one who spoke Spanish when I was called to the congregation in 2012. The congregation was numerically a program church, with an average worship attendance of around 350 persons, but it functioned in a pastoral church model, which typically would have 50-150 active members.¹ A pastoral church is organized around the pastor. A program church is organized around its ministry teams or committees; the pastor's primary role in this model is to support these teams. In 2012, St. Luke's was organized in the pastoral church model with a pastor being at the center of most programmatic ministry. The roles of each of the four pastors could be labeled as

¹ Arlin J. Rothauge, *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry* (New York: Produced for the Education for Mission and Ministry Office by Seabury Professional Services, 1982).

“executive and worship,” “visitation and adult education,” “youth and youth education,” and “Spanish ministry.” The Spanish service was a ministry of St. Luke’s and functioned like an independent congregation with little overlap. The congregation, both through the process of calling me as its senior pastor and then through a series of focus groups after I arrived, expressed a desire to integrate its Spanish-speaking and English-speaking communities.

From 2013-2014 there was a complete turnover in pastoral and office staff with only me, the senior pastor, remaining. It was decided by St. Luke’s leadership that the congregation could not sustain the compensation requirements of three full-time and one half-time pastor; therefore, instead of simply replacing the departed pastors, a restructuring of the pastoral team and support staff began. The congregation’s leadership paraphrased a portion of its newly crafted vision statement² as it set out to re-staff saying, “One staff for one parish.”³ A new associate pastor, a native Spanish-speaker, was called not as the congregation’s “Spanish pastor” but to be a pastor for the whole parish. A receptionist who was fluent in both English and Spanish was also hired. A director of youth ministries who would work to bring the youth of the whole congregation together was added one year later. The numerically program church then had a program church staff dedicated to leading the whole congregation.

² *Vision*: Called by God into local, national, and global community, St. Luke’s is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home. ~ *Mission*: Founded in faith, growing in grace, we are called to love and serve God, one another, and the world.

³ A parish is traditionally understood as a church serving a specific geographical location, such as a Roman Catholic parish. In the ELCA model constitution for congregations, a parish is defined as a partnership of multiple congregations. St. Luke’s may be thought of as a parish in both ways: it is located in one geographical location and it has worshipping communities in English and Spanish.

Some leaders recognized that becoming one parish would require more than staff changes. It would require a change in the congregation's culture. This focus, however, was on the English-Spanish dynamic and not the pastoral-program models. The vision statement adopted in 2014 was closely linked to John 14 where Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many rooms. . . I go to prepare a place for you."⁴ Leadership saw a connection between the Father's house and a typical human dwelling. The goal was for the congregation to embody unity and diversity similar to how this is done in a typical home, where residents express themselves as a community in certain spaces and as individuals in others. This was seen as a consistent vision in John 14, in our homes, and in our congregation. Leadership saw the importance of creating space for the whole community to come together as one people of God.

The vision for one parish with many cultural voices is to maintain individual sacred spaces where we celebrate our diversity while simultaneously creating additional spaces to express our unity in diverse ways. The 2013 focus group conversations suggested that the best ways to become integrated were fellowship, social outreach, and Christian education (among the youth who speak mostly English). The Sunday morning worship and education schedule was changed in the fall of 2017 to allow one Sunday school program to be held between English and Spanish services.

Research Topic and Question

Transitioning from what was effectively two pastoral church congregations, each with a different language, into one program church parish is an ongoing adaptive

⁴ All Bible passages are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

challenge,⁵ one for which the congregation does not already have the proverbial tools in the toolbox but must rely on experimentation and new approaches. This thesis recounts a series of interventions in the life of the congregation and analyzes their impact on how the people as a whole and as individuals understand their identity as one parish with many cultural voices. This was developed using the theological concept of the perichoretic⁶ *imago Trinitatis*.⁷ Our Triune God is one God in three persons, three persons in one God. Within the Trinity we find a society of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity comes with their own gifts and personality. Each is unique and loved by the others in a communion of mutual love and respect. This God created all people in God's own image and invites humanity to participate in this perichoretic communion.

The question I explored in this research project was:

How might action research⁸ interventions clarify a bilingual-multicultural congregation's identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity?

The population was the entire St. Luke's parish. The independent variables were a series of interventions that included a variety of faith practices designed to provide opportunities to both experience and reflect on unity and diversity as both experience and

⁵ Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

⁶ Theologian Leonardo Boff defines perichoresis as the "cohabitation, co-existence, interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another... a complete circulation of life and a perfect coequality between the Persons, without any anteriority or superiority of one over another." Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*, Theology and Liberation Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988). 93.

⁷ Translated as "Image of the Trinity."

⁸ Action Research will be explained in detail later. In short, it is when a researcher seeks to facilitate change in an organization by intervening with one or more actions. The results of these are studied for impact and reported for the benefit of the larger community.

theology. The dependent variables were the impact of these interventions on individual members of the parish and on the parish as a whole. The primary intervening variables for participants included age, race, education, duration of membership at St. Luke's, and previous participation in multicultural activities at St. Luke's. The primary intervening variables upon the interventions included language barriers and issues around translation, the newness of the worship and education schedule, and unavoidable scheduling conflicts.

Importance for My Congregation, the Larger Church, and Me

The importance of this research for the congregation is clear. Can a bilingual-multicultural congregation, like St. Luke's, live into its vision statement to be one parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home? Can it understand its unity and diversity as a reflection of the Triune God? The impact of this project flows from its multicultural aspect. It is not all about language; rather, it transcends language and applies to any setting where two or more cultures coexist. As a Christian congregation, we have an opportunity to embody our Trinitarian understanding of God as social and sending. We are created for relationship with God—who in God's very nature is a society of unity and diversity—and we are sent to participate in God's mission to embody this society in, with, and around the world. If St. Luke's can live into its vision to be one parish with many cultural voices and understand its unity and diversity as a reflection of the Triune God, the congregation can be a model for any congregation where two or more cultures live together as one.

The seeds for my interest in this research were planted early in my childhood, beginning with the congregation of my boyhood in Queens, NY. It was a predominately

white English-speaking pastoral church where the pastor was not only at the center of the ministry but performed most aspects of it. It is my recollection that the members of the congregation barely noticed, and much less celebrated, the gifts of the baptized.

Marginalization of those who were different from the dominant culture was also typical.

I experienced some marginalization firsthand when I entered middle school where I was confronted with a new reality, one where as a white male I was in the minority. There, in addition to my existing friendships from elementary school, I found a new community with Hispanic and Latino classmates. My development of friendships across cultural barriers continued throughout high school and college. I learned through these relationships that people with diverse cultural experiences and languages can find unity as people created in the image of God. The seeds planted in boyhood for this research in unity and diversity had sprouted in adulthood. This was evidenced by my experience of culture shock and discomfort when I returned to predominately white European descent congregations during my seminary internship years. I longed for the kinds of multicultural friendships to which I had grown accustomed.

My continuing education in the doctoral program related to this thesis has helped me to reflect on God, the world, the congregation I serve, and myself in new ways. The lenses I applied in studying the research question included theoretical, biblical, and theological perspectives. The theoretical lenses are *Adaptive Change*, *Transculturation*, and *Church Size Theory*. The biblical lenses are *Love the Stranger*, *Led by the Spirit*, and *Unity and Diversity in God's Family*. The theological lenses are *imago Trinitatis* and *missio Dei*. Studying these lenses and applying them to St. Luke's were particularly helpful in my education and faith formation.

Theoretical Lenses

Adaptive Change

A change is needed, but the challenges before St. Luke's are unique. The situation cannot be approached with yesterday's solutions. It requires adaptation and not merely adoption of a previous model or approach. Heifetz and Linsky's work on adaptive change in *Leadership on the Line* helps to explain the differences between adaptive and technical challenges. This will be explored more fully in chapter 3; in short, a technical challenge is one for which a solution "already lies within the organization's repertoire" while adaptive challenges "force the organization to change" or adapt.⁹

Transculturation

In order to have a better understanding of St. Luke's past, present, and possible future, it is necessary to consider the impact of immigration and transculturation. Journalist and historian Juan Gonzalez helps to explain the unique immigration histories of several Central and South American countries in *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*.¹⁰ United States colonialism and the American empire have an impact on St. Luke's ministry.

Persons of every language and culture experience some form of transculturation when their communities come in contact. Some history of transculturation in the United States will also help as we attempt to clarify the expectations of English-speaking

⁹ Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*, 18.

¹⁰ Juan González, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).

members of the congregation. Authors Fernando Ortiz¹¹ and Dan Anderson¹² present and build upon transculturation by comparing and contrasting ideas such as deculturation, acculturation, neoculturation, and assimilation; and Donald McGavran introduces the homogenous unit principle.¹³ Through these concepts we can better understand the cultural realities that both unite and challenge St. Luke's, such as age, wealth, technological savvy, understanding of the congregation's basic organizational structure, and, of course, immigration from Spanish nations and those from nations with languages other than Spanish.

Church Size Theory

In *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry*,¹⁴ Arlin J. Rothauge discusses four basic congregation sizes: the family church, up to 50 active members; the pastoral church, 50-150 active members; the program church, 150-350; and the corporation church, 350-500 and over. Each of these sizes comes with its own unique organizational structure and expectations of members and pastors. The pastoral church and program church are the models relevant for the research project in this context.

Leadership in the pastoral church is centralized in a pastor who is surrounded by “layers or circles which revolve around a pastoral care center.”¹⁵ These members join the

¹¹ Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet De Onis (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1947).

¹² Daniel R. Anderson, “A Theory of Transculturation,” *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy*, (Notre Dame, IN: North American Academy of Liturgy, Inc., 2015), 107–22.

¹³ Donald A McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990).

¹⁴ Rothauge, *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry*, 15.

¹⁵ Rothauge, 15.

pastor in leading the congregation and are very connected to the pastor at the center. The pastor is still at the center in the program church, but the organization is different.

“Democratic organization and leadership by the laity” are key in these congregations.¹⁶

Committees consisting of members of the congregation plan and implement the programs of the congregation. The pastor provides support. Using church size theory as a lens, this research explored which model St. Luke’s followed more closely. This lens will be revisited in chapter 3 under the heading *imago Trinitatis* where I will offer a model for the church based on Trinitarian theology.

Biblical Lenses

Love the Stranger

“God so loved the world . . .” John 3:16. The biblical lenses focus on the love of God enacted throughout the Scriptures. Created in the image of God, human love reflects God’s love for us. This lens explores the biblical mandate to love your neighbor, commanded by Moses in Exodus and emphasized by Jesus in the Gospels. Jesus clarifies the teaching in Luke 6:31 saying, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This lens explores the nature of this *love*, the *world*, and our *neighbor*. It also considers what it means to love others as we love ourselves.

The biblical exploration into loving neighbor flows into the question: “Who is my neighbor?” While Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) speaks of someone passing through, the Old Testament offers instruction on how to treat the *strangers*, *foreigners*, or *aliens* living among us. An exploration of Old Testament teachings offers

¹⁶ Rothauge, 23.

instruction that applies to marginalized ethnic groups among us today and shows that our neighbor includes not only strangers but even those we might consider enemies.

Led by the Spirit

The role of the Spirit in history is helpful for understanding God's Trinitarian nature and God's interaction with humanity; therefore, I review the story of the Spirit's activity through both the Old and New Testaments in this section. This begins in Genesis 1, (where the *Ruach* of God hovers over the face of the deep just before bringing forth creation) and continues with the Spirit's work in the lives of a variety of ordinary people, (that they might perform the extraordinary task of leading God's people). This work continues in the New Testament and is evidenced even in the ministry of Jesus. I show how the Gospels may be referred to as "The Acts of the Holy Spirit through Jesus" just as the book of Acts has been called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles."

Unity and Diversity in God's Family

This section continues the exploration into the Spirit's work in the early church and in the church today. Jesus' teaching that in His Father's house are many rooms (John 14) sets the backdrop for this research project as it led to the congregation's vision to be one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home. Jesus' prayer in John 17 reveals his desire for the church to be united. A consideration of the Pentecost story in Acts 2 shows how the Spirit works to make this unity a reality even in the midst of diversity.

The conversation continues in the book of Acts with a shift to culture where we find that new Christians from the Gentile community are generally not required to follow the Jewish laws. Finally, this lens explores the ways in which diversity is not something

to overcome but a gift from God's Spirit. This is shown through 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4 where Paul likens the church to the human body with the Holy Spirit gifting different persons with unique yet equally important gifts.

Theological Lenses

Leonardo Boff captures the essence of the two theological lenses applied to this research and their relationship to each other in *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*.

We seek transformations in social relations because we believe in God, Trinity of Persons, in eternal interrelationship and infinite *perichoresis*. We seek a society that will be more an image and likeness of the Trinity, that will better reflect on the earth the Trinitarian communion of heaven, and that will make it easier for us to know the mystery of communion of the divine Three.¹⁷

Imago Trinitatis

God is eternally a social God, forever interrelated as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This section is an exploration of the nature of God as unity and diversity using writings of Leonardo Boff¹⁸ and Miroslav Volf.¹⁹ Each person of the Trinity has their own gifts, purpose, and role; yet, there is only one God. The image of the Trinity is imprinted upon all people. This lens focuses on the perichoretic relationship of God and the church in, with, and around the world. Writings of Letty Russell²⁰ and Mark Lau Branson²¹ help in

¹⁷ Leonardo Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), Kindle edition, Location 139.

¹⁸ Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*; Leonardo Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*.

¹⁹ Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*, Sacra Doctrina Series (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998).

²⁰ Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/J. Knox Press, 1993).

²¹ Mark Lau Branson and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011).

reimagining congregational leadership through Trinitarian practices: no person is at the margin and all are equals at the table. The section ends with a critique of the program church model presented in chapter 3 and offers a Trinitarian adaptation.

Missio Dei

The next lens focuses on how God's nature as social leads to God's nature as sending. Implications of God's being upon God's doing are considered and are followed by an exploration of what God does and into what God invites the church to participate. Boff wrote, "Community results from personal relationships in which each is accepted as he or she is, each opens to the other and gives the best of himself or herself."²² God invites all humanity to participate in the *missio Dei*. The *missio Dei* lens considers theologically the various gifts God bestows upon all people for this work. This lens is used in the research to interpret how a series of interventions may or may not have informed the congregation's identity as one who participates with the Trinitarian God in the world.

Research Methodology

The research methodology was action research using transformative mixed methods. Action research was chosen as it was my intention to facilitate a transformation in my own congregation's understanding of both the Trinitarian nature of God and of its own reflection of that nature, both as a whole congregation and as individual members. Action research is a traditional action reflection model where those being studied and

²² Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, 3.

studying themselves participate in an activity, or series of activities, and then report on what they have experienced.²³

Jesus models action research in Luke 9 and 10. In Luke 9, he sends His twelve apostles into the neighboring communities to heal and bring Good News. The chapter ends with Jesus and the apostles reflecting on their experience. Jesus then sends seventy disciples to all the places he himself intended to go in Luke 10. This action reflection model, with Jesus as participant, was similar to a transformative qualitative action research design.

The population studied in this action research project was the whole parish of St. Luke's. Various demographic segments of the population were also analyzed to understand better how demographics or participation in interventions might have made a difference in the outcome of the study. The method included three surveys of the whole population (a baseline, a midpoint at the conclusion of a sermon series, and an endline)²⁴, a series of four town hall meetings with round table discussions and activities, and a church council retreat.

Completion of the questionnaires, participation in the town hall meetings with round table discussions, and participation in the church council retreat implied consent. This was explained on the cover pages for each questionnaire. Statements summarizing this were also made at the beginning of each time the survey was conducted. A section

²³ David Coghlan and Teresa Brannick, *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications Inc., 2014), 43-49.

²⁴ The questionnaires can be found in appendix A.

for guardian consent, including signature, was included on the cover page of the questionnaires so that youth might participate.

The surveys were conducted via mixed methods questionnaires—while most questions were quantitative, there were also sections within the questionnaires for participants to describe topics in their own words. The questionnaires were administered in both English and Spanish and were available both on paper and electronically. Spanish-speaking participants were offered an opportunity to have the questionnaires read aloud, due to low literacy levels for some in the congregation. The goal for all surveys was to have as many members of the community participate as possible. After it took more than an hour for the Spanish-speaking members to complete the baseline questionnaire, it was decided to provide a meal for them when it was time to complete the endline questionnaire. Nearly fifty people were fed and over thirty participated in the final survey.

The questionnaires were developed using language related to the lenses. Transculturation generated questions about equality at church and in the world. Led by the Spirit led to questions about spiritual gifts and the celebration of diverse expressions of the Spirit in the church and everyday life. *Missio Dei* brought questions exploring our participation in God's work through the sharing of our gifts with others. These questionnaires were field-tested by eight to ten persons not participating in the research project. These persons were demographically similar to the research population.

The findings of this research, along with analyses and conclusions, are found in chapters 6 and 7 of this paper. There I report the descriptive statistics including total number of responses, the frequency of responses by category, the percent by category,

and the mean where appropriate. I analyzed the results by inferential statistics, including independent t-tests and paired t-tests of my baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys.

The qualitative sections of the mixed methods questionnaires, as well as the notes from the town hall meetings with round table discussions and church council retreat, were analyzed and coded by theme using the first two steps of Charmaz's coding process in *Constructing Grounded Theory*.²⁵ The responses were read word-by-word and line-by-line and sorted according to keywords and themes that emerged. This process, as it was applied to my data, is described in detail in chapter 5. The qualitative and quantitative data from the three surveys and the notes from the meetings and retreat were triangulated to see if and how participation in various activities may or may not have shaped the development of participants' identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity. The effectiveness of the interventions based on these results is discussed in the conclusions chapter. In the epilogue, I offer a critical analysis of the project, where it might be improved upon and what further interventions might further assist the congregation of St. Luke's in clarifying its identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity.

The Research Process

The research began with a census survey of the population to establish a baseline. A series of interventions followed; it included multicultural events, a sermon series, a series of town hall meetings with round table discussions, and a church council retreat. Every intervention, with the exception of the church council retreat, was advertised for the whole parish's involvement. Some form of teaching accompanied each intervention;

²⁵ Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 2nd ed., Introducing Qualitative Methods (London: Sage, 2014).

for example, a *Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe* was paired with a two-to-three-minute commentary on how persons from different cultures might celebrate their faith. These teachings were an integral part of the interventions. Some of these events have been occurring for years. It was the teaching that set them apart from other years. Other interventions, such as a bilingual Epiphany service with a whole parish ethnic potluck luncheon, were modified from previous years to intentionally bring together our English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities. Every intervention was in some way viewable through our lenses. A midpoint survey was conducted following the sermon series and the endline census took place after the final town hall meeting. This marked the end of the research. The findings of this research are presented in chapter 6 and discussed in relation to the lenses in chapter 7.

Other Matters

Meeting IRB Standards and Ethical Concerns

Population

This research project was about being a bilingual-multicultural congregation. It conformed to the IRB standards of Luther Seminary.²⁶ It is reasonable to assume undocumented persons are part of our faith community. A study on our bilingual-multicultural congregation could not be done without them. One's immigration status has no impact on this research and there are no questions in any of the questionnaires that

²⁶ "Institutional Review Board: Authorizing research involving human subjects," Luther Seminary, accessed January 3, 2019, <https://www.luthersem.edu/irb/default.aspx?m=6081>. "All research that involves human subjects and is conducted under the auspices of Luther Seminary by its faculty, staff or students is required to be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB)."

sought to uncover this information. Such information would remain confidential if it was disclosed. Children and youth are also part of what makes the congregation multicultural. Informed consent paragraphs on the questionnaires made it possible for youth to participate.

Risks and Benefits

There were no substantial risks associated with this study. The only cost was the time needed to complete the questionnaires and to participate in the interventions. Participants were informed that they may withdraw at any time. Indirect benefits of participation included an awareness of what God might be doing at and through the congregation; learning about themselves, the congregation, or the community; and improvement upon the congregation's ministries in the community. As a bilingual congregation, St. Luke's is unique. Its desire to be "one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices" is even more unique. The lessons learned from this study and the benefit to the congregation and the larger church far outweigh the sacrifice of time participants contributed.

Records and Data

The records of this study are kept confidential. Neither this paper nor any future report will include any information that discloses the identity of participants. All data are kept either on a password-protected hard drive or in a locked drawer in my church office; only my advisors and I will have access to the data. These data, notes, and transcripts of conversations will be destroyed by June 30, 2022. While I made every effort to ensure confidentiality, anonymity was not guaranteed due to the small number studied.

Consent

Completion of the baseline, midpoint, and endline questionnaires implied consent. This was explained on the cover pages for each questionnaire. Statements summarizing this were also made at the beginning of each time the questionnaire was administered. A section for guardian consent, including signature, was included on the cover page of the questionnaires so that youth might participate. Permission to utilize data gathered from the town hall meetings with round table discussions and church council retreat were received through implied consent at each event. Google Translate²⁷ and a human translator were used to translate Spanish text into English for analysis.²⁸

Glossary of Key Terms

Acculturation: The process by which a culture adopts the cultural traits of another, especially a minority culture's adoption of a dominant culture.

Assimilation: The process by which a minority group adopts the customs and attitudes of a dominant group.

Communion, *Perichoretic*: The relationship of the different but equal persons of the Trinity, which is embodied in the church and the world when people come together as different but equal members of society in mutual love and respect.

Culture: "The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; *also*: the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time."²⁹

Ethnic: Of, relating to, or characteristic of a group of people sharing a common cultural heritage, often including language, religious traditions, food, or dress.

²⁷ Google Translate is part of the G Suite by Google and is available at <https://gsuite.google.com>.

²⁸ See page 232 in appendix A for the confidentiality agreement.

²⁹ *Merriam-Webster, s.v. "culture,"* accessed December 5, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>.

Identity: “Who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others.”³⁰

imago Dei or imago Trinitatis: The terms Image of God and Image of the Trinity are synonymous for Christians. The image of God is of one God in three persons, three persons in one God. This is important as Christians believe humanity is created in the image of this perichoretic Triune God.

Melting Pot: A country, locality, or situation in which a blending of races, peoples, or cultures takes place.³¹

Monocultural: The idea that there might be a single, homogeneous culture without diversity or dissension.

Multicultural: An environment in which two or more cultures coexist.

Multi-ethnic: An environment in which the ethnic characteristics of two or more peoples coexist.

Mosaic: A picture or decorative design made by setting small colored pieces, as of stone or tile, into a surface.³²

Neoculturation: A new culture that results from the process of transculturation.

Parish: A parish is traditionally understood as a church serving a specific geographical location, such as a Roman Catholic parish. In the ELCA model constitution for congregations, a parish is defined as a partnership of multiple congregations. St. Luke’s may be thought of as a parish in both ways: it is located in one geographical location and it has worshipping communities in English and Spanish.

Perichoresis: The “cohabitation, co-existence, interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another . . . a complete circulation of life and a perfect coequality between the Persons, without any anteriority or superiority of one over another.”³³

Quilt: At St. Luke’s a quilt is a coverlet or blanket with a decorative design made by stitching together swaths of cloth of many different patterns onto one surface.

³⁰ *Cambridge Dictionary*, s.v. “identity,” accessed January 4, 2017, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/identity>.

³¹ *Random House Kernerman Webster’s College Dictionary*, s.v. “melting pot,” accessed September 28, 2017, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/melting+pot>.

³² *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition*, s.v. “mosaic,” accessed September 28, 2017, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/mosaic>.

³³ Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 93.

Transculturation: The process by which a new culture emerges as two or more cultures coexist in the same space and time.

Unity and Diversity: The recognition that those who look and behave very differently one from another can identify themselves as one united people, like one body with many different parts.

Summary

This action research focuses on how a series of interventions might clarify a bilingual-multicultural congregation's identity as a reflection of the social nature of the Trinity. The underlying principles are relevant to any congregation where two or more persons of differing cultures coexist, which is arguably everywhere. Chapter 2 will offer a brief history of St. Luke's, the congregation on which this research focused. It is bilingual. It is multicultural. It is an illustration of both unity and diversity.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY

Setting

The congregation studied in this research, which we will call St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, is located in the second wealthiest county in the US.¹ The population of northern Virginia expanded during the 1940s and much of Springfield was intentionally set aside as the future site of affordable housing for military and other government personnel; this became a reality during the 1950s and 1960s as homes were built and families began to settle in the area.² Some of the effects of being in an area with a high percentage of its population being in the military and other government or government contract jobs include a family atmosphere, a fairly high level of transience, and a “hit the ground running, knowing they have a limited time” work ethic.³ Longtime residents of the area recall how Springfield was established as an intentional suburb of Washington, D.C. They also state that six lots were set aside by developers for worshipping communities of

¹ Carol Morello and Ted Mellnik, “Seven of Nation’s 10 Most Affluent Counties Are in Washington Region,” Washington Post, accessed November 1, 2017, http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/seven-of-nations-10-most-affluent-counties-are-in-washington-region/2012/09/19/f580bf30-028b-11e2-8102-ebee9c66e190_story.html.

² “Village History,” West Springfield Village, accessed August, 15 2015, <http://www.westspringfieldvillage.org/villagehistory/history.html>.

³ Cheryl Harrison, “Military Spouse Appreciation Day: ACS Recognizes Local Spouses,” US Army, accessed November 1, 2017, <http://www.army.mil/article/39178/military-spouse-appreciation-day-acr-recognizes-local-spouses>.

faith; any faith was welcome to make Springfield its home. This is an important part of the memory of some church leaders.

DNA

St. Luke's was conceived and born in 1953 as part of the Augustana Lutheran Church (ALC). The congregation quickly grew from a couple dozen charter members to over 1,100 baptized members in 1960. Through denominational mergers, St. Luke's became part of the Virginia Conference of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) in 1962 and then Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod (MDCS) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 1988. The MDCS was formed out of congregations in D.C., southern MD, and northern VA. Many of the wealthiest VA congregations were and are still in the MDCS. The departure of these congregations had a negative and lasting financial impact on the newly formed Virginia synod but helped to create a financially vital MDCS. St. Luke's has both contributed to and benefited from its synod's financial position; the benefit has been most noticeable through its Spanish-language ministry, for which St. Luke's receives grant money.

While a ministry for Spanish-speaking people will certainly be remembered in future years as a part of the congregation's legacy, that ministry is part of a larger story that is its actual legacy. St. Luke's has been busy identifying and meeting the needs of its community since its establishment. It has done so out of love for God and neighbor. While still a very young congregation in 1961, St. Luke's was selected by the Augustana Synod for a two-year pilot program of having a certified social worker on staff. This person would work for the church but be an integral part of the community and be available to everyone. It was realized during that time that there were local people in need

and a ministry that started in St. Luke's eventually became the Ecumenical Community for Helping Others (ECHO). As of 2010, ECHO receives support from twenty-seven faith communities in Springfield.⁴ When the demographics of Springfield began to change with the immigration of Spanish-speaking persons, the congregation recognized the need for an English as a Second Language (ESL) program and classes began in 1997. A citizenship class was later added. ESL was renamed ESOL (English for those Speaking Other Languages) in 2017 when it was recognized that many persons came to the program speaking multiple languages besides English. The relationships built through the ESL program led to the congregation's decision to begin a service in Spanish in 2001.

The early and rapid growth of the congregation, the formation of ECHO, the beginning of the ESOL ministry, the later creation of a Spanish-language ministry, and the many ministries in between, were in large part the result of the humility, passion, and commitment to God's mission embodied by its founding and longest serving senior pastor. His commitment to God's mission and passion for all of God's people planted, watered, and harvested decades of disciples who would partner together to continue God's work in Springfield and beyond. Loving God by loving and serving neighbor took root as the most remarkable feature of the congregation's proverbial DNA. This attribute is what most people in the congregation mention when asked why they attend St. Luke's.⁵

⁴ "History," Ecumenical Community Helping Others, accessed December 8, 2017, <http://echo-inc.org>.

⁵ This was revealed through several focus groups and surveys conducted prior to this action research project.

Demographics Today

During its early years, St. Luke's would have been considered a *community church*, one that existed in, with, and around the neighborhood. Its membership was mostly made up of those who lived within walking distance of the church building and its ministries directly served its neighbors. Today, many members of St. Luke's refer to the congregation as a *regional church*. While many ministries continue to exist for its neighbors, other programs have formed that serve people literally around the world—like military care packages and quilts for a variety of recipients. In addition, members who once lived within blocks of St. Luke's have moved to areas that are beyond walking distance. The digital age has also allowed members who move away, even out of the country, to remain engaged with the congregation, including participation in worship via online worship bulletins and streaming of the services. The fact remains that 36% of St. Luke's members live within eight miles or fifteen driving minutes of the congregation.⁶ Community once referred to the neighborhood. Today, community may be understood as something larger. In light of this, St. Luke's may be defined either as a community church or a regional church.

⁶ This figure was taken from St. Luke's membership database in 2016. Thirty-six percent represent 547 of the congregation's baptized membership of 1,581 at the time.

A 2016 US census report indicates that the “Hispanic or Latino”⁷ community accounted for 18% of Springfield.⁸ However, the immediate context of St. Luke’s is best understood by the demographics of Creekside Elementary School immediately across the street. St. Luke’s hosted the school’s kindergarten orientation while the school was being renovated the summer of 2012. The teachers spoke to the children in English then turned to the parents and spoke in Spanish. No other languages were spoken or required translation, as it seemed the parents all understood Spanish. At the time, 77% of the school’s students were Hispanic. That percentage increased steadily to 83% in 2015-2016 (and decreased to 82% in 2016-2017).⁹

Looking only at Creekside Elementary does not give the full picture. Creekside is one of only three Elementary schools in the congregation’s zip code. Oakton, just .6 mile from St. Luke’s, has also seen a slight increase in Hispanic enrollment. Their Hispanic population in 2013-2014 was 67% and 67% in 2016-2017.¹⁰ Adams Elementary, 1.38

⁷ I will use the words “Hispanic” or “Latino” only when referring to documents that use them (such as census reports) or the previously existing “Hispanic Ministry Committee” of St. Luke’s. These terms are debated even within Spanish-speaking communities; there is no norm. I will do the same with the word “Anglo.” Instead, while it will be more cumbersome, I will use “Spanish-speaking” and “English-speaking” throughout this thesis. These phrases also better capture the reality of St. Luke’s where not all English-speaking persons are Anglo and not all Spanish-speaking persons are Hispanic or Latino.

⁸ “QuickFacts: Springfield CDP, Virginia; UNITED STATES,” United States Census Bureau, accessed on December 5, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/springfieldcdpvirginia,US/PST045216>.

⁹ “Demographics,” Fairfax County Public Schools, accessed on November 1, 2017, http://schoolprofiles.fcps.edu/schlprfl/f?p=108:13:::::P0_CURRENT_SCHOOL_ID:164.

¹⁰ “Demographics,” Fairfax County Public Schools, accessed on November 1, 2017, http://schoolprofiles.fcps.edu/schlprfl/f?p=108:13:::::P0_CURRENT_SCHOOL_ID:166.

miles from St. Luke's, had a Hispanic enrollment of only 25% in 2012-2013, increasing to 31% in 2016-2017.¹¹

Another important statistic with direct impact upon past, present, and future ministries of the congregation is English proficiency. In all three schools, proficiency in English was below 50% in 2014-2015.¹² This fact explains why the congregation's ESOL and citizenship program continues to be a vital part of St. Luke's ministry to the community. It is also worth noting that even as the percentage of Hispanic population continues to rise at Creekside, English proficiency has also been increasing, from 23% in 2012-2013 to 31% in 2016-2017. This statistic, which may reflect the growing number of second-generation Hispanics, is a fact that bears significance for St. Luke's as it continues its attempt to meet the needs of the community.

The congregation also reflects the county in its economic demographics. In the county and in the congregation, one will find both those who live in million-dollar homes and those who live in closets, those who write and implement US policy and those who clean their offices. This is both a gift and a unique challenge for the congregation.

Leadership Developments

1953-2012

It is necessary to dig deeper into key leadership developments over the congregation's first sixty-four years of ministry to better understand this research. The

¹¹ "Demographics," Fairfax County Public Schools, accessed on November 1, 2015, http://schoolprofiles.fcps.edu/schlprfl/f?p=108:13:::::P0_CURRENT_SCHOOL_ID:162.

¹² See footnotes 9-11 for English proficiency in the three elementary schools.

congregation has had four senior pastors, twelve associate or assistant pastors, three lay rostered staff members, and seven non-rostered professional staff members.¹³ The actions of the senior pastors suggest that consecutive senior pastors did not all share the same vision for congregational leadership.

Conversations I have had with members of the congregation and two of the surviving senior pastors suggest a history of congregational leadership that looks something like this. St. Luke's first senior pastor led within a hierarchical paradigm. As the president of the congregation, he was at the top of the church's leadership model. People fondly remember how everyone would do whatever he asked them to do. He was the spiritual leader, the head of staff, and the corporate wisdom. Little if anything happened without his approval. The congregation was organizationally a pastoral church during this time. After his retirement, the congregation moved into a new form of organization where the pastor was no longer president of the congregation. While a three-year rotation of council members remained, the senior pastor was no longer the senior officer of the organization. This might have been a shift toward a program church model. The first senior pastor called into this new model labored to create a culture of shared leadership and ministry responsibilities among new and existing lay leaders. His successor helped to shift the congregation back toward a pastoral church model by reconsolidating some of the congregation's leadership into the office of pastor. The youth, Christian education, and worship committees were all discontinued and the responsibilities were taken over by the pastoral and support staff. While the congregation

¹³ Amsalu Tadesse Geleta, "Missional Ecology: A Study of a Local Congregation for Missional Imagination" (Doctor of Ministry thesis, Wesley Theological Seminary, 2011), 107.

continued to maintain a level of excellence, many of its discipleship ministries (such as Christian education, worship, and youth) existed as their own islands with accountability only to the pastoral office.

2012-2018

The first six years of my leadership as senior pastor reflected most closely that of the second senior pastor who worked toward sharing the ministries of the congregation among the members of the congregation. Two key developments that took place prior to this action research project were particularly relevant to this thesis: the activities of a *Mission Planning Team* and an attempt to change the council meeting format to prioritize missional leadership.

Mission Planning Team

From 2012-2014, a Mission Planning Team made up of members of the congregation and me engaged the congregation in a series of small group meetings. One of the goals of this series was to hear where members of the congregation had seen God at work in and through St. Luke's in the past, where they presently see God at work in and through the congregation, and where they see God leading St. Luke's into the future. The congregation's values were identified and new vision and mission statements were presented to the council after more than a year of these conversations. The council then discussed, modified, and refined these statements. The final versions captured St. Luke's biblical and theological commitments and were adopted by the council and presented to the congregation in 2014. The vision statement became: "Called by God into local, national, and global community, St. Luke's is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home."

Called by God. This phrase in the statement meant that the people of St. Luke's believe the congregation's ministry is not its own but God's. God invites the church to participate in God's work in and to the world. Apart from the presence of God, there is no ministry. *Local, national, and global community.* This phrase meant that St. Luke's understands all people of the world as its community and sustains a small but global presence, from tutoring at Creekside Elementary to military care packages for military personnel overseas. This likely occurred without recognizing the tension between being a regional and community church. *One Lutheran parish with many cultural voices.* This phrase meant that while the people of God at St. Luke's speak different languages, fall into different tax brackets, and are of different ages, these various cultures come together as one congregation. *Room for everyone to be at home.* This phrase was at the heart of the vision statement and comes from John 14 where Jesus taught, "In my Father's house are many rooms." St. Luke's sees itself as a home with room for everyone. Like a typical American home, which has some areas designated for individual expression and others for the whole family, St. Luke's intentionally creates some space for individual cultural expression and others for cultural blending. The congregation is not a "melting pot" but a "quilt."

The adopted mission statement flowed from the vision statement. It reads, "Founded in faith, growing in grace, we are called to love and serve God, one another, and the world." With Ephesians 2:8-9 at its root, St. Luke's has held "*Founded in Faith. Growing in Grace.*" as its tagline since 2003. Whether intentional or not, this phrase captures the social nature of the Holy Trinity. While the original writers might have used the language of Ephesians, *by grace and through faith*, they chose *in faith and in grace*.

The theological consequence is not trivial. *By* connotes an action taken upon and *through* a means to an end. Using the word *in* implies that the whole life of the congregation exists in the fullness of faith and God's grace.

During the process of developing the vision statement, one leader said, "This is not a vision statement. This is what we are now." While the participants of the small group sessions, who continually expressed a desire to be more integrated across cultural differences, would likely disagree with this comment, the perspective is valid. There had already been efforts to bring the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities together, especially through occasional bilingual worship services (around three per year). Nonetheless, at the time of the adoption of the vision and mission statements, St. Luke's was effectively two unrelated congregations: one English-speaking and one Spanish-speaking. Few of their members knew each other, they worshipped and socialized independently, they had their own Sunday schools and social ministries, even their ordained leadership typically worked apart from one another.

Management–Leadership

The council held its annual retreat in the spring of 2016. The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Wilson—then a doctoral candidate in the Congregational and Missional Leadership DMin program at Luther Seminary—was brought in to lead the council through a discussion on the differences between management and leadership. The council decided to change its monthly meeting format based on that retreat. The hour-and-a-half long business meeting was replaced with a new format that included twenty to thirty minutes

of “Dwelling in the Word”¹⁴ beginning at 7:30 p.m. followed by *leadership* (a time of reflection and visioning for the congregation’s current situation and future direction). The remaining half hour, beginning at 8:30, was used for *management* (discussion of reports, old business, and new business). I defined leadership as *discerning and living into God’s vision for St. Luke’s through conversations with God, each other, and the community*. In our leadership portion, therefore, we engaged God, each other, and the community in conversations around what God has been up to among us, where God might be working now, and, where the Holy Spirit might be leading us. In months when the business was particularly heavy (such as budget season) this leadership conversation would be intentionally set aside. These leadership conversations were made possible, in part, by the strong management teams St. Luke’s has in its committees, such as property and finance. It was also made possible by dedicated liaisons who prepared committee reports that were distributed by the council secretary and reviewed by the council prior to the meeting. Members would come prepared with any questions or concerns. Liaisons would only highlight important areas or items that required council action. When no discussion was needed, we would move on to the next topic.

In our first three conversations, we discussed the weaknesses and threats the congregation’s ministry faces in its context, the strengths and opportunities of the congregation’s ministries in its context, and our understanding of the nature of God and how that understanding determines how we shape our organization and ministries. The

¹⁴ Patrick R. Keifert, *We Are Here Now: A New Missional Era, a Missional Journey of Spiritual Discovery* (Eagle, ID: Allelon Publishing, 2006). Dwelling in the Word is a process of listening to God through the Scriptures using three basic questions: What in this passage captures your imagination? What would you like to know more about? How might the Holy Spirit be nudging you or the congregation? These have been summarized at St. Luke’s as imagination, information, and transformation.

conversation around the nature of God was the focus of the council's leadership hour at its September 2016 meeting. The premise was that the way people understand God's nature will determine the ministries they perform.

We learned that the council saw God as loving, caring, guiding, and providing opportunities to follow. We saw once more that "love" is a verb for St. Luke's. Every council member involved in the conversation referred to some way the congregation's many social outreach ministries are an embodiment of God's loving nature, such as ESOL, ECHO, and its Spanish-language ministry. Consistent with the general population of St. Luke's, the council saw God as one who loves and cares for all people. They understand church as a place to learn about and participate in God's love by loving and serving neighbors.

Playing the role of secretary for these leadership conversations,¹⁵ I had the opportunity to distill the data from the SWOT¹⁶ exercise from the first two meetings. From these data eleven SMART¹⁷ goals emerged. These were categorized into three areas: (1) support Spanish-language ministries beyond St. Luke's in Northern Virginia, (2) build upon our already strong music program utilizing the gifts of our current members, and (3) improve our communications both within and outside our congregation. As the council discussed the specifics of the goals, it realized that the

¹⁵ Keifert, 88, 101.

¹⁶ Mike Morrison, "History of the SWOT Analysis (Brief)," RapidBI, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://rapidbi.com/history-of-the-swot-analysis/>. SWOT is an acronym for an exercise where participants identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats an organization has or faces. An interesting history of the acronym can be found here.

¹⁷ Duncan Haughey, "A Brief History of SMART Goals," Project Smart, accessed February 19, 2019, <https://www.projectsmart.co.uk/brief-history-of-smart-goals.php>. SMART is an acronym for goals that are Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time-related.

congregation did not have the organization in place to address many of them. This conversation led to the realization that, while the congregation has effective ministry teams in management areas (such as personnel, property, or finance), it does not have functioning ministry teams in critical discipleship areas (such as worship, Christian education, or youth ministry).

Size of Church and Pastoral Staff

The size of the congregation as it relates to the staff also became a topic of conversation in 2017, as there was an average of only 250 people in worship each week that year. It had been suggested that the congregation might need to “right-size” its organization for the size of the attendance. In chapter 3, the church size theory lens reveals that the congregation may be right-sizing itself to the size of its pastoral staff.

Conclusion

The church and the world are rapidly changing. St. Luke’s has a long history of being a leader in the larger church. The congregation must continue to discern how it will move into the future for that to continue. These times are different from years past. We are not prepared for what comes next. Chapter 3 will begin by framing the conversation within adaptive change, which is required during this time of organizational restructuring for a bilingual congregation with cultural diversity. The congregation’s organizational structure will be considered using the lens of church size theory; its cultural diversity will be viewed through the transculturation lens. Chapter 4 will then explore five biblical and theological lenses. These eight lenses will become the glasses through which I discuss the findings of my research.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL LENSES

Introduction

In their work, *Leadership on the Line*, Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky contrast challenges that can be solved through technical fixes with those that require adaptation. A technical challenge is one for which a solution “already lies within the organization’s repertoire” while adaptive challenges “force the organization to change” or adapt.¹ St. Luke’s is facing adaptive challenges. They are different from any it has faced before. The congregation does not have solutions in its proverbial toolbox of tried-and-true programs to see it through this time of linguistic and cultural diversity and organizational restructuring. This chapter will explore three theoretical lenses applied to the congregation for this research: adaptive change, transculturation, and church size theory.

Adaptive Change

Heifetz and Linsky establish that “people do not resist change . . . but loss.”² This helps to lay groundwork for understanding the threat of adaptive challenges. The world is always changing, but humans would prefer things to remain the same. One of the most famous phrases around change in organizational life is “We’ve never done it that way

¹ Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*, 18.

² Heifetz and Linsky, 11.

before.” We will see in the transculturation lens that the English-speaking community cannot look to its ancestors for parallel stories of immigration when trying to understand the Spanish-speaking community. In addition, the idea of a program church revolving around Trinitarian leadership discerned and implemented through the partnership of pastors, council, and people can be foreign to a culture that largely works within military hierarchies. Becoming a congregation of equal partners from multiple cultural expressions will require adaptation in both how the congregation functions across cultural divides and how the people see themselves and others within the leadership of the organization.

A pastoral church model has governed St. Luke’s for over sixty years. This included the senior pastor as president of the congregation for the first four decades. Decentralizing authority from the senior pastor to the members of the congregation requires more than a change to the governing constitution; it requires ownership and buy-in from the members of the congregation, their elected leaders, and the pastors. Add to this already complex challenge the fact that St. Luke’s would need to work through language barriers and we have a multi-faceted adaptive challenge.

Adaptive approaches are met with intended and unintended resistance. Forces within the organization labor to “maintain the familiar, restore order, and protect people from the pains of adaptive work.”³ This is, in part, because adaptive change both “forces people to question and perhaps redefine aspects of the identity” and it “challenges their sense of competence.”⁴ Resistance to the adaptive challenge of program church ministry

³ Heifetz and Linsky, 48.

⁴ Heifetz and Linsky, 30.

has been evidenced at St. Luke's in the congregation's response to the shift in visitation and care ministries being largely performed by members of the congregation. While members are receiving more personal contact from the congregation in 2017 than they were in 2012, several members of the congregation have stated that personal contact has declined. This feeling of disconnect is because people expect their connections with the church to be maintained by pastoral contact. This is not a guess; some members have stated this expectation. Adapting visitation ministry at St. Luke's toward a program church model is an example of the challenges shifts in culture will present for some members.

One of the fundamental challenges in successfully carrying out adaptive change is that there is no guarantee that everyone will agree that the changes will have brought an improvement.⁵ In fact, this research revealed that members of the congregation held very different opinions on critical issues. The members would often think that everyone felt as they did and would assume that church leadership was not listening to them because their desires were not being met. It became increasingly important to reach an understanding of the many different perspectives among groups within the congregation.⁶ Only then could people begin to understand that the pains experienced might bear no visible fruit and that casualties of pruning are a necessary by-product of adaptive work.⁷ Part of the

⁵ Heifetz and Linsky, 27.

⁶ Heifetz and Linsky, 30.

⁷ Heifetz and Linsky, 30.

change process includes showing the congregation the potential positive value of making change whenever and as often as possible.⁸

“People are willing to make sacrifices if they see the reason why.”⁹ Clearly communicating a Trinitarian program church model for our bilingual-multicultural congregation and showing the challenges and benefits of such a model is the first step in shifting the congregation’s leadership culture. As changes are made and losses are felt, it is important to grieve with the congregation and memorialize their real loss.¹⁰

Transculturation

Culture

The word “culture” is rich with meaning. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary includes six definitions for it. For the purpose of this research, I will use the following definition: “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also, the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time.”¹¹ Culture is about more than language; it is about our entire being. It can be easy to forget this in a congregation like St. Luke’s where its people speak two languages. People in the English-speaking community often expect everyone who speaks Spanish to share a common culture. The opposite is also true as many Spanish speakers expect all English speakers to be the same.

⁸ Heifetz and Linsky, 122.

⁹ Heifetz and Linsky, 94.

¹⁰ Heifetz and Linsky, 30.

¹¹ *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “culture,” accessed December 5, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>.

In 2003, I was associate pastor of a primarily white congregation. The congregation decided to begin a Spanish-language worship service for the growing Hispanic-Latino community during my time there. The fellowship committee decided to host an “ethnic potluck supper” to help prepare the predominately English-speaking congregation for the start of this new ministry. The committee opened my eyes to recognize that even within the English-speaking community there were multiple cultural identities to be celebrated. I observed, “Who knew there were so many different types of meatballs?” Every congregation includes a variety of cultural identities. The process by which these cultures come into contact and impact upon each other is called transculturation.¹²

Transculturation

In *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, Fernando Ortiz offers transculturation as a term describing the process of engagement between cultures. He explains how acculturation is the process of simply acquiring the culture of another and how deculturation is the process of losing a part or all of one’s own culture.¹³ Transculturation is neither of these; rather, it is where two cultures come together to form a new culture while creating space to maintain the former. I experienced this on my wedding night after my new wife and I read our wedding cards. When we were finished, she began placing them on the piano. I quickly took them down, saying, “I don’t put cards on the piano.” Fortunately, I very quickly caught myself and said, “Wait. This is

¹² Anderson, “A Theory of Transculturation,” 107.

¹³ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, 102.

our piano now and maybe *we* do put cards on it.” This is transculturation. I brought an apartment with a piano to the marriage. I never placed anything on the piano. My wife brought the practice of placing cards on the family piano. These are cultural expressions. Transculturation is the process of the cultures meeting. This transculturation resulted in us placing cards on the piano together. Ortiz says this new culture resulting from transculturation can be called neoculturation.¹⁴

While I argue throughout this thesis that transculturation occurs even within seemingly homogenous populations, such as in the case of my own wedding night, it is important to also consider the processes by which the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities of St. Luke’s came to be as they are. Spanish-speaking and English-speaking immigrants to the United States had very different experiences. Historian and journalist Juan Gonzalez summarizes much of the history of South and Central American peoples in *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*.

The Spanish and British colonization of America began with the brutal killing of around 90% of the Native Americans in the hemisphere. The Spaniards were responsible for the vast majority of this; arguably because the land they claimed was far more densely populated by Native Americans.¹⁵ The colonies diverged in how they would eventually relate to people with darker skin, both Native Americans and those from Africa. The fair-skinned people who settled in the Americas from the British Empire separated themselves from those with darker skin. Generally, the Native Americans who were not killed were

¹⁴ Ortiz, 103.

¹⁵ González, *Harvest of Empire*, 10.

relegated to reservations and Africans were bound to slavery.¹⁶ There was a clear shift by the mid-sixteenth century within the Spanish colony. Spanish laws accepted Native Americans as “free and equal subjects of the Spanish crown” and the church performed occasional marriages between Spaniards and Native Americans, but landowners often ignored these laws and kept Native Americans in slavery.¹⁷ The cultures of the Spaniards who settled in Central and South America blended with those of other native nations already living there. Their Anglo counterparts to the north strived to maintain their European cultural identity,¹⁸ yet, even as they did, transculturation is a force that cannot be stopped. A clear example of this is the United States government structure, which borrows from the Iroquois.¹⁹

By the early nineteenth century, “They were now Anglo Americans and Latin Americans. They had adapted their religion, political and economic views, their speech, their music, and their food to the new land.”²⁰ In 1824, there was near equivalence in territory size between Mexico and the United States. Mexico covered 1.7 million square miles to the United States’ 1.8 million square miles.²¹ From 1824-1898, the United States acquired Texas, California, and the Southwest from Mexico.²² To this day, Americans of Mexican descent in these states often say, “We didn’t cross the border. The border

¹⁶ González, 29.

¹⁷ González, 12-13.

¹⁸ González, 13.

¹⁹ González, 24.

²⁰ González, 25.

²¹ González, 39.

²² González, 27.

crossed us.”²³ The United States continued its involvement in Central and South America throughout the twentieth century. Gonzalez makes a strong case that this involvement has had a direct impact on the stability of several countries or territories in Central and South America. He also shows how this has led directly to many of the immigration issues the United States faces today.²⁴

Throughout US history, there have been and will continue to be scattered communities around the country where immigrants have been able to maintain their native tongue, such as Astoria, Queens where in the 1900s a person from Greece would commonly hear their native tongue spoken on the streets in the community.²⁵ For immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries, this ability to continue to communicate in their native tongue is becoming less-and-less an exception and more-and-more the norm. This difference from other migrant communities is very meaningful. Juan Gonzalez writes:

Different in class makeup. Different in customs. Different in where and how they settled, and in how America responded to them. Their separate odysseys were as rich in experience and as varied as those of the English, Irish, Italians, and Poles who came before them. Yet, they shared one bond that other waves of immigrants had not—a common language.²⁶

English-speaking church people notice this and they remember the stories of their immigrant ancestors who did not have a common language with other immigrants. Dan

²³ *Harvest of Empire: The Untold Story of Latinos in America*, directed by Peter Getzels and Eduardo Lopez (New York, NY: Snag Films, 2012), Amazon Prime Video.

²⁴ González, *Harvest of Empire*, 129-48.

²⁵ Richard F. Shepard, “A Greek Isle in the New York City Sea,” *New York Times*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/15/arts/astoria-a-greek-isle-in-the-new-york-city-sea.html?pagewanted=all>.

²⁶ González, *Harvest of Empire*, 77.

Anderson lifts up Eric Gritsch’s words noting that often in the memory of Lutherans of Swedish, Norwegian, Scandinavian, and German descent is how their ancestors, “at the end of the nineteenth century, [found themselves intentionally] giving up worship in the language and cultural heritage of their homelands for the sake of a common language, liturgy, and worship life.”²⁷ There is a substantial contrast between the two groups. While the ancestors of many Anglo-American Christians needed to come together around a common language to practice their faith, Spanish-speaking Christians are often in communities where this need not be done. There are enough Spanish-speakers in many communities for them to continue to worship in Spanish. Are there cultural differences between them? Absolutely. The data in this research demonstrate this fact.

Homogeneous Unit Principle

St. Luke’s is currently a blend of English-speaking Americans from a variety of mostly European backgrounds and first-generation and second-generation immigrants from Spanish-speaking Central and South American countries. When St. Luke’s began in 1953, most of its people were of Swedish, German, Norwegian, or Scandinavian descent. Though their cultural heritages were diverse, their ancestors had long before chosen English as their language in order to unite them around their common Lutheran tradition. This was likely not an easy decision for those ancestors. They were in themselves, as Donald McGavran would call them, “homogenous units.” Each had its own set of shared cultural beliefs and practices.²⁸

²⁷ Anderson, “A Theory of Transculturation,” 109.

²⁸ McGavran, “Understanding Church Growth,” Kindle edition, Location 1119.

These culturally and linguistically diverse ancestors came together and negotiated the transculturation of these varied European cultures, sometimes intentionally and sometimes haphazardly. We continue to see the effects of this in many predominantly European-American congregations. Dan Anderson expands upon McGavran's work in a way that recognizes the cultural complexity St. Luke's faces as people of many different cultures come together. He writes that the *homogeneous unit principle* states that "congregations and people within congregations cluster in homogeneous units based upon cultural characteristics such as worship style preference, age-based ministry, gender-based ministry, and even political positions."²⁹ This statement helps to capture the challenges of culture within communities as it recognizes not only language but also worship preferences, age, gender, and political opinions as matters of culture.

Gonzalez alludes to the harsh reality European immigrants who did not speak English faced when they emigrated to the United States. He does this as he recognizes the common bond of language of their Latin American and Central American immigrant counterparts. Many of our English-speaking members experienced immigration hardships firsthand. Others remember stories from parents and grandparents. I have heard English-speaking members of every congregation I have served say things like, "My ancestors learned English, why shouldn't they?" I have even heard this from an English-speaking Puerto Rican American.

²⁹ Anderson, "A Theory of Transculturation," 116.

Intentional Transculturation

It was onto this backdrop that St. Luke's 2012-2013 Mission Planning Team facilitated its series of conversations for the purpose of discerning where the congregation saw how God might be leading it into the future. Out of those conversations arose three goals: further integration of the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities (especially through education and fellowship); increased participation of youth and families in worship; and increased opportunities for fellowship. The conversations led to the adoption of new vision and mission statements. The vision statement included the phrase: "St. Luke's is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home."³⁰

Our biblical reference became John 14 where Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many rooms." We saw a connection between the Father's house and a typical human dwelling. Whether we live in houses, apartments, or tents, our dwellings bear evidence of both individual and communal life. For example, there is no mistake in my home which rooms belong to the sons, which to the parents, and which to the whole family. In other words, we express ourselves as individuals in certain spaces but as a community in others. The quilt is another good visual at St. Luke's where we have a prolific quilting ministry. Hundreds of unique squares, each with their own beautiful differences, come together to make one glorious quilt.

³⁰ *Vision:* Called by God into local, national, and global community, St. Luke's is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home. *Mission:* Founded in faith, growing in grace, we are called to love and serve God, one another, and the world.

The vision for one parish with many cultural voices is to maintain individual sacred spaces where we can celebrate our diversity while simultaneously creating additional spaces where we can express our unity in diverse ways. What we did not realize at the time was that we were setting the stage for transculturation as Ortiz defined it. By creating two different types of space—one for diverse cultures to exist independently and one for them to come together—we were making it possible for different cultures to engage naturally, similar to the way my wife and I came together on our wedding night. Like in the Triolo household, after a few decades in the processes of *transculturation*, *neoculturation* might occur at St. Luke's and we might find a whole new form of unity.

Church Size Theory

There were four pastors on staff for the average worship attendance of 350 when I arrived at St. Luke's in 2012. The senior pastor emeritus was also a member and worshipped with us about twice a month. Opinions in the congregation and beyond were split about the size of the staff. Some said we were over staffed; others said we were staffed for growth. Changes in the congregation from 2012-2017 suggest that neither of these opinions was accurate. While St. Luke's was numerically a program church, it was organizationally a hybrid of pastoral church and program church. The congregation was staffed just right for the size of its organization.

In his book, *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry*, Arlin J. Rothauge discusses four basic congregation sizes: the family church, up to 50 active members who attend worship with some regularity; the pastoral church, 50-150 active

members; the program church, 150-350; and the corporation church, 350-500 and over.³¹ Each of these sizes comes with certain expectations of members and pastors. The pastoral church and program church are the models relevant to this research.

Pastoral Church

According to Rothauge, leadership in the pastoral church is centralized in a pastor who is surrounded by “layers or circles which revolve around a pastoral care center.”³² These members who join the pastor in leading the congregation are very connected to the pastor at the center. Each of the pastors serving St. Luke’s in 2012 had such a pastoral care circle related to their focus areas. Members looked to the pastor at the center of their ministry for “direction, inspiration, and pastoral care.”³³ As the newest member of the team, the senior pastor had the smallest circle; this was evidenced by the fact that most funeral sermons were preached by one of the associates or even the senior pastor emeritus.

Each pastor had a clear role: there was the executive, the Spanish pastor, the youth and family pastor, and the visitation pastor. Not one of us actually carried such a title and each would have protested if so called, but that was effectively what we were. Decisions about worship were made at weekly staff meetings around the pastoral table. The Christian education and youth program schedules were crafted over the summer by an associate pastor. Events for the Spanish-speaking community were organized by an

³¹ Rothauge, *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry*, 15.

³² Rothauge, 15.

³³ Rothauge, 16.

associate pastor and his wife. There were no formal fellowship or evangelism plans for the whole community and the many social outreach programs of the congregation were, in the word of our most veteran associate pastor, “fragmented.” In other words, there were no committees for the key discipleship areas of worship, education, youth, evangelism, social outreach, or fellowship. Each of these was carried out by the pastoral staff, who would either carry out the work on their own or create teams around themselves for the efforts. This is not a critique. This is simply how it was. In these ways, St. Luke’s resembled a pastoral church.

Program Church

Things were different on the administrative side of the circle. The congregation has a wealth of gifts and abilities in business and management, which the members put to good work. In addition to the church council, there are committees for finance, property, personnel, stewardship, publicity, and an advisory board for the church’s preschool. These ministry teams function more in line with the way Rothauge describes leadership in a program church, where “democratic organization and leadership by the laity” are key.³⁴

A Hybrid

In 2012, St. Luke’s was a hybrid pastoral church/program church. It was a program church on the management side. The senior pastor served as the executive who enabled and administered the ministry teams surrounding him. It was a pastoral church on the discipleship side. There was a pastor at the center of every ministry team for

³⁴ Rothauge, 23.

discipleship. A change would be forced as the staff turned over. Two associate pastors took other calls, both the third associate pastor and the senior pastor emeritus entered God's eternal presence, and for mostly financial reasons, the congregation chose not to maintain four pastors. By 2015, the pastoral staff included two pastors and a half-time lay youth director.

“Right-Sizing”

The change in staff from 2012-2017, in effect, changed the congregation from a numerically pastoral church to a numerically program church. In 2012, when the congregation had an average worship attendance of 350, there was one full-time pastor for every 100 worshippers. In 2014, there were two pastors for roughly the same 350 worshippers. Without recognizing that we were effectively a pastoral church organization, we set out to create a program church organization by filling the administrative voids with the addition of lay ministry teams. We attempted to add committees for worship, youth, Christian education, and social outreach. While each of these did some very good work, without a paid staff member at the center of the team's leadership, they all dissolved. The only team that has continued to meet regularly is the Hispanic ministry committee, which has regular pastoral leadership. If any of the other teams meet, it is only as they see need for meeting.

In the transitional years of 2014-2017, we also experienced two things Rothauge anticipates. First, people felt that there is “a break in communication.” Second, various groups were off “doing their own thing.”³⁵ The latter had been said of the social outreach

³⁵ Rothauge, 24.

ministries of the congregation for years. This suggests that the congregation had at some point begun to make the shift toward a program church organization but never completed it. Instead, it continued to add staff so that it would maintain a pastoral church ratio.

It seems the congregation is at a cross in the road. St. Luke's is numerically a program church, but it is organized as a hybrid of pastoral and program church. It can comfortably maintain this model for many years, with eventual changes to the staff and worship space. To maintain the staff and programming, however, it must be intentional in its organization. It must decide whether it wants to be a pastoral church, a program church, or a hybrid of the two. Interventions in this action research have shown that there is willingness in the congregation to explore these things and a desire in the council to work toward positive change.

There is evidence that it can move this way. A lay visitation and care ministry was formed shortly after the arrival of our associate pastor in 2014. This team has about a dozen people on it and works closely with a flower delivery team and has recently added a card ministry. The team tirelessly cares for the members of the congregation with flowers, visits, phone calls, and cards. While in 2012 a pastor would have made all official visits, today people receive (and are beginning to expect to receive) care from other members of the church. Soon, some will also bring communion from the altar on Sundays to those unable to attend worship. A key sign of a potential shift from a pastoral church to program church mentality is the fact that key lay leaders on the visitation and care team ministry recognize that the congregation has gone from four pastors to two and the need for members to join them in caring for the congregation. One critique of church

size theory might be that it still places pastoral leadership at the center of the organization. I will return to this in chapter 4 under the heading *Perichoresis* Embodied.

Conclusion

St. Luke's is facing adaptive challenges around transculturation. Members of the congregation are diverse and represent many different homogeneous units. The congregation captures this in its own vision statement when it says "St. Luke's is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home." These cultures are coming together intentionally and unintentionally to form new homogeneous units. This transculturation presents many challenges that cannot be solved through technical fixes; instead, they require adaptation.

The three theoretical lenses of this chapter—adaptive change, transculturation, and church size theory—will be used in this research to gain some theoretical insight into where the congregation has been, is now, and where God might be leading it into the future. This action research project sought to assist the congregation with these adaptive challenges with interventions intended to help it grow in its identity as a reflection of the *imago Trinitatis*.

This brings us to our biblical and theological lenses. The next chapter will explain the three biblical lenses and two theological lenses also used. The biblical lenses are love the stranger, led by the Spirit, and unity and diversity in God's family. The theological lenses are *imago Trinitatis* and *missio Dei*.

CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LENSES

At the heart of this research project is the premise that humanity is united and diverse and that this reflects the Trinitarian nature of God. Three biblical lenses and two theological lenses emerge. The biblical lenses are: love the stranger, led by the Spirit, and unity and diversity in God's family. The theological lenses are: *imago Trinitatis* and *missio Dei*. As theology ought to begin with the Scripture, this chapter will explore the biblical lenses followed by the theological lenses. There is movement as the lenses flow one to the next within the biblical and theological categories and the lenses perichoretically relate to one another across biblical or theological types.

Love the Stranger

God's Love Revealed

"God so loved the world . . ." John 3:16. Our biblical lenses revolve around the love of God. I begin my description of this lens with an overview of God's love enacted throughout the Scriptures, from Genesis 1 through Revelation. Created in the image of God, human love reflects God's love for us. We love because God first loved us (1 John 4:19). Paul describes love in 1 Corinthians 13 as follows: "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

It is said that the Bible is God's "love letter" to humanity. We see God's love—as defined by Paul—revealed time and again beginning in Genesis and running through Revelation.

The biblical narrative begins with our Trinitarian God bringing creation into existence. God extends the relationship of mutual love and respect of God's self to humankind, who is made in God's own image. Both creation stories found in Genesis 1 and 2 reveal humanity as the pinnacle of God's creation. From Genesis 2 we learn that it was God's intention to commune with humanity. By choosing to disregard God's one command to not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, humanity turned away from God, thus breaking its relationship with God. A close reading of Genesis reveals that had we not eaten that fruit, the fruit of life would have remained part of our diet. In other words, it was God's intention to be in communion with humanity forever. Being prevented from eating of the tree of life was an act of grace. If they been permitted to eat from it, humanity would have lived eternally separated from God. The story that unfolds from Genesis through Revelation is one of a loving God on a mission to bring humanity back into God's presence forever. This "forever" is not just some time in the distant future; it begins here and now.

God warns Adam and Eve that they will die if they eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That death frees them for forgiveness and eternal life in God's presence, but they do not die immediately. Instead, God covers their newfound nudity and gives them a new beginning. God forgave them and continued to be their God. When their son Cain kills his brother Abel, again God does not strike Cain dead but gives him a mark of protection and a new beginning. These new starts do not come without consequences, but

they are renewed opportunities to live in God's presence in this temporal life until they would be brought into God's eternal presence.

God continues God's mission to live among people in this world. When all but one man, Noah, have fallen away, Genesis tells us that God flooded the earth that God might start again with him. Shortly after this, all of humanity is again worshipping everything and anything but God, and God chooses to try anew once more with Abram and Sarai, later called Abraham and Sarah. (I often wonder if God had called others like them but only they believed and followed.) After receiving God's promise that from them God would make a great nation—that they would be God's people and God would be their God—their descendants suffered 400 years of slavery in Egypt.

At the end of the 400 years, God acted to establish the nation of Ancient Israel by freeing the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from their bondage in Egypt. The 400 years of slavery is an awkward period in this story of God's mission because it may seem that God had abandoned humanity. This time in bondage, however, would play a critical role in how the people would later see themselves and especially their interactions with strangers and aliens in the land God would give them as an inheritance.

Journeying with them through the desert for forty more years—whether by a pillar of fire or cloud, or within the tabernacle or ark—God was at last living among humanity. It was not what God had intended in Genesis 1-2, but God was among humanity. God was forming and preparing God's people for a critical role in God's mission to bring humanity into God's eternal presence. Ancient Israel was to be “a light to the nations,” one among whom God would dwell and through whom the world might know God (Isaiah 42:6, 49:6).

Once in the Promised Land, a cycle that resembled that which unfolded in the book of Genesis emerged: God establishes a relationship with humanity; humanity turns away from God, thus breaking the relationship; God allows humanity to have it their own way; God restores the relationship with humanity; and, the cycle continues. It goes on this way for many generations. The nation of Ancient Israel divides because of it. The Northern Kingdom is conquered and lost forever and the Southern Kingdom eventually falls as well. After another 400 years, God performs the ultimate act of love. God enters humanity for God's self by being born into one of our own earthly bodies. Adam's words, "this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23), take on a whole new meaning. "God became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Jesus became the new light to all people (John 8:12). God would laugh our laughs and cry our tears, experience our joys and our sorrows; he would even die our death. Through Jesus, the promise of God's mission becomes real. As Paul wrote, "If we are united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5).

After Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, God established the church to continue the work of being "a light to the nations." Unlike Ancient Israel, which was confined to one piece of real estate, the Spirit of God would bring the church "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God's mission is a relentless pursuit to be in communion with humanity forever. God invites all people to participate in this already commenced eternal work of bringing peace, hope, and healing to all.

The Scriptures conclude with the book of Revelation. While there are many interpretations of this text, the general meaning is that in the end, God wins. Our Triune

God—who created humanity in God’s own image for the purpose of participating in a relationship of mutual love and respect—at last will dwell face-to-face with humanity forever. “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away” (Revelation 21:1-5a).

An Invitation to Participate

This summary of God’s love enacted from Genesis through Revelation reveals a God who consistently invites humanity into the work of bringing peace, hope (Good News), and healing (restoration) to all people. Abraham was “blessed to be a blessing,” this promise first made in Genesis 12:3 was repeated several times. The people of Ancient Israel were chosen and set apart to be a “light to the nations” (Isaiah 49:6). Jesus came to be “the light of the world” (John 8:12). With the power of the Holy Spirit, the church was sent to shine his light before all people that they might believe and give glory to God (Matthew 5:16, Acts 1:8).

God’s love exhibited through the continual cycle of relationship, separation, and restored relationship demonstrates that God continually loves humanity, even when we set ourselves as enemies of God (Romans 5:7-10). In both the Jewish Bible and the New Testament, God consistently calls God’s people to love others as they have been loved. This is summed up well by Jesus’ teaching recorded in Matthew and Luke: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44); and “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who

mistreat you” (Luke 6:27-28). Let us consider three groups of people whom God calls us to love: neighbors, enemies, and strangers and aliens.

We are commanded in Leviticus 19:18 to “love your neighbor as you love yourself.” This love is not merely a feeling; it is active. When our neighbors are in need, we ought not speak poorly of them but come to their assistance (Deuteronomy 15:7-11). Jesus in the Gospels, Paul in his letters, and James in his letter all lift up the command to love our neighbors as ourselves as a summary of the law (Luke 10:29ff, Romans 13:9-10, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8). Who is our neighbor? Jesus uses a parable in Luke 10 to answer this question. The Parable of the Good Samaritan teaches that anyone in need is our neighbor, even if this person is an enemy (as the Samaritans and Jews were in Jesus’ day). God calls us to love our neighbors, including those we consider our enemies.

What is particularly important for St. Luke’s—a bilingual-multicultural congregation—is what the Scriptures teach about “strangers” and “aliens” among us. The words “stranger” or “strangers” appear only thirty-seven times in the NRSV of the Old Testament (not including the Apocrypha). Deuteronomy 10:19 sets the tone for how God’s people ought to interact with strangers. “You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” The words “alien” and “aliens” are used much more frequently, 112 times in the Old Testament. This theme of welcoming strangers and aliens also appears in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy: “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 22:21); “You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9); “The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of

Egypt: I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:34); and ““Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien, the orphan, and the widow of justice.’ All the people shall say, ‘Amen!’” (Deuteronomy 27:19).

Aliens in the Pentateuch fall under the same law (Numbers 15:16, 29), are to be considered “citizens” (Leviticus 19:34), may follow the Jewish laws and be brought into the covenant (Exodus 12:48), and are included in the rites of the Sabbath (Exodus 23:12, Leviticus 16:29, Deuteronomy 5:14) and the Passover (Exodus 12:48, Numbers 9:14). Aliens should not be oppressed (Leviticus 19:33) and the poorest among them should receive charity from what is left over (Leviticus 23:22, Deuteronomy 24:20-21). The people of Ancient Israel had difficulty treating the aliens among them according to the laws in the Torah. This is evident in the teaching of the prophets who condemn the people for their abuse of aliens (Jeremiah 7:6, 22:3; Ezekiel; 22:7, 29; Zechariah 7:10; Malachi 3:5). Most striking in the Pentateuch may be that God’s people are to treat aliens honorably, including welcoming them as citizens, even when they are descendants of their enemies (Deuteronomy 23:7).

Jesus echoed these teachings in Matthew 25 in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats where he said to the sheep, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” and to the goats, “I was a stranger and you did not welcome me.” Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God’s people are called to love as God first loved them, loving their neighbors, enemies, strangers, and aliens as they love themselves. Jesus’ teaching in Luke 6:31, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” captures the spirit of all of God’s teaching on loving our neighbors, enemies, strangers, and aliens. God is on a

mission to be in communion with humanity forever; and God invites God's people to participate in bringing peace, hope, and this healing to all people.

Led by the Spirit

The roles of God the Father and God the Son have been given far more attention through the years than the role of God the Holy Spirit. Robert Jenson noted how even Karl Barth, in *The Promise of the Spirit*, managed to write an entire section titled "The Holy Spirit and the Mission of the Christian Congregation" without once mentioning the Holy Spirit!¹ It is impossible to even begin to understand God's Trinitarian nature and God's interaction with humanity without seeing the role of the Spirit in history. For this reason, I will now outline the acts of the Spirit as recorded through the Old and New Testaments.

Old Testament Revelations

We first see the Spirit's activity in Genesis 1 where we find the *Ruach* (wind/breath/spirit) of God hovering over the face of the deep just before bringing forth creation (Genesis 1:1-2). The Spirit of God fills Joseph, thus allowing him to interpret dreams (Genesis 41:38), comes upon Balaam that he might speak prophetically (Numbers 24:2), possesses Saul that he might also prophesy (1Samuel 10:10), and then withdraws from Saul when God rejects his kingship (1Samuel 16:14). In the time of the judges, as recorded in Judges, the Spirit of the Lord "came upon," "took possession of," "stirred," and "rushed on" a variety of ordinary people that they might perform the extraordinary task of leading God's people. The Spirit of the Lord God continued to take hold of and

¹ Robert W. Jenson, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," *Pro Ecclesia* Vol II, no. 3 (1993): 298.

speak through the prophets. One of the most notable utterances is found in Isaiah 61. “The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring Good News to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD’S favor” (Isaiah 61:1-2a). Jesus quoted this passage near the beginning of His public ministry, thus tying the work of the Holy Spirit in the Hebrew Bible to the work he was doing in the name of God.

New Testament Revelations

In the Gospels, the Holy Spirit miraculously impregnates Mary (Matthew 1:18, Luke 1:35), rests on and leads Simeon (Luke 2:25), and speaks through both Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-42) and Zechariah (Luke 1:67). In the Gospel of John, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples to teach them and remind them of all he said (John 14:26); he later fulfills this promise (John 20:22). The Holy Spirit is a major character in the book of Acts: the Spirit descends upon the apostles and they proclaim the Good News in various languages (2:4); fills the apostles that they might preach boldly (4:8, 31; 7:55); fills many who hear their testimony, often for the purpose of affirming their faith (10:44; 19:6); and directs the apostles in their ministry (13:2, 4; 15:28; 16:6). The epistles, Hebrews, and Revelation continue these themes as the prophets did in the Hebrew Bible. One of Paul’s richest expositions of the Spirit’s role of empowering people for God’s work is found in 1 Corinthians 12 where he explains how the Spirit of God distributes a variety of gifts and services for the common good.

The Gospels have been referred to as “The Acts of Jesus” and the book of Acts as “The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles.” From the above overview of the

Spirit's work in Acts, it is obvious how Acts might be given such a title. The role of the Holy Spirit is clearly a very active one. Similarly, a close reading of the Gospel according to Luke reveals that not only Acts but also Luke might be referred to the Acts of the Holy Spirit. Luke might be called "The Acts of the Holy Spirit through Jesus." Rather than being one who is merely sent by the Father or the Son, the Spirit is at least equally involved in the sending. Before Jesus' conception—in fact, even in His being conceived—the Holy Spirit was already at work. Jesus went to John to be baptized just before he began His public ministry. After His baptism, the "Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove" (Luke 3:22). The same Holy Spirit directs Jesus' next move: "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness" where he was tempted (Luke 4:1ff). When the temptation was completed, "Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee . . . [where] he began to teach in their synagogues" (Luke 4:14-15). There, Jesus connected His ministry with God's promise in Isaiah 61, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . ." (Luke 4:18-21).

Unity and Diversity in God's Family

What about the role of the Spirit for the church and individual Christians? In the Hebrew Bible, the Holy Spirit descends upon specific people for specific works. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is poured out on all believers from the day of Pentecost onward. The purpose, however, is no different. The role of God the Spirit is to empower God's people for work in God's mission to be in community with humanity forever. God's church is created in and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of joining God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in this work.

Unity

The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Christian church began in Jerusalem one Pentecost morning when God continued God's relentless mission to be in communion with humanity by sending the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' disciples, giving them the ability to communicate the hope of the Good News to everyone around in their own native language (Acts 2). The healing of our severed relationship with God might be realized through the proclamation of the hope of Jesus. Jesus taught in John 14 that in His Father's house are many rooms and that he goes to prepare a place for humanity to be with him. The acts of the Holy Spirit make it possible for all to become one in the family of God, thus fulfilling Jesus' prayer in John 17. "The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:22-23).

What does it mean to be "one"? God's pursuit of humanity will result in the restoration of the relationship God intended to have with us as revealed in Genesis 1-2. Does this mean all people shed their earthly uniqueness and be transformed into something completely new and homogenous? Paul writes that at the resurrection people will be raised into new "spiritual bodies" for life in God's eternal home (1 Corinthians 15:44). Will these all be the same? Revelation 7:9 presents an image that celebrates the great and beautiful diversity of humanity. "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands." Like strangers and aliens in a new world, God's people will

come bringing the skin colors, languages, gifts, and abilities unique to themselves and the areas in which they lived. God will welcome them as full and beloved citizens of God's city, members of the household of God, made one by the Spirit of God (Ephesians 2:18-19). Consistent with this interpretation of being made one, St. Luke's adopted John 14:1-3 as a scriptural image for its 2014 vision statement, which states that we are "one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home."

This image of our eternal home has implications for our communities and congregations on this side of heaven. Whereas in the Old Testament strangers and aliens were required to be circumcised and follow the laws and customs of the Jews in order to become Jews, this is not the case in most of the New Testament. Beginning in Acts 15, the young Christian church accepted non-Jews into the church without them first becoming Jews. They were required to "abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:29). It is worth noting that each of these is a cult practice directly related to the worship of false gods, a clear violation of the first and greatest commandment to have no gods before God (Matthew 22:37-38). All other aspects of the culture, including the primary practice of circumcision, were considered unnecessary for entry into the church, as Paul wrote in Galatians 3:28 where he says ethnic, cultural, gender, and other boundaries have been broken down through the unity we now have in Christ. At St. Luke's, to be "one parish . . . with room for everyone to be at home" means that no one person must adopt the culture of another to be welcomed and considered part of the family of God gathered there. It is worth noting here that no one expects the congregation to be able to be all things for all people. We have neither the gifts nor the resources for this.

Instead, God has given St. Luke's all the gifts it needs for the ministry to which God is calling it. This message is communicated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:7 and continues throughout that letter. In chapter 12, Paul compares the church to a body. As a body has many parts, God's Spirit has gifted members of the church with a variety of gifts and services; these all work together for the common good of all (Romans 8:28). While the gifts differ greatly, no gift is more or less important than the next.

Diversity

Diversity is not something to overcome but a gift from God's Spirit. Paul masterfully illustrates unity in diversity in the church in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. An entire chapter of the sixteen chapters in 1 Corinthians is dedicated to an unpacking of this image. He writes, "Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12). The parts of the body are all important and have their unique roles; the eyes, toes, heart, and stomach each has a critical role to play. Paul explains that though there are varieties of gifts, activities, and services, it is the same Spirit who activates them all (1 Corinthians 12:4-6). The letter of 1 Corinthians was written to a divided church. Rather than celebrating their diversity as a united people of God, they compared their spiritual gifts and ranked themselves according to what they thought more or less important.

This lesson remains important today. There are occupations society might deem menial. Those who perform them might even hold a minimal view of themselves. Can you imagine, however, if there were no longer trash collectors or janitors? While such

persons earn far less than CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, one can argue that their work is actually more important.

Conclusion

St. Luke's is a bilingual-multicultural congregation. Living into this vision is easier said than done. It might not be a surprise that the English-speaking community, which outnumbers the Spanish-speaking community roughly three to one, has a greater voice in leadership decisions. It is also true that within each community different cultures have more or less weight in discernment and decision-making. For example, younger members are less likely to attend planning meetings. Those that do attend often find their voice quickly quieted. When they are heard, they rarely see their opinions acted upon. There are also dominant cultures within the Spanish-speaking communities. The congregation has all the gifts it needs—and these gifts are equal in importance—but not everyone sees it this way. Creating space for every voice to be heard equally is an adaptive challenge.

“In my Father's house are many rooms” (John 14). “All the members of the body, though many, are one body” (1 Corinthians 12). “How is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?” (Acts 2:8). To be one in the Spirit means that God has brought us together—with our wide variety of cultural expressions, gifts, and services—and invites us to participate as equal partners with each other in the work God calls us to; that is, we proclaim peace, hope, and healing to all people.² The Spirit of God goes ahead of

² Lois Malcolm, *Holy Spirit: Creative Power in Our Lives*, Lutheran Voices Series (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2009), Kindle edition, Location 696.

the church in this work. Through the Spirit, the church affirms Jesus as Lord and works for the common good of all people.³

Imago Trinitatis

We have in this chapter considered the biblical witness of God’s activity among humanity, especially the work of God the Holy Spirit. This is the economic Trinity, the Trinity as it is shown in our history—literally “household management,” from the Greek *oikos* (house) and *nemein* (management). We have gotten a glimpse from the Christian Scripture of how God interacts within God’s self and with humanity. We now turn more specifically to what this tells us about God’s nature, about who God is within God’s self, and God’s own interpersonal relationships. This is the immanent Trinity—literally “remaining within” from the Latin *in* (in) and *manere* (remain). This is critically important for the church because our understanding of the nature of God impacts upon how we understand the world God made, each other, and ourselves. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, church, and world. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation’s governance. Consider this, if we understand God as a hierarchy of Father over Son and Son over Spirit, then we might also understand the church as a hierarchy with pastor over council and council over congregation, or family as husband over wife and wife over children. If, however, we understand God as a communion of three equal persons in one God and one God in three equal persons, then we might see the church and our own families as communions of equal yet differently gifted persons united in God’s mission.

³ Malcolm, 725, 731.

Trinitarian Development

To help summarize the development of our understanding of the Trinity, I turn to Leonardo Boff's *Trinity and Society* where he outlines a progression in Trinitarian thought.⁴ Irenaeus confronted the teaching of the Gnostics by presenting a picture of the economic Trinity based upon scripture. He focused on the salvific actions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as God revealed in human history. His writings made the important contribution of clarifying the presence of three distinct persons. Origen then introduced the idea that the Trinity is a "Dynamism of Communication." He wrote that the Trinity "should not be thought of as a reality complete in itself but as a process in everlasting realization." God is one but God is not alone. He used light as a metaphor saying, "As light gives brightness, so the Father originates the Son, and Father and Logos originate the Holy Spirit."

Tertullian presented a groundbreaking formula that came to express true faith in the Triune God. He wrote, "one substance, three persons." Tertullian claimed that the Trinity actually derives from unity within itself. "God is not just single, but one . . . not an entity closed in on himself, but a reality in process, a 'self-distribution' constituting second and third Persons who form part of God's substance and action." While only one substance, and, therefore, only one God, these three persons are specific, distinct, and objective individuals—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁵

⁴ Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 51-58.

⁵ Boff, 51-58.

The Cappadocian fathers then further developed the theology of the divine persons as interplay of relationship.⁶ Augustine expounded upon this relationship saying, “the three Persons are three respective subjects; that is, they are concerned with one another and related to one another. Being means being-for-itself; person, on the other hand, means being in relation to others or with others.”⁷ Aquinas affirmed the eternal nature of the Trinity, writing, “This Subsistent Being always exists in eternal relationship with the other Subsistent Beings. We come to understand the divine Persons as Subsistent Beings permanently and eternally related, forming one God or one divine nature.”⁸ So we have one God in three persons, three persons in one God, coequal, coexisting, and cohabitational. This is the unity and diversity of God’s very nature.

Un-Trinitarian Divergence

The world would have been better off had our Trinitarian theology built upon this notion of God as three equal persons in eternal communion. Instead, a linear understanding of the Trinity also developed. I will not dwell deeply in this but will address it briefly. Miroslav Volf addresses the negative impact of this linear Trinity in his work, *After Our Likeness*. In a linear Trinitarian theology, there are “hierarchical relations between the divine persons; the Father begets the Son and spirates (together with the Son?) the Spirit, and sends the Son and (with him?) the Spirit.”⁹ Volf outlines

⁶ Boff, 51-58.

⁷ Boff, 51-58.

⁸ Boff, 51-58.

⁹ Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 216.

how this “un-Trinitarian”¹⁰ view leads to a “series of selfish hierarchs.”¹¹ His argument is summarized well here:

Because the persons [of the Trinity] are “pure relations,” God can act externally only as the one undifferentiated divine being, that is, as *one* “person.” This one divine nature acting externally corresponds to the one church that together with Christ constitutes one subject and thus itself becomes capable of action. Hence for both the Trinity and for the church, the “one” is structurally decisive: the one divine Nature, the one Christ, the one Pope, and the one bishop. This in its own turn corresponds to the filioquistic linear doctrine of the Trinity; the Spirit is the third who proceeds from the Son and who accordingly within the economy of salvation cannot determine the Son. This is why although the Spirit can indeed vivify the structures of the church, the Spirit can hardly determine their form.¹²

I have already shown in the biblical lens, led by the Spirit, that it is simply untrue that the role of the Spirit is limited to the sending of either the Father or the Son. The logic behind this theology, therefore, collapses under the weight of the Scripture. However, the negative impact of this understanding of the Trinity is very real. It informed the ecclesiology of the medieval Roman Catholic Church and it is seen in our congregations today, even in many who are theoretically organized in the round. This un-Trinitarian theology is at work whenever a congregation functions hierarchically or wherever the gifts of one Christian are even perceived as being dominant to another.

Boff also rejects these un-Trinitarian theologies, writing, “theological visions of an a-trinitarian monotheism can serve as an ideological underpinning of power concentrated in one person: dictator, prince, monarch or religious leader.”¹³ He explains:

The disintegration of trinitarian understanding is due to our losing the memory of the essential perspective of the triune God: the communion between the divine

¹⁰ Volf, 217.

¹¹ Volf, 72.

¹² Volf, 214.

¹³ Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 20.

Persons. Upwards, outwards and inwards must co-exist and so open the way for us to achieve a right representation of the Christian God. In other words, the Father is always in the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is interiorized in the Father and in the Spirit. The Spirit unites the Father and the Son and is totally united to them.¹⁴

Yes, we have turned our attention away from the communal nature of the Trinity. We have allowed our own tendency to subjugate one human to another to shape our understanding of God's nature rather than allowing God's nature to shape us. I now return to the upward, inward, and outward communion between the divine Persons that we might find a better way through pure Trinitarian theology.

Reclaiming *Perichoresis*

In Genesis 1, “When God created the heavens and the earth . . . a wind/breath/spirit¹⁵ from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Genesis 1:1-3). In John 1 we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:1, 14a). We see the Trinity at work in these first words of Genesis. The Trinity was present, not as one god dominating another, but as one-in-three and three-in-one. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God in three equal yet distinguishable persons.¹⁶ This is *perichoresis* as Boff describes it: “cohabitation, co-existence, interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another . . . a complete circulation of life and a perfect coequality between the Persons, without any

¹⁴ Boff, 16.

¹⁵ The NRSV says only “wind.” I added the equally valid translations to show that this wind is the Holy Spirit or the breath of God.

¹⁶ Boff, *Trinity and Society*, 93.

anteriority or superiority of one over another.”¹⁷ There is no hierarchy, just one eternal communion of equal persons.

Returning to the economy revealed in the Scriptures, we find that these “Persons emerge as three Subjects who engage in mutual dialogue, love one another and are intimately related. Each Person is *for* the others, *with* the others and *in* the others.”¹⁸ This offers a very different model for human relationships. Being created in the image of God, we are not superiors and inferiors but differently gifted and equal persons in communion with God, each other, and the world.¹⁹ It is all too obvious that this is not where humanity is today. Thanks be to God, God’s relentless mission continues and God continues to work with us.²⁰

To understand God’s ultimate vision for human relationships with each other, we might look once more to the Trinity for an image of communion. There we find that “three ‘Differents’ uphold their difference one from another. . . .” and “by upholding the other and giving themselves totally to the other, they become ‘Differents’ in communion.”²¹ God will one day make this relationship of mutual love and respect a full and complete reality for all people. Unity and diversity are both possible and celebrated in God’s reign. In the meanwhile, we might participate in that communion by becoming a society that does not “tolerate class differences,” “dominate based on power,” “subject

¹⁷ Boff, 93.

¹⁸ Boff, 138.

¹⁹ Boff, 151.

²⁰ Boff, 158.

²¹ Boff, 151.

those who are different,” or marginalize the weak. Rather, we might become “a society that takes its inspiration from [God’s] trinitarian communion.”²²

Perichoresis Embodied

What might this look like in the church? There are two options within the model constitution for ELCA congregations. The lesser used option places the pastor as the president of the organization; this resembles Rothauge’s description. The more widely adopted option chooses a better path. It places the office of pastor alongside the church council in leading the congregation. Here we find the pastoral office and church council relating perichoretically to the Trinitarian presence of God; neither is superior nor inferior, they are equal participants in the process of discerning and living into God’s will. In a very perichoretic way, the pastoral office and church council join in partnership around the leadership of our Triune God. They are not alone in this work; the congregation is equally part of the process. The members of the body are brought in organizationally through ministry teams or committees. This entire organism lives in the context of the world and is in an ongoing conversation not only with God but its neighbor also. Discernment is a dual process of Dwelling in the Word and Dwelling in the World.²³

Feminist theologian Leddy M. Russell’s excellent work, *Church in the Round*, has helped to shape my understanding of congregational organization. Through her work, I find a model for leadership that has the power to draw in everyone, leaving no one at the

²² Boff, 151.

²³ Keifert, *We Are Here Now*, 74ff.

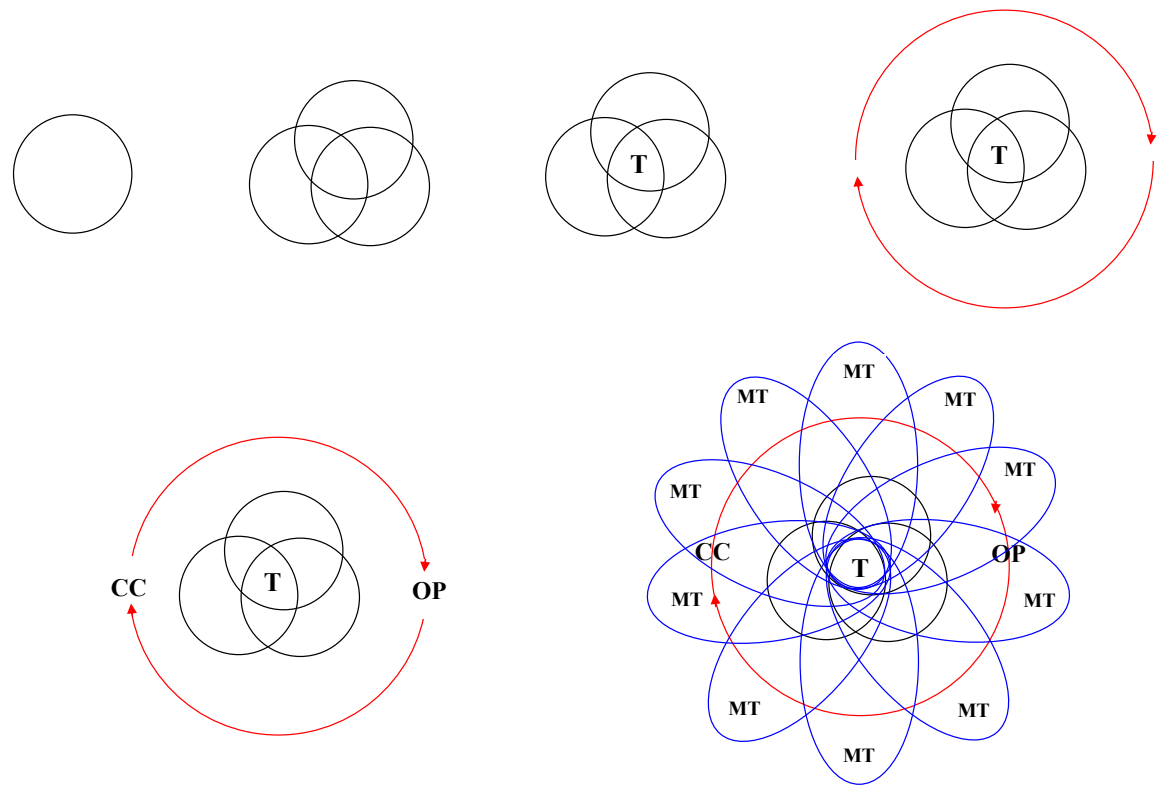
margins. Paraphrasing her writing using Trinitarian language, I see a Trinitarian Model where there are never too many leaders because power is not understood as a zero-sum game that requires competition and hoarding to “win.” Rather, it is a model where power and leadership gifts multiply as they are shared, and more and more persons become partners in communities of faith and struggle. Such a perspective is Trinitarian because it represents a position of advocacy for the full humanity of all people together. A Trinitarian style of leadership draws its model of behavior from a partnership paradigm. A Trinitarian leader is one who inspires others to be leaders, especially those on the margins of church and society who do not think they are somebody.²⁴

Each of the characteristics of *Church in the Round* are present in the bottom right image in figure 1, below. The image is constructed beginning in the top left corner in the following way. The top left circle can represent any person of the Trinity. Since we have an eternal three-in-one, one-in-three, it may be Son, Spirit, or Father. I added two more circles to represent the other persons of the Trinity. I do not do it in the traditional form that resembles a triangle but randomly and overlapping each other. Here no one comes before another or is superior to another. Unfortunately, this image is static. If it were dynamic, there would be movement in every direction. I added curved arrows around the circles to represent this dynamism.

St. Luke’s constitution places the office of pastor alongside the congregation council as equals. I added to the diagram the letters CC to represent the congregation council and OP for the office of Pastor. They are moving perichoretically as one around (or within) the Trinitarian presence of God. The whole congregation is brought into this

²⁴ Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*, 56-57.

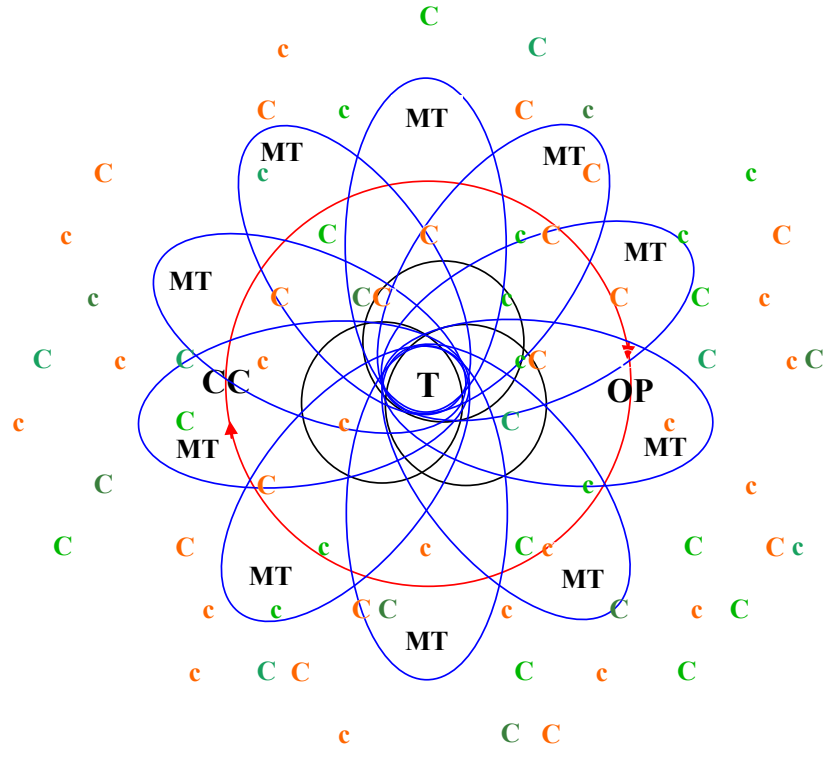
perichoretic communion through committees and ministry teams. Like petals on a flower, these ovals overlap each other, the church leadership, and God's presence.



T=Trinity, CC=Church Council, OP=Office of Pastor, MT=Ministry Team

Figure 1. In the Image of the Trinity

In summary, the Trinitarian presence of God is at the center. The office of pastor and congregational council are equal partners in leading the congregation in discerning and living into God's will. Committees and ministry teams are equal partners in developing and implementing goals and objectives consistent with the mutually discerned vision. The congregation is part of the discernment process, both formally and informally, through congregational meetings and ongoing dialogue with council members. The culturally diverse members of the congregation are represented in figure 2 by the letter C, below.



T=Trinity, CC=Church Council, OP=Office of Pastor,
MT=Ministry Team, C=Congregation Members

Figure 2. The Perichoretic Nature of God and the Church

Parts of this model are already part of St. Luke’s formal organizational structure: the pastoral office and council are equal partners in a mutual ministry, management teams are involved in discernment and implementation in their respective areas, and council members have engaged members in the narthex between services. Understanding the leadership model at St. Luke’s as a mutually shared process of discernment and implementation goes beyond the already challenging shift from pastoral church to program church ministry; it goes to the very core of who is actually at the center and how we organize ourselves around that one. This is one of the adaptive challenges the congregation continues to face.

Missio Dei

God's social nature leads automatically to God's nature as sending. God brought humanity into existence desiring to extend a relationship of mutual love and respect beyond God's Trinitarian self. It is no accident that the Scriptures tell many stories about fellowship; God desires to be among people—even Jesus' first miracle in the Gospel of John was turning water into wine at a wedding party (John 2). God wants to spend time with humanity. Therefore, God's mission is to restore the relationship we continually turn away from.

The sending nature of God is evidenced time and again in the course of humanity's endless cycle of turning away from the God who continually pursues us. God sets the nation of Ancient Israel apart to be "a light to the nations" (Isaiah 49:6). Through them "all nations of the earth [were to] be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). When it becomes clear that on its own humanity would continually turn away from God, God sends Jesus "not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:17). Jesus would be the light to the nations. Through him God would heal the relationship humanity broke and communion would be restored; not only for the Jews, but for all people as God had intended since creation (Luke 2:32). Beginning on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit sends the church to bear witness to the promise of redemption and reconciliation with God through Jesus' death and resurrection "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God has a mission: to be in communion with humanity. God's mission has a church: to participate with God in bringing peace, hope, and healing for all people.

In, With, and Around the World

The perichoretic relationship of Trinity, church, and world is dynamic and impossible to adequately represent graphically. Nonetheless, I offer figure 3, below.

T and the interlocking black circles represent the Trinity. They are both in the center and around the whole diagram. The red circle represents the dynamic ever-moving nature of their relationship.

CC and OP are Congregation Council and Office of Pastor. Their placement on the red circle represents their constant movement of discernment around and within the Trinity.

The blue ovals marked MT are ministry teams through which the whole congregation is brought into the work of the CC and OP.

The Cs are the diverse yet united members of the congregation.

The globes represents the world and everyone in it.

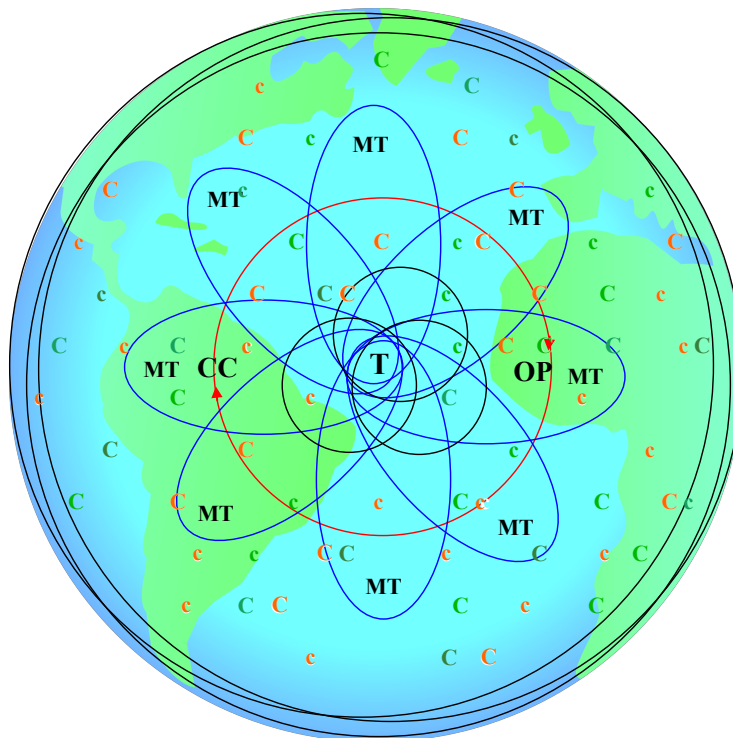


Figure 3. In, With, and Around the World²⁵

The Trinity is not confined to one place; rather, God's presence is everywhere. This is depicted by the interlocking circles in both the center of the image and around the outside. The globe fills the space because God is acting in, with, and around the world.

This graphic represents how a congregation participates with the Trinity in the world. The congregation council (CC) and the pastoral staff (OP) with the whole congregation through ministry teams (MT) discern together the will of God; this discernment is represented by the red curved arrows around the Trinity. Each of these individual pieces

²⁵ The image of the globe is from <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/202734.htm>.

work together and apart in the *missio Dei*. The various sized and colored Cs are the diverse members of the congregation; they participate in God's work in the church and in the world. Made in the *imago Trinitatis*, the church, in all of its diversity, is united with the Trinitarian God at work in, with, and around the world.

Conclusion: Social and Sending

In *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, Boff captures the essence of these two theological lenses and their relationship to each other. He writes, "We seek transformations in social relations because we believe in God, Trinity of Persons, in eternal interrelationship and infinite perichoresis. We seek a society that will be more an image and likeness of the Trinity, that will better reflect on the earth the trinitarian communion of heaven, and that will make it easier for us to know the mystery of communion of the divine Three."²⁶ The world will experience hope, peace, and healing as God's church lives out its nature as one created in the image of God.

In summary, the *missio Dei* is a natural product of the social and sending *imago Trinitatis*. The First People were created to be in relationship with God. They effectively removed themselves from this sacred society when they sinned against God and hid in shame. God sent the Spirit that our relationship with God might be healed. The Spirit comes that we might more fully be the human selves God intended for us to be.²⁷ We are invited not only into God's presence but also into the work of witnessing to God's promise of peace, hope, and healing among all people. Noah and Abram and Sarai were the first people recorded in the Hebrew Bible to be invited by God to participate in the

²⁶ Boff, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, 131.

²⁷ Malcolm, *Holy Spirit*, 547.

healing of God's sacred society, yet humanity continued to turn away from God. The work of the church is to embody this sacred society in the world today; to participate in God's mission to be in eternal communion with humanity; and to bear witness to the peace, hope, and healing that God is always working in the world.

The next chapter will explain the research methodology including the questionnaires and series of eight interventions utilized to help St. Luke's, a bilingual-multicultural congregation, clarify its identity as a reflection of the social nature of the Trinity in unity and diversity. The interventions can be understood through the lenses presented in chapters 3 and 4. The lenses were also used to develop the questionnaires, and the lenses will be used again in chapter 7 to better understand the findings and conclusions of this research. The biblical and theological lenses through which this project was designed and evaluated are all related to some aspect of the *imago Trinitatis* and *missio Dei*. Love the stranger, led by the Spirit, and unity and diversity in God's family are all aspects of these theological lenses. The ways in which church people understand this nature of God impacts upon the way their congregations are organized. This brings us back to the theoretical lenses of adaptive change, transculturation, and church size theory.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to determine how a series of action research interventions that focused on unity and diversity in the Trinity and the church might help a bilingual-multicultural congregation clarify its identity as a reflection or embodiment of God's Trinitarian nature (*imago Trinitatis*) in unity and diversity. The lenses found in chapters 3 and 4 presented an image of the perichoretic relationship between God, church, and world. Graphic representations of these relationships are found in the previous chapter and in appendix C. The interventions were intended to help the congregation learn and experience God's nature and the instruments were developed to test the effectiveness of the interventions.

Research Question

The question being researched in this study was:

How might action research interventions clarify a bilingual-multicultural congregation's identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity?

The congregation being studied in this research includes people from a variety of demographics. It is bilingual in that it offers worship and ministries in both English and Spanish. It is multicultural in that there are many subcategories within these two basic categories. There are English speakers and Spanish speakers of all ages. One might argue that teenagers from both populations have more in common with each other than they do with their own grandparents. Spanish speakers are not all from the same country and

English speakers descend from many countries, and some are not even white. Some members are first generation residents of the United States, others have had family on the continent since the Mayflower, and still others date back to the Native Americans. Some members rely on technology for almost everything they do in life, others will not even use email. Tastes in music styles, clothing, movies, and television vary widely. The congregation ranges politically from very “conservative” to very “liberal.” And, as was written about in the church size theory lens, there are also different cultures around church organization. These many differences and more are the cultural diversity of this bilingual-multicultural congregation. These realities and possibilities emphasize again why the terms “Anglo,” “Hispanic,” or “Latino” are inadequate for distinguishing between cultures in this context. At the heart of the research question is the idea that this rich diversity reflects the very nature of God as three-in-one and one-in-three, *imago Trinitatis*. The question is about whether or not a diverse congregation with many homogeneous units can understand itself as a reflection or embodiment of this Trinity who, while it is quite diverse, is also completely united as one God. Can unity and diversity become the central homogenizing unit for St. Luke’s?

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed was action research using transformative mixed methods. Action research is used as a methodology when the researcher is seeking to bring about some form of change in the population he or she is studying, the researcher is also a participant in the system being studied, and the researcher will share his or her study and findings with the larger community that others might learn and possibly build

upon the research.¹ The two basic goals of action research are “to solve a problem and to contribute to science.”² It was my intention to facilitate, using a variety of interventions, a transformation in the congregation’s understanding of both the Trinitarian nature of God and of its own reflection of that nature. I desired this outcome for both the congregation as a whole and for individual members. The effectiveness of the interventions was evaluated through analysis of three sets of data: data collected through baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys; data collected at a series of town hall meetings; and memos and notes of relevant conversations and events I recorded throughout the process. I share the results of this research with the larger community for consideration and education through this paper.

Biblical Framework

AR is a traditional action reflection model. A researcher intervenes in a situation by putting into practice some element of learning through one or more actions, reflects on what might occur as a result, learns from the process, and reports what he or she learns through the experience that others might benefit. We see this modeled by Jesus in Luke 8 through 10. In Luke 8, Jesus models the ministry to which he will call His disciples. He teaches them about the Kingdom of God through parables and heals people of many different kinds of illness.

¹Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ²and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. ³He said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. ⁴Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. ⁵Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are

¹ Coghlan and Brannick, *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*, 43-49.

² Coghlan and Brannick, 48.

leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”⁶ They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere (Luke 9).

Verses 1-2: Having modeled the ministry to which he was calling them—possibly Jesus’ first intervention for this portion of his work—Jesus brought His twelve closest disciples to himself. It was time for them to act—the second intervention. *Verses 3-5:* Not only did Jesus model the work with which he would charge them, he also carefully trained them before sending them out. Their mission was clearly laid out; and, like an action research study, it could be replicated by someone else. *Verse 6:* Having been trained, the disciples went out following the directions as Jesus had presented them.

They returned in 9:10. “On their return the apostles told Jesus all they had done. he took them with him and withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida.” Jesus sent the twelve into action. They returned, reported what they experienced, and reflected on it with Jesus. The rest of chapter 9 builds upon chapter 8 as Jesus continues His own ministry of healing and teaching—we might call this a third intervention. This time the audience is much larger. Verses 12-17 recount how Jesus fed five thousand people who had come to hear him and to be healed.

This series of healings and teachings leads to another intervention very much like the one in 9:1-6, only six times larger. *Verses 1-2:* Jesus explains the importance of the effort. *Verses 3-11:* Just as in chapter 9, Jesus very clearly lays out the process.

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. ²He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. ⁴Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’ ⁶And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move

about from house to house. ⁸Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; ⁹cure the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.’ ¹²I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town” (Luke 10).

Notice that there is far more detail in this chapter. It may be because unlike the twelve, these seventy had less contact with Jesus and needed more training. It might also be that Jesus learned from the experience of the twelve that some additional training was needed. Either way, Jesus employed an action reflection model in which he was clearly a participant; therefore, we find in Luke 8-10 a biblical example of action research with Jesus as the researcher looking to bring about transformation in the lives of two populations: His disciples and the world through their ministry. While Jesus’ method was qualitative—conversations with those he sent—the method for my research was mostly quantitative with qualitative mixed in.

The Research Design

The research process consisted of a series of eight interventions: (1) a vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe, (2) a Christmas pageant, (3) Las Posadas and celebration, (4) a bilingual worship service with an Epiphany pageant and multicultural potluck lunch, (5) a five-part sermon series on The Image of the Trinity, (6) the Presentation of Our Lord celebration, (7) a series of four town hall meetings with round table discussions, and (8) a Church Council retreat. The interventions were a combination of existing ministries incorporated into the project as interventions, existing ministries modified in order to function as interventions, and new ministries modified to also serve as interventions. Baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys of the whole population were conducted for

analysis and assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions. My own journal reflections, table notes from the town hall meetings with round table discussions, and council retreat notes were also used to triangulate with the surveys. In line with Luke 8-10, data from the baseline and midpoint surveys helped determine the focus of some of the presentations and discussions at the town hall meetings.

Baseline Survey

While not labeled as an intervention, analysis of the data suggests that the baseline questionnaire was itself an intervention. It introduced language and concepts that were new to many in the congregation. The wide range of responses on several Likert scale questions led to conversation around the understanding of key words and ideas. This led to dialogue focused on the ideas most relevant for the project. This will be explored further in chapters 6 and 7.

Intervention 1: Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe

Each December 11, many Spanish-speaking cultures around the world celebrate the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe. It is traditionally a Roman Catholic holiday commemorating the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of the Americas. An image of the virgin is enshrined at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.³ This is a multicultural event as it is not part of the cultural heritage of all the congregation's Spanish-speaking members. In fact, it was only introduced in 2015, fourteen years into the existence of the Spanish-language ministry of St. Luke's. The vigil is a worship

³ *Wikipedia, s.v.* "Our Lady of Guadalupe," accessed March 12, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Guadalupe.

service that includes readings, prayers, and music. Much of this is about the Virgin Mary. The vigil began at 11 p.m. on December 11 and ended at midnight with a song dedicated to the Virgin. The assembly then gathered for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

The event was advertised in both Spanish and English publications. Its significance was explained during Sunday morning worship to the English-speaking community. The research did not require English-speaking members to attend the event. The education itself was considered part of the intervention. The vigil was held in Spanish with no translation into English. It was attended only by members of the Spanish-speaking community, with the exception of me (one of their pastors and researcher). The vigil is an example of unity and diversity as it demonstrates how persons of diverse cultural expressions within the Spanish-speaking community can be united as one people in learning and celebration.

Intervention 2: Christmas Pageant

Each year the English-speaking Sunday school program presents the Christmas story for the congregation. This has taken place during either a worship service or between services. With the 2017 change to the worship and education schedules, the plan was to incorporate children from the whole parish who, in theory, would all be students in the blended Sunday school program. The pageant would naturally be bilingual. Cultural change, however, can be slow. Children who worship at the Spanish service were not attending Sunday school and the pageant was completely in English. It was offered at 11:15 a.m., between the 10 a.m. English and 12 p.m. Spanish services, but only English-speaking members (mostly the families of the children) were in attendance.

This intervention was meant to embody unity and diversity across not only language differences but age as well. The participation of youth and family members of the congregation is an important part of the congregation's reflection of the Trinity in unity and diversity. Do older members see children's ministries as necessary for their own faith life? This will be considered in chapter 6.

Intervention 3: Las Posadas and Celebration

This event commemorates Mary and Joseph's inability to find a place to stay on Christmas Eve. Like the vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe, Las Posadas (the Inns) is not part of the cultural heritage of all Spanish-speaking Christians and it was also introduced at St. Luke's for the first time in 2015. Like the Christmas pageant, Las Posadas has the potential to demonstrate unity and diversity across cultures, such as language and age. The event was held on the Friday evening before Christmas. It began with worship in the church and moved to the fellowship hall for a celebration. The worship was conducted in Spanish and was attended mostly by Spanish-speaking members. The several English-speaking members in attendance were children, their families, and other members who work with children at St. Luke's.

The English-speaking community was taught during a Sunday morning service about the event's significance before it took place. This education brought it into the research as an intervention. It is another example of unity and diversity as it demonstrates how persons of diverse cultural expressions can be united as one people in learning and celebration. The event was advertised in both Spanish and English publications. This intervention did not require English-speaking members of the community to attend.

Intervention 4: Bilingual Worship, Epiphany Pageant, and Multicultural Potluck Lunch

Tres Reyes (Three Kings, or the Arrival of the Magi) is celebrated on Epiphany Sunday by Spanish-speaking members of St. Luke's. This began shortly after the Spanish-language service was established in 2001. With the 2017 change of the worship and education schedule, an Epiphany pageant was written as a second part to the Christmas pageant. The lack of attendance of Spanish-speaking children in the Sunday school led to alteration of the script. Spanish acting parts and songs were removed from the program. Bible readings, however, were read in both languages and the event became bilingual. Unlike the Christmas program, this pageant was offered at an 11 a.m. bilingual worship service, which was the only worship service that day. The community gathered in the fellowship hall after worship for a *multicultural culinary celebration* (as it was called in the sermon) where the aroma of foods from around the world, particularly Europe, Central America, and South America, filled the space; and English and Spanish languages were heard spoken by people of all ages. This intervention was intended to embody unity and diversity through the coming together of a bilingual-multicultural congregation through worship, education, and fellowship. It was communicated to the congregation in Spanish and English through both oral and print publications.⁴

Intervention 5: The Image of the Trinity Sermon Series

This intervention was intended to teach language and ideas about the social nature of the Trinity and the church as a reflection of this nature through preaching from the Scripture. I preached a five-week sermon series at both English and Spanish services

⁴ See appendix B.

beginning on Epiphany Sunday, January 7 and ending on February 4, the Sunday during which the church celebrated The Presentation of Our Lord.⁵ Articles in both languages and in both printed and electronic newsletters accompanied each installment. The themes covered were: *Introduction to The Image of the Trinity*; *The Nature of the Trinity*; *The Nature of the Church*; *Unity and Diversity in the Church*; and *In, With, and Around the World*. Each of the five weeks was accompanied by a graphic, included with each sermon in appendix C.⁶

The series paired nicely with the lectionary calendar. The arrival of the magi presenting gifts from three different lands worked well as an introduction to the series. The readings for the second Sunday were particularly fitting for the Nature of the Trinity, as they included the presence of the three persons of the Trinity at both Jesus' Baptism and the creation in Genesis 1. The Presentation of Our Lord was commemorated on the fifth week; this was a good theme for week five in the series, as it reflected on Jesus' role and the church's role in being a light in the world. A survey of the whole congregation was conducted at the conclusion of the series to evaluate its effectiveness. Only English-speakers completed a questionnaire, though the survey was conducted in both English and Spanish. This will be reviewed in chapter 6. In the meantime, it is interesting to note that some received the series very well and others said it was "a waste of time." This was true for both the sermons themselves and the accompanying graphics.

⁵ Translations for the sermons were generated through Google Translate and corrected by the associate pastor.

⁶ The articles are found beginning in appendix B. The sermons are found in appendix C.

Intervention 6: The Presentation of Our Lord Celebration

The Presentation of Our Lord is a Christian holiday celebrated each year on February 2, the fortieth day after Christmas. On this day, the church remembers Jesus' presentation at the temple in accordance to Jewish custom. The Gospel of Luke tells us that the prophets Simeon and Anna prophesied that Jesus is the light to shine in the darkness, the one to bring salvation to the people of Israel. This day marks the official end of the Christmas season in older Roman Catholic traditions.⁷ Customs around this holiday vary from culture to culture. The church calendar at St. Luke's is adjusted each year so that the holiday, which often falls on a weekday, is celebrated on a Sunday. The festivities included highlighting the presentation in all three worship services, the culmination of the sermon series described in intervention 5, and a party after the Spanish service in the fellowship hall.

Three specific actions were taken to make this annual celebration an intervention for this research. First, the families who were to supply the meal were selected randomly from among both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking members on Epiphany Sunday. This was done by placing figurines representing the baby Jesus in the traditional Rosca de Reyes (Kings' Bread). Those who found a baby Jesus in their slice of bread would contribute toward the meal. This tradition has been practiced at St. Luke's since 2015. This year, in light of the single bilingual service on Epiphany, there was greater

⁷ Gretchen Filz, "Does Christmas End on Epiphany?" Get Fed, January 6, 2017, <https://www.catholiccompany.com/getfed/does-christmas-end-on-epiphany>.

participation among the English-speaking community; and, therefore, higher participation in the celebration on February 4.

The second action added was the final sermon in the series on the *imago Trinitatis*. Drawing upon the theme of Jesus as light to the world, the sermon completed the series with a presentation on how God's light shines in, with, and around the world; and, how this is embodied by a diverse yet united church. The survey period for the midpoint census also began on this day.

The third action taken to adapt this practice for the research was very visual and lasted throughout the Christmas and Epiphany seasons. A practice was adopted from some of our Spanish-speaking cultures. A life-size doll representing the baby Jesus was placed in a manger in the narthex on Christmas Eve. It was moved to the base of the altar on Epiphany Sunday and remained there until the end of the Presentation of Our Lord service. At that time, it was taken with a family to remain at their home until the following Christmas season. While this practice is not part of the culture of our English-speaking community, the doll was left in the church for all services as it illustrated the congregation's unity in diversity. The practice was also verbally explained on several Sundays to the English-speaking community that they might understand the significance of this practice in the cultural heritages of their sisters and brothers.

Intervention 7: Town Hall Meetings with Round Table Discussions

A series of four town hall meetings—one in each month of February, March, April, and May—were held in order to explore various issues in the life of the congregation. Several topics overlapped with this research project, such as the nature of the Trinity, the nature of the church, the congregation's vision statement, and church size

theory. The series, therefore, fit naturally as an intervention. The council's predetermined general direction of the conversations would include a discussion around the vision statement (addressing the English-Spanish cultural differences) and the establishment of ministry teams (addressing the pastoral church-program church differences). It was understood, however, that each session would inform the next and that the Spirit or congregation might bring the conversation in unexpected directions that were not part of the original plan. Permission to use data from these sessions for this research project was received from the congregation through implied consent. Participants were reminded at each event that any data collected might be used for this thesis. This was done through verbiage similar to the implied consent found at the beginning of the three questionnaires.⁸ They were also told that if at any time anyone did not want data from their table's conversation to be shared, they need only speak with me and I would not use those notes. No one approached me to withhold data.

The samples for these events were convenience samples. The invitations went to the entire congregation of St. Luke's and all were encouraged to attend. In order to maximize participation from all demographics, the events included potlucks suppers, they were held in both English and Spanish, and professional childcare was offered. Most of the sessions followed the same basic format. I offered series of brief presentations that were followed by table discussions around focused questions related to the presentation. Each table then had an opportunity to share a brief synopsis of its conversation. Church council members were assigned to each table as facilitators/scribes. It was their task to keep participants on subject and to take notes. They were not to be contributing

⁸ The questionnaires are found in appendix A.

participants as they would have their opportunity to offer their thoughts and opinions at the annual council retreat in May. As scribes, they were also charged with reading their notes back to their table participants to assure accuracy and edit as necessary. They were given all of these instructions at a monthly church council meeting and again via a monthly email with a list of who would serve at the upcoming sessions. The directions were also left at each table the afternoon or evening of the meeting.

The presentations of the first town hall meeting in February were offered in English with Spanish summary translations given at the Spanish-speaking tables. A slideshow, which was displayed in English, was translated into Spanish and distributed for those who spoke Spanish. All round table discussions were conducted in one language, either Spanish or English. Church council members served as scribes and recorded notes. There were seven tables; five spoke English and two Spanish. The topics of the first session included life cycles of ministries past and present, a review of the congregational strengths and opportunities previously identified by the council, and a conversation around the meaning of the congregation's vision statement.

The pastoral staff decided to separate the Spanish-speakers after the first town hall meeting and create additional sessions. This was because the limited amount of translation offered proved to be a limitation for the Spanish-speakers. Scheduling also proved to be a challenge and the Spanish-speakers completely missed out on a session. The sessions that were sessions two and three for English-speakers were combined into one session for Spanish-speakers. The second English session covered three topics: (1) a continuation of the conversation on the vision statement, including a discussion about whether or not it is time for a new one; (2) a consideration of benefactor and

companionship ministries, which led to a lengthy discussion on how the pastoral staff and members of the congregation accompany other members of the congregation; and (3) a questionnaire and conversation around the marks of discipleship as presented by Pastor Michael Foss in his book, *Power Surge*.⁹ The third English session included three topics: (1) a conversation about the congregation's organization, including a discussion of question twenty-four in the baseline questionnaire;¹⁰ (2) a lengthy conversation on the pastoral church and program church models, including participation in a survey by Roy Oswald that helps a congregation in its self-understand regarding church size;¹¹ and (3) a presentation and discussion around the existing (mostly business) and missing (mostly discipleship) ministry teams at St. Luke's, see figure 4 below. At the second Spanish town hall meeting, I simply asked participants what they wanted to talk about. I spoke mostly in English and participants spoke mostly in Spanish. Someone would translate into Spanish or English when translation was needed. The participant-directed conversation covered the same general themes as the third English session; that is, church organization and the need for every member to participate in leadership.

⁹ Michael Foss, *Power Surge: Six Marks of Discipleship for a Changing Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000).

¹⁰ "There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation."

¹¹ Roy M. Oswald, "How to Minister Effectively in Family, Pastoral, Program, and Corporate-Sized Churches," *Enrichment Journal*, accessed October, 17, 2017, http://enrichmentjournal.org/200702/200702_000_various_size.cfm. Found in this paper on page 241 in appendix B.

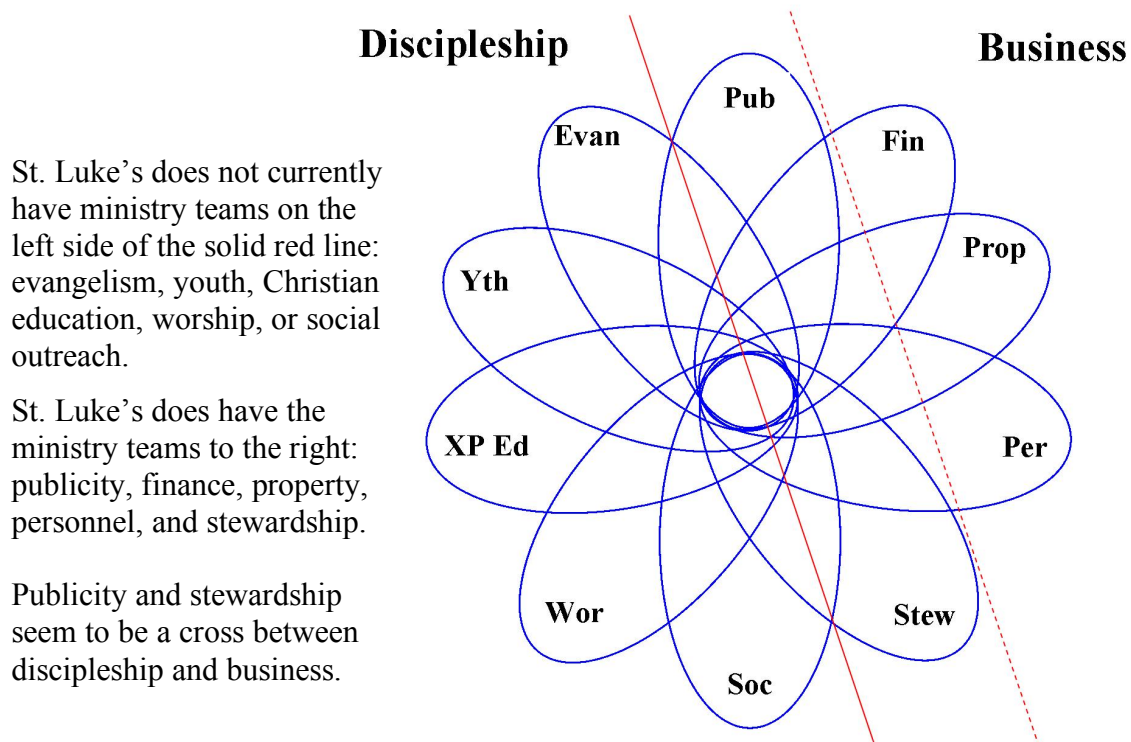


Figure 4. Missing and Existing Ministry Teams

The fourth town hall meeting was also the congregation's annual program meeting. Presentations were given in English. A professional translator who worships at St. Luke's offered her talents and translated the entire event. The congregation had mixed opinions of this approach. All but the final five minutes of the sessions was taken up with business items that did not continue the town hall meeting conversations around unity and diversity. Results from analysis of the data from these four sessions are presented in chapter 6. A reflection on the data and the realities of being a congregation with two spoken languages and multiple cultural expressions is found in chapter 7.

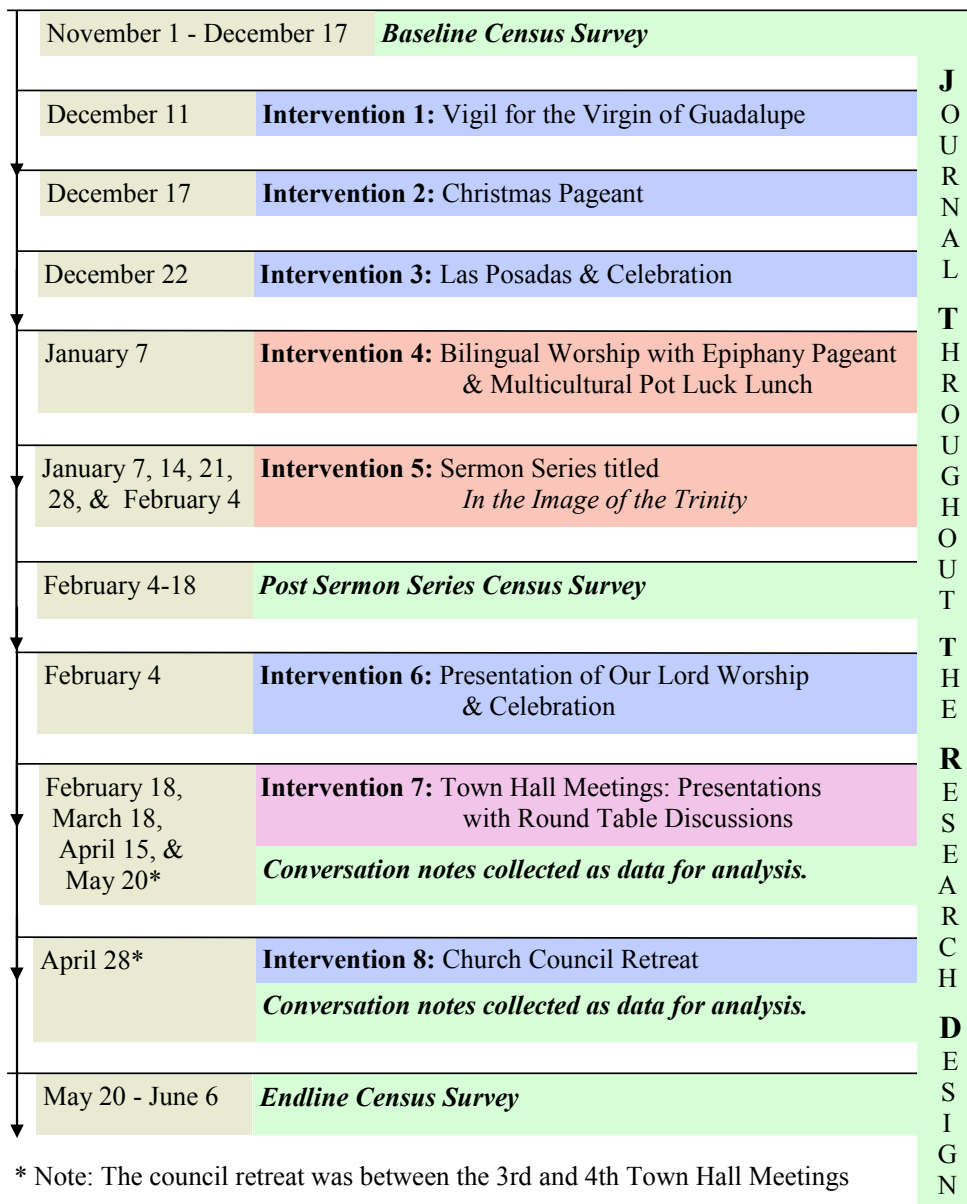
Intervention 8: Church Council Retreat

The church council met in retreat in the month of May to review their notes from the February, March, and April town hall meetings. The plan was to meet from 9 a.m.

until 3 p.m. I was ill the day of the council retreat and only attended the first hour of the event. The council president told me that he did not expect the meeting to run much past noon. The council was energized, however, and met as originally planned. Notes from the retreat were assembled, reviewed for accuracy, and forwarded to me for conversation. Much of the conversation followed up on the April town hall meeting and focused on the pastoral church and program church models. The council was later reminded that some of their notes from the conversation are relevant to this action research project. Permission to use these notes was obtained by informed consent.

The Research Design Illustrated

Figure 5, below, graphically presents the flow of the research project and is color coded to show related items. Items with a green background were ways data were collected for this research. The three types of interventions are colored cyan, salmon, and mauve. Cyan is for existing ministries that occurred in their usual way but were incorporated into the research because of their relevance to the research; this includes the vigil for the Virgin, the Christmas pageant, Las Posadas, the Presentation of Our Lord celebration, and the church council retreat. Salmon is for the regularly occurring activities that were modified to become interventions; this includes the bilingual worship and pageant for Epiphany with the multicultural potluck lunch and the sermon series. Mauve is for the town hall meetings; this series was new to St. Luke's and, though it was useful for this research project, it would have happened with or without it.



Legend
Data Collecting Opportunities
Existing ministry incorporated as an intervention
Existing ministry modified as an intervention for the Research Project
New Ministry incorporated as an intervention for the Research Project

Figure 5. The Research Design

Population

This action research intended to study and understand the impact of a series of interventions on the congregation’s self-understanding as a reflection of the unity and

diversity found in the social nature of the Trinity, and the impact of these interventions on individual members' understanding of themselves and the Trinity. The population studied was the whole congregation of St. Luke's. Roughly 75% of the weekly worship attendance attends the English language services and 25% the Spanish service. Children and youth make up about 15% of the weekly attendance. There are also about a dozen weekly online listeners.¹² The surveys were conducted both electronically using Google Forms¹³ and on paper.

All members were invited and encouraged to participate through Sunday morning announcements, the weekly bulletin insert, and the weekly electronic newsletter.¹⁴ All surveys were conducted in both English and Spanish with both electronic and paper versions available. Participants chose their preferred language and method. Among the Spanish-speaking population are those who neither read nor write. An opportunity to have the questionnaires read to them was offered after worship one Sunday following the Spanish service. Children and youth were also included in the invitation to participate, though they were never specifically asked as an individual group, such as through the youth ministry email. No children or youth participated in either the baseline or midpoint survey. There were youth from the Spanish-speaking community who did participate in the endline survey. This will be presented in the following chapter.

¹² Only IP addresses are shown in the audio streaming program. Each "listener" represents one or more persons.

¹³ Google Forms is part of the G Suite by Google and is available at <https://gsuite.google.com>.

¹⁴ These materials are found in appendix B.

Research Instruments

The baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys of the whole population were conducted via mixed methods questionnaires—while most questions were quantitative, there were also sections within the questionnaires for participants to describe topics in their own words.¹⁵ The opened-ended long answer sections revealed that participants did not share a common understanding of critical words and phrases in the research. This will be discussed in chapter 6. Additional data relevant to the research were collected during the series of town hall meetings. This process was described above.

The congregation was surveyed three times: (1) at the beginning of the research, from November 1 through December 17, to establish a baseline; (2) at the conclusion of the sermon series, from February 4-18, to establish a midpoint while the series was fresh in the population's mind; and (3) at the conclusion of the interventions, from May 20 to June 6, to determine an endline. In all cases, the surveys were open for three weeks and included paper and electronic options in both English and Spanish. Completion of the questionnaires implied consent; this was explained on a cover page for each questionnaire and was reviewed during Sunday worship at the beginning of each survey period. A section for guardian consent, including signature, was included on the cover page of each questionnaire.

The questionnaires were developed in accordance with the concepts and themes introduced in the lenses. Transculturation and love the stranger led to questions about equality at church and in the world. Questions about ordained and lay roles in the church represented church size theory, led by the Spirit, and unity and diversity in God's family.

¹⁵ The questionnaires can be found in appendix A.

Unity and diversity in God's family also led to questions about spiritual gifts and the celebration of diverse expressions of the Spirit in the church and everyday life. Questions about God's nature, particularly regarding equality represented *imago Trinitatis*. *Missio Dei* brought an exploration of our participation in God's work through the sharing of our gifts with others. This action research project sought to bring adaptive change. There were no specific questions for this lens; rather, comparisons of the responses between surveys would speak to this.

Field Testing the Instruments

Both the paper and electronic versions of the questionnaires were field-tested by eight to ten persons not participating in the research project. These persons were similar demographically to the research population. Two field-testers reviewed the translation and made corrections as needed. The preference of the testers for the format of the Google Form version led to a reworking of the paper version. The original had a matrix for the Likert scale sections; the revision required more paper but was easier to read and complete.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data statistics from the baseline, midpoint, and endline questionnaires—including the total numbers of responses, the frequency of responses by category, the percent by category, and the mean where appropriate—are reported and analyzed in chapter 6. These data were analyzed using IBM's SPSS¹⁶ software to

¹⁶ SPSS is a product of IBM and is available at <https://www.ibm.com/analytics/data-science/predictive-analytics/spss-statistical-software>.

describe the results and to determine whether or not there were statistically significant differences between means on a variety of variables around unity and diversity. Analysis was performed using inferential statistics, including independent t-tests and paired t-tests. The data were paired across all three surveys using date of birth as the identifier for the paired t-tests. Particular attention was given to possible impacts of gender, language, and participation in specific interventions.

Qualitative data from the questionnaires and town hall meeting notes were analyzed and coded according to theme using the first two steps of the method described in Charmaz's, *Constructing Grounded Theory*.¹⁷ NVIVO software was also used to count word frequency.¹⁸ The first level of *in vivo* coding was to identify key words or phrases.¹⁹ *In vivo* literally means "in life." This level of coding begins with the actual words of participants. Words that appeared in the question asked were typically not included in the coding; for example, "culture" in a question that asks for an explanation of culture. Frequently used words or words of particular interest were read in their context to understand better the participant's intended meaning; for example, the context defines whether "service" means social outreach or worship. The second level was focused coding.²⁰ *In vivo* codes were grouped into categories and given titles related to the category. I concluded the coding of the data at this level because there was not enough

¹⁷ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*.

¹⁸ NVivo is a product of QSR International and is available at <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/home>.

¹⁹ Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 113.

²⁰ Charmaz, 113.

information to code further. Notes from the council retreat were analyzed for themes and are also presented in the following chapter.

In the next chapter, I present my descriptions of the data gathering events from my journal notes; the qualitative and quantitative data from the baseline, midpoint, and endline surveys; and, the findings from the church council retreat. This research studied the possible impact of specific interventions on the population's understanding around its identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity; the data are, therefore, put into conversation to see how participation in various activities may have shaped this identity. In chapter 7, I will view the findings of chapter 6 through the lenses of chapters 3 and 4, discuss effectiveness of the interventions based on these results, and consider possible implications for the larger church. In the epilogue, I will offer reflections on the research project and on what I learned about myself in the process.

CHAPTER 6
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

Review of Research Process

The purpose of this research was to determine how a series of interventions that focused on unity and diversity in the Trinity and the church might help a bilingual-multicultural congregation clarify its identity as a reflection or embodiment of God's Trinitarian nature, *imago Trinitatis*, in unity and diversity. The interventions presented in chapter 5 intended to help the congregation learn and experience God's nature; the instruments were developed to test the effectiveness of the interventions. The eight interventions were: (1) a vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe; (2) a Christmas pageant; (3) Las Posadas and celebration; (4) bilingual worship, Epiphany pageant, and multicultural potluck lunch; (5) a five-part sermon series on The Image of the Trinity; (6) the Presentation of Our Lord celebration; (7) series of four town hall meetings with round table discussions; and (8) church council retreat.

Three surveys of the population were conducted. The whole congregation of St. Luke's was given opportunities to participate. The first was a baseline survey. The second was a midpoint survey conducted after the sermon series. The third was an endline survey at the conclusion of the research. These surveys gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. Other data for this research are from town hall meeting notes, notes from the church council retreat, and my own journal. In this chapter, I will first present the demographics of the population that participated in the baseline and endline surveys

(midpoint survey results will be presented later in the section on the sermon series). I will then share qualitative data from the final question on the baseline survey. The third section will be data regarding the bilingual events: the vigil, pageants, posadas, and celebratory meals. The qualitative and quantitative data regarding the sermon series will follow. I will then come to the town hall meetings, which I present apart from the bilingual interventions due to their complexity. I will then present the data from the church council retreat. The last data to be presented will be additional quantitative and qualitative comparisons of the baseline and endline surveys.

The Baseline Survey

Responses to the English version of the survey began to be received the same Wednesday afternoon it was first distributed with the congregation's weekly electronic newsletter and posted to the website. The paper edition was distributed the following Sunday. Both paper and electronic versions were received during the survey period, November 1 through December 17. The cutoff date was December 11, the day of the first intervention, but two paper edition questionnaires were submitted and accepted after the eleventh. The Spanish version was also available in paper and distributed electronically with the weekly newsletter and posted on the website. Only the paper edition of the Spanish questionnaire was completed; this was done after worship on Sunday, November 12. The survey was read line-by-line in Spanish in order to assist those who were not fully literate. This process took over an hour. In contrast, the English-speaking participants typically completed their questionnaires in less than fifteen minutes.

The following demographics are found in table 1, below. Those who speak English accounted for 88.9% of the completed questionnaires. Nearly three times as

many women completed the survey than men, 71.4% as opposed to 28.6%. Slightly more than one half of the participants were sixty-five years of age or more, and nearly one-third were thirty-five to sixty-four. Respondents were about equal in whether or not they were always Lutheran (55.6% to 44.4%). Most (69.8%) had served in a leadership role in the prior two years. Most (82.5%) had also participated in one or more bilingual events at St. Luke's. Longevity at the congregation was the most diverse in its response; and, most of the responses fell in the extreme categories; 55.6% of those who participated had been with the congregation twenty-six years or more and 23.8% had been members five years or less. One other survey question I will include with the demographic information is "When you pray, which person of the Trinity do you address mostly?" *Father* received 27.0% of the responses, no one said Son or Spirit, 17.5% said they address them equally, and 55.5% said they simply refer to God as God or Lord. Data from this survey will be presented later in comparisons to the midpoint and endline surveys.

Table 1. Frequencies for Demographics of the Baseline Survey

Demographic	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
English-Speaking	56	88.9	88.9
Spanish-Speaking	7	11.1	100.0
Female	45	71.4	71.4
Male	18	28.6	100.0
Age (0-17yrs)	0	0.0	0.0
Age (18-34yrs)	2	3.2	3.2
Age (35-64yrs)	21	33.3	36.5
Age (65+yrs)	33	52.4	88.9
No response	7	11.1	100.0
Longevity at St. Luke's (0-5)	15	23.8	23.8
Longevity at St. Luke's (6-15)	7	11.1	34.9
Longevity at St. Luke's (16-25)	5	7.9	42.8
Longevity at St. Luke's (26+)	35	55.6	98.4

Table 1 (continued)

Demographic	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No response	1	1.6	100.0
Always Lutheran	35	55.6	55.6
Other denomination	28	44.4	100.0
Participated in bilingual activities	52	82.5	82.5
Did not participate	10	15.9	98.4
No response	1	1.6	100.0
Served on a committee in last 2yrs	44	69.8	69.8
Did not serve	19	30.2	100.0
Addresses God in prayer as:			
Father	17	27.0	27.0
Son	0	0.0	27.0
Holy Spirit	0	0.0	27.0
all equally	11	17.5	44.5
simply refer to one, ex God/Lord	35	55.5	100.0

The Endline Survey

The survey period for the endline survey was scheduled to be May 20 to June 6. The endline questionnaires were available in paper form at the church and electronically through the weekly newsletter and website. Responses to the English version were received throughout that period; two additional paper copies were submitted on June 10 and accepted. I made lunch for the Spanish-speaking community and invited them to complete paper edition questionnaires on June 6 following the Spanish worship service. The meal was to encourage participation and to show my appreciation for the hour plus it took to complete the baseline questionnaire. Having the senior pastor and his wife prepare and serve the meal was likely an intervening variable on responses, particularly in the area of sense of equality. Nearly fifty members attended the lunch and twenty-four completed a questionnaire. Three bilingual members assisted with literacy, as needed. No

other Spanish questionnaires were completed, either electronically or on paper, aside from the twenty-four completed this day.

The endline survey had seventy participants, forty-six completed a questionnaire in English and twenty-four completed one in Spanish. Though the questionnaire asked respondents to check a box for only one language, English or Spanish, five members checked both boxes and one person left it blank. I added *English and Spanish* to table 2 to reflect this. These six questionnaires were all completed in Spanish and were counted among the Spanish-speakers for data analysis.

The following demographics are presented in table 2, below. Those who speak English accounted for 65.7% of the completed questionnaires. Those who speak Spanish completed 25.7% and those who indicated English and Spanish completed 7.1% of the questionnaires. More than two times as many women participated in the survey than men, 67.1% compared to 32.9%. Slightly less than one-half of the participants were sixty-five years of age or more (47.1%) and more than one-third were thirty-five to sixty-four (41.4%). Almost two-thirds of respondents indicated they were always Lutheran (65.7%) and had served in a leadership role in the prior two years (64.3%). Over three-quarters of the participants (75.7%) had participated in one or more bilingual events at St. Luke's. Longevity at the congregation was once again the most diverse in its response: 24.3% had been at the congregation zero to five years, 27.1% indicated six to fifteen years, 10.0% said sixteen to twenty-five years, and 38.6% of those who participated had been with the congregation twenty-six years or more.

The population for this survey was younger than the baseline. This is mostly due to the larger percentage of Spanish-speaking participation in this survey, including

members from the Spanish-speaking community who are under eighteen-years-old. Most of these youth indicated both English and Spanish as primary languages. Four other demographic shifts from the baseline to the endline survey resulted from the increased Spanish-speaking participation. These include the lower frequencies in longevity at St. Luke's, whether or not the person was a lifelong Lutheran, participation in bilingual activities, and leadership roles.

Table 2. Frequencies for Demographics of the Endline Survey

Demographic	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
English-Speaking	46	65.7	65.7
Spanish-Speaking	18	25.7	91.4
Speak English and Spanish	5	7.2	98.6
No response	1	1.4	100.0
Female	47	67.1	67.1
Male	23	32.9	100.0
Age (0-17yrs)	4	5.7	5.7
Age (18-34yrs)	2	2.9	8.6
Age (35-64yrs)	29	41.4	50
Age (65+yrs)	33	47.1	97.1
No response	2	2.9	100.0
Longevity at St. Luke's (0-5yrs)	17	24.3	24.3
Longevity at St. Luke's (6-15 yrs)	19	27.1	51.4
Longevity at St. Luke's (16-25 yrs)	7	10.0	61.4
Longevity at St. Luke's (26+ yrs)	27	38.6	100.0
Always Lutheran	46	65.7	65.7
Other denomination	22	31.4	97.1
No response	2	2.9	100.0
Participated in bilingual activities	53	75.7	75.7
Did not participate	15	21.4	97.1
No response	2	2.9	100.0
Served on a committee in last 2yrs	45	64.3	64.3
Did not serve	25	35.7	100.0

Table 2 (continued)

<u>Demographic</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
Addresses God in prayer as:			
Father	17	24.5	24.5
Son	2	2.8	27.3
Holy Spirit	2	2.8	30.1
all equally	18	25.7	55.8
simply refer to one, ex God/Lord	29	41.4	97.2
No response	2	2.8	100.0

Quantitative data were paired across all three surveys using date of birth as the identifier. This made it possible to perform analyses using inferential statistics, including independent t-tests and paired t-tests. Sixty-one participants were paired for the baseline and endline surveys. Fifteen were also paired for the baseline to midpoint surveys and a similar fifteen from the midpoint to endline surveys.

Bilingual Interventions (Interventions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6)

Intervention 1: A Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe

Journal Notes

The associate pastor invited the English-speaking community to participate in the vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe during the Sunday worship announcements for the two weeks leading up to the event. She described the service as an opportunity to reach out to our neighbors, many of whom are from cultures that have services for the Virgin Mary. She explained that through this service we have an opportunity to teach people a Lutheran understanding of the saints while honoring the example Mary gave to us

through her faithful service. Lutherans remember and commemorate the faithful service of the saints but do not pray to them.

The vigil was held at 11 p.m. on December 11, 2017. The event was offered in Spanish with no English translation. There were around three dozen participants; all were native Spanish-speakers, with the exception of me. Around a third of the participants were not members of St. Luke's. They were members of the community who came in response to fliers that were distributed in the community. After the service, which ended promptly at midnight, everyone went to the fellowship hall for a meal.

I neither speak nor understand Spanish. I preach in Spanish only because I can read the language with enough accuracy to be understood. The portrait and figurine of Mary could easily have led me to mistake the service for a Roman Catholic Mass. I was only able to understand the significance of the service from a Lutheran perspective because of the worship announcements and prior conversations I had about its significance with St. Luke's associate pastor.

Intervention 2: Christmas Pageant

Journal Notes

St. Luke's Sunday morning worship schedule was changed at the beginning of the academic year to, in part, allow for a Sunday school program that occurred directly between an English service and a Spanish service. The typical English-language Christmas pageant, which ordinarily took place during an English service, was replaced with a two-part bilingual pageant. The first part was the Christmas story, which took place during the Sunday school hour between the services. The second part of the pageant was the Epiphany story, our fourth intervention, which took place in January as part of a

bilingual service. Both segments of the pageant were written to include speaking parts and songs in both English and Spanish.

The Christmas pageant took place on December 17, 2017. The first observation was that there were no members of the Spanish-language community present at the beginning of the program; about five of them came in during the program. The second was that there were no Spanish-speaking parts or songs in the program and the printed program was entirely in English. A third observation was that most of the roughly fifty people in attendance were family and friends of the children. Less than ten people who worshipped in the morning and did not have children in the program returned to be in the audience. It was also true that some of the family and friends did not worship but only came for the pageant.

A conversation with the Sunday school director revealed that Spanish-speaking children were not attending Sunday school. They did earlier in the year when their families were preparing for First Communion and baptisms, but they stopped attending after those events had taken place. The absence of Spanish speakers in the Sunday school led to the Spanish music and speaking parts being written out of the pageant. The associate pastor attributed the lack of participation of Spanish-speakers in the Sunday school to the fact that it is not part of their culture; the Rite of Confirmation and First Communion are, but not Sunday school. This suggests that people do not naturally participate in the events of a culture that is not their own. Reflecting on the attempt to integrate the languages through the Sunday school program, the Sunday school director said, "It can be years before we see the fruit."

The confirmation program and the youth group, which met at the same time as Sunday school, had greater participation from among the Spanish-speaking members after the change to the worship and education schedule. Confirmation is a sacrament in the Roman Catholic church and would be part of the cultural beliefs and practices of many of our Spanish-speaking families. Youth group is a place for youth to spend time with their friends; the Spanish-speaking youth in youth group are second-generation Americans. The contrast between the lack of participation in Sunday school for children in preschool through grade five and increased participation of youth in middle and high school suggests that while people will not naturally participate in activities that are outside of their culture, they will participate in activities that are within their cultural experience.

Intervention 3: Las Posadas and Celebration

Journal Notes

Las Posadas and celebration took place on Friday, December 22, 2017 beginning at 5 p.m. The event was a worship service offered in Spanish with very little translation into English followed by a party in the fellowship hall with tamales, cakes, and piñatas. There were around seventy people in attendance. The only English-speakers in the congregation to participate were me, my family, a member who works with children of the church, and one other member who helped make presents that were to be given to the children who attended. My ability to understand Spanish is limited. It was very difficult for me to fully understand the service. None of the members of my family and the other English-speakers understand Spanish. It was nearly impossible to help them follow along. Language was less of a barrier at the party. Everyone understands the universal language

of fun; and, while most people sat with people who shared the same primary language, there was some mixing of Spanish-speakers and English-speakers at the tables. The lack of participation of English-speakers suggests that people do not naturally participate in the events of a culture that is not their own.

Intervention 4: Bilingual Worship, Epiphany Pageant, and Multicultural Potluck Lunch

Journal Notes

The Epiphany pageant was an act of transculturation. It was part of the Spanish language community's annual Tres Reyes celebrations until it was brought into the Sunday school program for 2017-2018. It was incorporated into the Sunday school program for this research and experienced a similar lack of participation from among the Spanish-speaking community, as did the Christmas pageant. The program was set to run as an English-only event until a confirmation student from the Spanish-speaking community agreed on the day of the event to read selections from the Bible in Spanish. Unlike the Christmas pageant, which took place between the English and Spanish services, the Epiphany pageant was presented as part of a bilingual service on Sunday, January 7, 2018. The service took place at 11 a.m., replacing both the 10 a.m. English service and the 12 p.m. Spanish service. The service was followed by the congregation's traditional Tres Reyes (Three Kings) celebration in the fellowship hall. Unlike previous years, this celebration was a potluck multicultural lunch, which was meant to encourage greater participation from among English-speaking members. Well over 100 members, with almost equal participation among English-speakers and Spanish-speakers attended. Worship and celebrations, including potluck meals, are already part of the cultural expressions of both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities. This

intervention showed that while people do not typically cross cultural barriers for events related to worship, they would occasionally come together for a culturally blended service and fellowship. This is particularly true when the event is purposefully planned and alternate events are removed from the schedule, such as the worship schedule change for this event.

Intervention 6: The Presentation of Our Lord Celebration

Journal Notes

The celebration of the Presentation of Our Lord took place on February 11, 2018 after the 12 p.m. Spanish service. A flier was sent to all recipients of the electronic newsletter, which includes most families of the church, and included in the weekly bulletin insert the day of the event.¹ It included a summary that the purpose of the service and celebration was to help educate English-speaking members like myself, whether or not we participated. The event had also been announced at the bilingual service on January 7 and at the potluck lunch on that day, where over ten families from the whole congregation were invited to bring food for the February 11 celebration. Around seventy people, with about ten from the English-speaking community, attended the event.

Qualitative Survey Data for the Bilingual Interventions

“How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke’s?” This question was asked for each of the bilingual interventions in the baseline and endline

¹ The flier is found in appendix B.

surveys. Table 3, below, shows the number of baseline and endline questionnaires completed in each language and the number of responses to this question in each survey.

Table 3. Number of Short-Answer Responses to How the Interventions Impacted Experience of Diversity

	N _e	n _e	N _s	n _s
<i>1: Vigil for the Virgin</i>				
Baseline	56	25	7	6
Endline	43	21	27	3
<i>2: Christmas Pageant</i>				
Baseline	56	20	7	6
Endline	43	18	27	4
<i>3: Las Posadas</i>				
Baseline	56	25	7	7
Endline	43	22	27	2
<i>4: Tres Reyes</i>				
Baseline	56	24	7	6
Endline	43	20	27	1
<i>6: Presentation of our Lord</i>				
Baseline	56	25	7	3
Endline	43	18	27	3

Interpretive Key:

N is the total number of questionnaires completed.

n is the total number of responses to this question.

e and s subscripts are for English respondents and Spanish respondents, respectively.

Interpreting the Data

I analyzed the responses to these questions for each of the interventions in both of the surveys in order to identify themes. I found that responses to the questions for the vigil for the Virgin, Las Posadas, Tres Reyes, and the Presentation were very similar. I will present those first and return to the Christmas pageant.

Four out of six responses in the Spanish-language baseline survey indicated that the vigil for the Virgin helped people experience diversity at St. Luke's by educating members about the cultures of others and in connecting them with the community. This is seen in responses such as, "I have learned about other cultures" and "To be compassionate." Two responses identified faith in the Virgin as central to this event, including one who believes the event is meant to worship Mary, "We know that the Virgin is the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ and we should worship her." In the endline survey, two of the three responses were identical and spoke of remembering the Virgin daily. The third person said this event is "not part of Lutheran faith." These responses can be broken into three categories: (1) Those who see the event as helpful for learning about the cultures of others and connecting with neighbors, (2) those who see the event as an opportunity to remember or even worship Mary, and (3) those who see no place in the Lutheran church for this tradition.

The responses in both the English-language baseline and endline surveys fall into two basic categories: those who see a need for communication or instruction to better understand the significance of the event and those who simply see the event as "not applicable" for their experience. Eleven out of twenty-five responses in the English-language baseline survey are in the instruction or communication category. These respondents included phrases like, "Have not experienced it much, but would like more info on it," "no impact - failure of communications," or "I have no idea what it is." Ten of the twenty-five responses in the baseline survey were in the not applicable category. These respondents said things like, "This has not impacted my experience of diversity because I have not participated."

Responses in the endline survey were similar. Of the twenty-one responses to this question, nine might be categorized as instruction or communication and eleven as not applicable. Similar to the Spanish-speaking community, there was one response in both English-language baseline and endline surveys that raised the idea of the event being part of Roman Catholic tradition. One person wrote, “The celebration of Mary as the mother of Jesus seems more closely related to Catholicism than to Lutheran practice.” The other wrote, “I only know of this from Catholic relatives and never paid much attention to this. My family were very anti-Catholic and if the Catholics did it, the Lutherans certainly would not do that.”

The responses to Las Posadas, Tres Reyes, and the Presentation of Our Lord were very similar to the responses for the vigil for the Virgin with many of the same responses given by the same people, such as “no impact - failure of communications” and “I don’t know what this is.” One person clearly captured the usefulness of instruction for transculturation writing, “I wasn’t familiar with this until Pastor Rosa introduced it with a full explanation.” It was striking that only two people communicated knowing anything about Las Posadas because the event had been announced and explained during English worship services during the research period and seasonally for the previous three years. This suggests that events that are new to people must be clearly announced and explained repeatedly.

In the endline responses to the Tres Reyes Epiphany pageant and celebration, one person wrote, “I have not been able to attend, but after hearing that the Hispanic community had a special celebration for Epiphany I wanted to learn more and possibly

participate.” This demonstrates that new cultural experiences can slowly gain traction, one person at a time.

There was a difference between the baseline and endline responses for the Presentation of Our Lord that did not appear in the other bilingual interventions. Eight respondents from among the whole population in the English and Spanish surveys had something to say about instruction; four of them communicated that they now have knowledge of this event. One person wrote, “Seeing all share a common belief,” another wrote that it gave them an “Appreciation” of diversity at St. Luke’s. One person took the instruction beyond cultural diversity to how the event impacted upon his or her relationship with God, “More for me to learn about and how it changes my relationship to my God.”

There was an intervening variable that I believe made this event different from the others. A baby doll representing the baby Jesus remained at the altar beginning on Christmas Eve and was not removed until the Presentation of Our Lord. This needed to be explained several times to the English-speaking community because it was not part of their cultural experience but it was there at the altar every week. This visual reminder, along with the ongoing verbal communication, served as a repetitive instructional experience for the community.

I read the data from the Christmas pageant very differently. The responses to the bilingual interventions were more about instruction and experience. Respondents focused more on diversity for the Christmas pageant. The responses in the baseline survey can be separated into four categories: (1) eleven respondents indicated that they saw diversity in the event, (2) seven said they did not see diversity in the pageant, (3) four members wrote

not applicable, and (4) another four wrote something that would each fit in categories of their own. The same four categories emerged in the endline survey: (1) two people indicated that they saw diversity, (2) eight said diversity was not seen, (3) two responded in ways that would be their own categories, and (4) four people indicated not applicable. A fifth category emerged in the endline survey. Like in the responses to the bilingual interventions, instruction arose as a category and had the second most responses among the categories with six.

Responses in the baseline survey suggest that either people remembered pageants of previous years as being bilingual events or the survey itself suggested that the pageants were bilingual. For example, one person wrote, “Christ’s birth is celebrated in similar and also diverse ways throughout the world.” The most striking response in the endline survey was, “Cultural differences aren’t involved.” Responses like this suggest that the experience of English-speaking children offering a pageant is not understood as a representation of diverse cultures. Two respondents in the endline survey indicated that they no longer participate because their children are grown. The data suggest that some members do not see the differences between younger and older members as an example of cultural diversity at St. Luke’s; rather, they see culture as being about language. It seems to me that participation in children’s and family ministries is related to one’s present cultural reality.

Quantitative Data from the Baseline and Endline Surveys

I turn to the quantitative data from the baseline and endline surveys to see if participation in bilingual activities had an impact on the way members thought about

God's nature and the church.² This was done by isolating those who participated in one or more bilingual activities from the rest of the population. These participants were then subdivided by language group for further clarification. These data were analyzed through independent and paired t-tests.

The first observation was that there was no statistically significant difference when conducting independent t-tests on the selected questions in the baseline and endline surveys. This changed when conducting paired t-tests. I did find one statistically significant difference between the surveys. This is shown in table 4, below. The idea that "the cultural practices of the entire congregation should be taken into account when planning worship and woven into services" decreased from baseline to endline surveys, $t_{(22)} = 2.335$, $p = .029$. Respondents agreed in the baseline survey, a mean of 5.26, but only somewhat agreed in the endline, a mean of 4.70. This suggests that those who have participated in worship with unfamiliar practices would prefer to have worship services planned according to their own cultural experiences.

I found two statistically significant differences in the Spanish-speaking community when comparing their responses based upon attendance in bilingual activities. These are shown in table 5, below. First, I found that those who have participated in such events unanimously strongly agreed that "It is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture," a mean of 6.00. This is statistically significantly greater, $t_{(24)} = 3.160$, $p = .004$, than the somewhat agreed of those who did not participate in bilingual activities, a mean of 4.44. This suggests that

² The questions from the baseline survey considered for this area were #19-20, 26-35, see appendix A for the baseline questionnaire. The same questions in the endline survey were #20-21, 27-36, see appendix A for the endline questionnaire.

Spanish-speaking members who have experienced these activities in English strongly prefer to worship God in their own native tongue.

Table 4. Baseline to Endline Paired t-Test Results for the Whole Population on the Statement, “The cultural Practices of the Entire Congregation Should be Taken into Account when Planning Worship and Woven into Services.”

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_b (N _b)	\bar{x}_e (N _e)	df	t-value	p
The cultural practices of the entire congregation should be taken into account when planning worship and woven into services.	5.26 (23)	4.70 (23)	22	2.335	.029

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

b and *e* subscripts are for baseline and endline data, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Table 5. Endline Survey Independent t-Test Results for Spanish-Speakers Based on Participation in Bilingual Activities for the Statement, “It Is Important for People to Have a Weekly Opportunity to Worship God in Their Native Language and Culture.”

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_y (N _y)	\bar{x}_n (N _n)	df	t-value	p
It is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture.	6.00 (17)	4.44 (9)	24	3.160	.004
The cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture.	1.33 (15)	3.63 (8)	21	-3.289	.004

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

y and *n* subscripts are for Yes, participated and No, did not participate, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

The second statistically significant change among Spanish-speakers, $t_{(21)} = -3.289$, $p = .004$, was in the response to the statement: “The cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture.” Those who had not participated in bilingual activities somewhat disagreed, a mean of 3.63, while those who had participated indicated that they strongly disagreed, a mean of 1.33. This suggests that those who participated in bilingual activities saw the value of multiple cultural voices coexisting within one congregation, even if these voices do not come together for worship every week.

Table 6. Endline Survey Independent t-Test Results for English-Speakers Based on Participation in Bilingual Activities for the Statements, “Being a ‘Bilingual-Multicultural Congregation’ Means St. Luke’s Is One Congregation that Worships in Two Languages,” and “St. Luke’s Is Effectively Two Congregations.”

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_y (N _y)	\bar{x}_n (N _n)	df	t-value	p
Being a ‘bilingual-multicultural congregation’ means St. Luke’s is one congregation that worships in two languages.	5.06 (36)	5.67 (6)	12	-2.314	.040
St. Luke’s is effectively two congregations.	3.67 (36)	3.83 (6)	40	-.251	.804

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

y and n subscripts are for Yes, participated and No, did not participate, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Table 6, above, shows that English-speakers who have participated in bilingual activities are statistically significantly less likely to agree, $t_{(12)} = -2.314$, $p = .040$, that “being a ‘bilingual-multicultural congregation’ means St. Luke’s is one congregation that

worships in two languages.” Those who had participated in bilingual activities agreed, a mean of 5.06. Those who had not participated indicated that they agreed more strongly, a mean of 5.67. This suggests that the interventions of this research have begun to help English-speakers see culture as being about more than language alone. There is no statistically significant difference in their responses when it comes to their understanding of St. Luke’s as “effectively two congregations,” as respondents somewhat disagreed, means of 3.67 and 3.83. Combined with the first finding, these data suggest that members are seeing more diversity even within the English-speaking community.

There are no statistically significant differences between any other baseline or endline responses for the questions in this area. The endline responses are in themselves helpful in discerning the congregation’s understanding of itself as a bilingual-multicultural congregation. The means for these questions are found in table 7, below. Members somewhat disagreed that “St. Luke’s is effectively two congregations,” a mean of 3.68, but they agreed that “being a ‘bilingual-multicultural congregation’ means St. Luke’s is one congregation that worships in two languages,” a mean of 5.09. They also simultaneously disagreed that “the cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture,” a mean of 2.79, and agreed that “it is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture,” a mean of 5.44.

The above findings suggest the congregation generally sees itself as one congregation that worships in two languages. It values this, as expressed by agreeing that it is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture. Furthermore, the data suggest that even though members do not

want to blend cultures for every worship service every week, they do appreciate coming together for worship occasionally. Participants agreed with a mean of 5.10 that “when I see Spanish-speaking and English-speaking people together in worship at St. Luke’s, I feel I am seeing humanity as it is created to be.” There is at least some feeling that worship should be a place for all of God’s people to unite in expressing their cultural diversity, at least sometimes.

Table 7. Endline Means for Questions about the Bilingual-Multicultural Nature of St. Luke’s.

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” & 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	n _v	N	Mean
Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.	68	70	4.38
Diversity of cultures is something to be celebrated in the church.	68	70	5.19
Saying we are “multicultural” means we have many cultures in our congregation; such as, younger/older, English-Spanish speaking, tech savvy and not, etc.	70	70	5.26
When I see Spanish-speaking and English-speaking people together in worship at St. Luke’s, I feel I am seeing humanity as it is created to be.	68	70	5.10
It is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture.	70	70	5.44
Whenever possible, each culture within the St. Luke’s community should have its own unique worship experience.	70	70	4.33
The cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture.	67	70	2.79

Table 7 (continued)

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” & 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	n _v	N	Mean
St. Luke’s is effectively two congregations.	68	70	3.68

Interpretive Key:
n_v = Valid Responses
N = Total number of responses

Other Interventions (Interventions 5, 7, and 8)

Sermon Series on The Trinity (Intervention 5)

Journal Notes

A five-week sermon series intended to teach language and ideas about the social nature of the Trinity and the church as a reflection of this nature was preached at both English and Spanish services beginning on Epiphany Sunday, January 7, 2018 and ending on the Sunday during which St. Luke’s celebrated the Presentation of Our Lord, February 4, 2018. Worship attendance at St. Luke’s at the time was around 200-275 on Sundays with around 50-75 in Spanish and around 150-200 in English. An article in the online and printed weekly newsletters accompanied each sermon.³ Both the articles and sermons were offered in both English and Spanish. The series made use of the lectionary readings appointed for each Sunday and covered the themes: *Introduction to The Image of the Trinity; The Nature of the Trinity; The Nature of the Church; Unity and Diversity in the Church; and In, With, and Around the World.*

³ The sermons are found in appendix C. The articles are found in appendix B.

The comments I received on the series were diverse. Some people expressed that the series was very helpful in explaining the nature of the Trinity. Other members did not find the series at all helpful. Some found the graphics equally helpful. Others felt the graphics were confusing. One member of the Spanish-speaking community, who has no problem with literacy, told me that the concepts in the series were difficult for members of the community to comprehend. One member of the English-speaking community criticized the series saying that it took the place of the entire season of Epiphany. Another member disagreed with that criticism and felt the series was faithful to the lectionary,⁴ especially on the Sundays we celebrated Epiphany, the Baptism of Our Lord, and the Presentation of Our Lord, which are all annual celebrations in the season of Epiphany.

Qualitative Data from the Midpoint Survey

I turn to qualitative questions from the midpoint survey for additional insight. Twenty-one participants responded to the question, “What did you take away from the sermon series on the nature of the Trinity and the church?” Two respondents wrote that they took very little away from the series. One of them felt that five weeks on the Trinity was “overkill”; the other felt that “modern theology doesn’t seem to be any better at explaining things than ancient theology was.” Fourteen people wrote about the nature of God, the church, or the relationship between God and the church. Four wrote about the nature of God; seven wrote about the nature of the church; and, three wrote about the relationship between God’s nature and the nature of the church. One of these fourteen

⁴ Most congregations in the ELCA use the Revised Common Lectionary for their Sunday morning Bible readings. The lectionary is a three-year cycle of readings with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke as their primary Gospel texts. The lectionary has assigned passages to teach the major themes of the church year: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

explained that they did not see the connection between God’s nature and the nature of the church but found the idea helpful for church organization. Eleven of these fourteen wrote about the nature of God or the church as being about oneness or equality. Listing these as takeaways from the series suggests that the series had the congregation thinking of the three persons of the Trinity more in terms of three equal persons.

Table 8, below, shows that twenty-one people also responded to the question, “What was helpful or not helpful?” Five of these felt the series was not helpful and another two were undecided. Thirteen felt the series was helpful. Six of these indicated the usefulness of thinking of the Trinity in terms such as “parts,” “aspects,” or “components.” This suggests that the series had the congregation thinking of the three persons of the Trinity in terms of three persons working together. Another six lifted up the repetitive nature of the series with words or phrases such as, “rereading,” “reminded,” “reiteration,” and “expanded.” This suggests that participants see the repetition of ideas as helpful for learning and relearning theological ideas.

Table 8. Number of Responses to Short-Answers in the Midpoint Survey

N	“What did you take away . . .?” Responses (n)	“What was helpful or not helpful?” Responses (n)
25	21	21

Quantitative Data from the Midpoint Survey

A midpoint survey of the congregation was conducted at the conclusion of the sermon series. It was open for the whole population to participate from February 4-18, 2018. It was available in English and Spanish and in both electronic and paper editions.

The electronic version was linked to the congregation's weekly electronic newsletter and posted on the church's website. The paper editions were distributed on Sundays and left in the gathering space for anyone to complete. This survey was meant to evaluate the effectiveness of the sermon series in helping the congregation to better understand the social nature of the Trinity and the church's reflection of that nature. Questions were identical to those found in the baseline and endline surveys; therefore, both independent and paired t-tests could be performed on the data. Table 9, below, presents demographic data from this survey.

Table 9. Frequencies for Demographics for the Midpoint Survey

Demographic	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
English-Speaking	25	100.0	100.0
Spanish-Speaking	0	100.0	100.0
Female	17	68.0	68.0
Male	8	32.0	100.0
Age (0-17yrs)	0	0.0	0.0
Age (18-34 yrs)	0	0.0	0.0
Age (35-64 yrs)	3	12.0	12.0
Age (65+ yrs)	18	72.0	84.0
No response	4	16.0	100.0

The above frequencies show that all twenty-five participants were English-speakers. This survey did not ask for the same detailed demographic information found in the baseline and endline surveys; it did, however, ask for date of birth, which was the field used for pairing data between surveys. Fifteen persons who heard or read one or more of the sermons either completed both a baseline and a midpoint questionnaire or a midpoint and an endline questionnaire. Paired t-tests were conducted on these responses.

Analysis of the data showed that there was no statistically significant difference from baseline to endline for paired t-tests on the whole population on any of the questions in the midpoint survey.⁵ This was different for the baseline to midpoint surveys. There was at least some movement in the desired direction for pairs 2, 4, 5, and 8 between the baseline and midpoint surveys. There was movement in an undesirable direction for pairs 6 and 7. There were statistically significant changes in the desired direction for pairs 1, 3, and 8. Table 10, below, presents these results.

Table 10. Baseline to Midpoint Paired t-Test Results for All Questions in the Midpoint Survey

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_b (N _b)	\bar{x}_m (N _m)	df	t-value	p
Pair 1. Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.	3.67 (15)	3.20 (15)	14	2.168	.048
Pair 2. The weight of a person’s opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.	1.67 (15)	1.40 (15)	14	1.740	.104
Pair 3. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.	4.00 (15)	2.80 (15)	14	3.263	.006
Pair 4. Members of St. Luke’s are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.	4.07 (15)	4.60 (15)	14	-1.524	.150
Pair 5. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.	2.13 (15)	2.07 (15)	14	.155	.879
Pair 6. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.	4.86 (14)	4.07 (14)	13	1.229	.241
Pair 7. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.	5.53 (15)	5.20 (15)	14	1.323	.207

⁵ The questionnaire is found in appendix A.

Table 10 (continued)

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_b (N _b)	\bar{x}_m (N _m)	df	t-value	p
Pair 8. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.	3.14 (14)	2.29 (14)	13	2.280	.040

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom.

b and *m* subscripts are for baseline and midpoint data, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Regarding the idea that God “desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people,” participants somewhat disagreed in both surveys, but they moved toward more strongly disagreeing in the midpoint, $t_{(14)} = 2.168$, $p = .048$; the means moved from 3.67 to 3.20. There was greater change in thinking about hierarchy in the church, $t_{(14)} = 3.263$, $p = .006$, and in the Trinity, $t_{(13)} = 2.280$, $p = .040$. Responses to the question about “hierarchy in the church” moved from agree in the baseline, a mean of 4.00, to disagree in the endline, a mean of 2.80. Similarly, the mean of responses regarding hierarchy in the Trinity also decreased, from somewhat disagree in the baseline, a mean of 3.14, to disagree in the endline, a mean of 2.29.

Table 10 also shows the movement for the non-statistically significant changes. The responses seen in pairs 6 and 7 show the sermon series did not have much of an impact on how people understood the Trinity. In fact, these pairs show a movement away from agreeing that God is three unique and equal persons, each with their own role. This suggests that the point about God being one God in three equal persons was not made clear enough. The non-statistically significant changes in pairs 4 and 5 show that

respondents' thinking on the nature of the church and the roles of pastor and people also trended toward a change. They saw themselves more in partnership with the pastors after the series than they did before. Members strongly disagreed in both the baseline and midpoint surveys that one's level of education should determine their impact on congregational decision making. Together with the statistically significant changes, these data suggest that the sermon series helped participants see unity and diversity in the church as a reflection of God's image as coexisting coequals in partnership.

One of the most intriguing findings of this research is found in two of the questions from midpoint to endline surveys. Fifteen persons included in the paired t-test had a statistically significant change in their responses that show their thinking somewhat returning to their baseline responses. This is shown in table 11, below, where pairs 3 and 8 show statistically significant change, $t_{(14)} = -3.090$, $p = .008$ and $t_{(14)} = -3.240$, $p = .006$, respectively. Pair 3 increased from a mean of 2.60 to a mean of 3.60 and pair 8 increased from a mean of 1.87 to a mean of 2.87. Remember, there was no statistically significant change in any of the eight questions from baseline to endline, but there was change from baseline to midpoint. Endline means for four of the eight questions for the same population show that participants' thinking on these questions began to return to their thinking at the baseline. Three endline responses were identical to the midpoint. The question in pair 1 on homogeneity for the future of God's people had a higher mean at the endline than the baseline. This suggests that repetitive instruction on ideas, particularly ones that are new to a community, are required to help the idea become part of the communal vocabulary and understanding.

Table 11. Midpoint to Endline Paired t-Test Results for All Questions in the Midpoint Survey

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” & 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_m (N _m)	\bar{x}_e (N _e)	df	t-value	p
Pair 1. Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.	3.07 (15)	3.80 (15)	14	-1.661	.119
Pair 2. The weight of a person’s opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.	1.73 (15)	1.40 (15)	14	.892	.388
Pair 3. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.	2.60 (15)	3.60 (15)	14	-3.090	.008
Pair 4. Members of St. Luke’s are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.	4.80 (15)	4.60 (15)	14	.494	.629
Pair 5. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.	2.07 (15)	2.07 (15)	14	.000	1.000
Pair 6. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.	4.33 (15)	5.00 (15)	14	-1.113	.284
Pair 7. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.	5.53 (15)	5.47 (15)	14	.250	.806
Pair 8. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.	1.87 (15)	2.87 (15)	14	-3.240	.006

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

m and *e* subscripts are for midpoint and endline data, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

I could not compare how Spanish-speakers answered these questions from beginning to middle to end because no Spanish-speaker completed a midpoint questionnaire. Instead, I compared how Spanish-speakers and English-speakers who reported having heard or read one or more of the sermons in the series responded to the

same eight questions in the endline survey. I am not reporting results for paired t-tests in the Spanish-speaking community for the same criteria because there were only three. Table 12, below, shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the way the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking communities responded to four out of eight questions.

Spanish-speakers agreed, a mean of 5.75, that God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people; their English-speaking counterparts somewhat disagreed with this statement, a mean of 3.46, $t_{(30)} = -3.493$, $p = .002$. Spanish-speakers disagreed, a mean of 2.88, that the weight of a person's opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education; English-speaking members strongly disagreed with the statement, a mean of 1.63, $t_{(30)} = -2.315$, $p = .028$. While English-speakers somewhat disagreed that there is a natural hierarchy in the church, a mean of 3.63, Spanish-speakers agreed, a mean of 5.43, $t_{(29)} = -2.640$, $p = .013$. This contrasting understanding of hierarchy was also seen in respondents' understanding about God. While English-speakers disagreed that the Trinity is by nature hierarchical, a mean of 2.54, Spanish-speakers somewhat agreed, a mean of 4.13, $t_{(30)} = -2.055$, $p = .049$. These responses communicate that Spanish-speakers are more likely to see God and the church as hierarchical with the order being dictated by education. Their response also suggests that their hope for ultimate equality in the church is in a future where all people are of one common language and culture.

Table 12. Endline Survey Independent t-Test Results for English-Speaking and Spanish-Speaking Participants on the Same Questions from the Midpoint Survey

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_e (N _e)	\bar{x}_s (N _s)	df	t-value	p
Pair 1. Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.	3.46 (24)	5.75 (8)	30	-3.493	.002
Pair 2. The weight of a person’s opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.	1.63 (24)	2.88 (8)	30	-2.315	.028
Pair 3. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.	3.63 (24)	5.43 (7)	29	-2.640	.013
Pair 4. Members of St. Luke’s are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.	4.67 (24)	5.00 (8)	11	-.505	.624
Pair 5. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.	1.88 (24)	2.75 (8)	30	-1.422	.165
Pair 6. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.	4.38 (24)	4.57 (7)	8	-.196	.850
Pair 7. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.	5.33 (24)	4.75 (8)	30	.943	.353
Pair 8. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.	2.54 (24)	4.13 (8)	30	-2.055	.049

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

e and *s* subscripts are for English respondents and Spanish respondents, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Town Hall Meetings (Intervention 7)

Journal Notes

Four town hall meetings with round table discussions were held on Sunday evenings, one in each month of February, March, April, and May. The sessions began with a potluck supper at 5 p.m. and continued with brief presentations offered by me and table discussions around focused questions related to the presentations. Table participants then had an opportunity to share a brief synopsis of their table's conversation. Church council members were assigned to each table as facilitators/scribes. Overarching themes addressed were the congregation's vision statement, meaningfulness of the congregation's efforts in individual discipleship areas, and the congregation's organizational structure (church size theory). Data from these sessions provided insight into the bilingual-multicultural nature of the congregation.

The sessions were planned as bilingual events with presentations made in English and translated in summary form into Spanish. Table conversations were conducted in English or Spanish depending on who was at each table. The first session was conducted this way. There were around fifty English-speaking and fifteen Spanish-speaking persons in attendance. Most of the English-speakers gathered were older members of the congregation (sixty-five-years-old and up). There were three families with adults in the thirties or forties, and one additional adult in her forties. The Spanish-speaking participants included mostly members in their forties, some with adult children and some with teenagers. It was determined after the first session that the summary translations were not sufficient and that separate meetings would be held. This is likely the greatest challenge of being a bilingual congregation. Negotiating cultural differences is a

challenge even for people who speak the same language. It can be nearly impossible to talk through cultural differences within the community when the people cannot speak directly with each other. The second and third Sunday evening sessions—held in March and April—followed the above format but included only English-speaking participants. The demographics of these sessions were similar to the first but had less participation among younger members; one single mother attended with her toddler and the woman in her forties attended both sessions.

Between the first and second town hall meetings, several members of the congregation asked to meet with me to share some of their concerns for the congregation. One of the major concerns was the worship life at St. Luke's, which they felt was not inspiring. This concern was a homogenizing unit for them. I knew this sentiment was not universal in the congregation because I had recently conducted a congregational survey for the denomination's annual report, see figure 6, below. My meeting with the members made it clear that members of the congregation are not of one mind on a variety of issues. This led to a clear and concise explanation of the town hall meeting process during the second town hall meeting in March.

I carefully explained the process just before the first round-table conversation at the second town hall meeting. I explained that the process involved four steps: (1) we hear a presentation of some idea related to current events within the congregation, (2) we discuss questions around the tables, (3) we summarize what was heard at each table, and (4) we allow for additional conversation as needed. I added, "I hear you. The council hears you. This process is so that you hear each other." This explanation was repeated at the second session for the Spanish-speaking community.

Worship nurtures people's faith.

25 responses

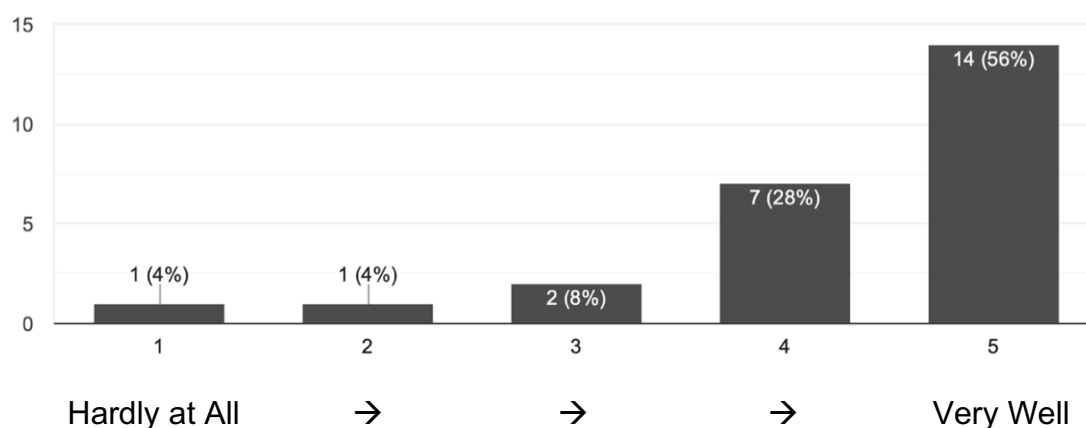


Figure 6. Worship Nurtures People's Faith⁶

The topics of the second and third sessions were truncated into one Spanish-language conversation held after the Spanish service one Sunday afternoon. Attendance at this session was around twenty. In addition to those who attended the first bilingual event, there was also a senior member, an additional young mother, and four youth. The planned format of that meeting was an abbreviated form of the English sessions, due to the limited time and need for translation for me.

After I offered a brief introduction to the session, I asked if anyone had any questions on any topic and the conversation. The format of the session departed from the planned structure at this point, but the conversation went in the same direction as the English-speaking sessions; that is, members expressed that the pastors cannot be alone in fulfilling all the needs of the church and that the members must become more involved in working together to accomplish God's work among us. Their focus was on worship, music, and education, but they also addressed ways we might connect with our neighbors

⁶ The figure was generated by Google Forms.

to address their needs and share the Gospel with the them. While we lost the oneness of being together as one parish with different spoken languages, it was good to have our Spanish-speaking members speak freely in their native tongue.

The fourth town hall meeting was also one of the congregation's annual meetings. It was determined that the meeting would be bilingual with everything translated, whether originally spoken in English or Spanish. A professional translator who worships at St. Luke's provided the translation. This meeting had the highest attendance of around seventy-five people. The roughly twenty-four Spanish-speaking members configured themselves around one large square of tables. The meeting was twice as long as it would have been in one language. There was only enough time for the business and no time for the additional presentations and round table discussions. Members expressed frustration with this format in the endline survey question about the town hall meetings. One person wrote, "All participated. However, having to translate everything was counter-productive."

Data from the Sessions

The town hall meetings were designed to bring the congregation through a process of reflection on where it had been, where it was, and where God might be leading it. Several areas were related to this research and its focus on culture. Remember that when considering culture, we are exploring "the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group" or "the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time." The following three topics speak to this research as they demonstrate how culture at St. Luke's goes much deeper than merely language: (1) the congregation's vision statement, from sessions one and two; (2)

the worship life of the congregation, from session two; and (3) church organization, from session three. The members who asked to meet with me between the first two sessions demonstrated that people with similar views on a topic might represent one cultural group. These examples show how within one seemingly homogenous group there can be multiple cultures.

Vision Statement, from Sessions 1 and 2

One of the topics for the first sessions was the congregation's vision statement. This continued into the second session. The question for conversation was, "Is it time for a new vision statement?" I gave a brief presentation and asked the tables to answer, "Yes or no; and, why or why not?" The first table shared their thoughts. The second table then began by saying, "We hear what you are saying Table One and we think you are dead wrong." The first four tables presented four different responses. The participants immediately lived into the purpose of the sessions: to hear and be heard by each other. They demonstrated that while English-speakers worship at the same church, they have different cultures. It seems most people congregate with those of similar thinking and assume everyone thinks the same way. Bringing them together helped members to see that there are many different viewpoints on the same issues. One person wrote in the endline survey about the town hall meetings, "It showed me that there are many needs at St. Luke's. . . . What was nice was there was no name calling or fights but respect for opinions. It was good to see a variety of people in attendance."

Worship Life, from Session 2

A questionnaire was administered at the April town hall meeting to help congregational leadership better understand how members of St. Luke's were growing in

their faith. Participants’ comments around worship were particularly helpful in demonstrating that there are many different cultures, demonstrated by a variety of felt needs and wants, even within a common language. The questionnaire was broken into six core areas and participants were asked to rank each area on a Likert scale of one to six. The question was, “How do these discipleship ministries at St. Luke’s help form your faith?” The scale was from one, “not at all” to six, “very much.” There were thirty-six responses to the questionnaire with thirty-four responses to the question on worship. Worship was scored a five by 41.2% and another 41.2% scored worship as a six, see figure 7, below. This demonstrated that while there are pockets of individuals in the English-speaking community for whom worship is not the most helpful, the majority of English-speakers find worship to be helpful in their spiritual development.

WORSHIP

How does this discipleship ministry at St. Luke’s help form your faith?

34 responses

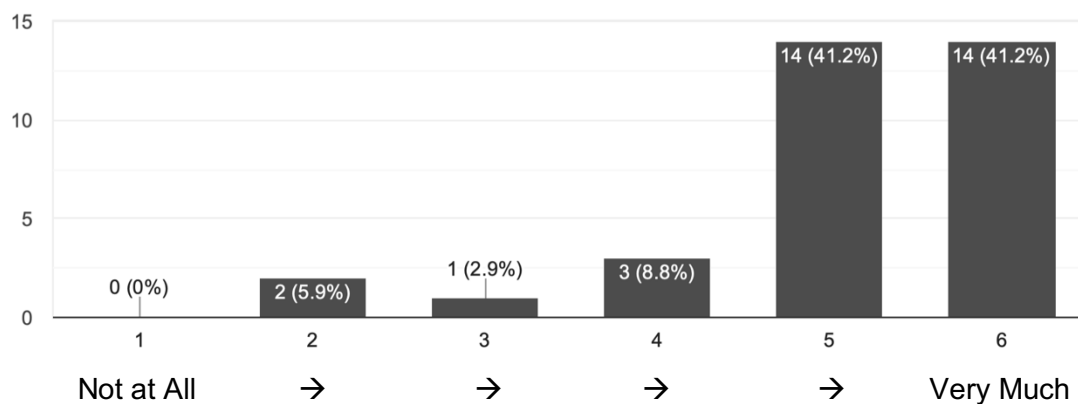


Figure 7. Responses to the Town Hall Meeting Question about Worship⁷

⁷ The figure was generated by Google Forms.

In addition to the Likert scale, the questionnaire included a short-answer section for each of the six marks of discipleship⁸ where respondents were invited to list what they experienced as most and least helpful. Results of this are shown in table 13, below. While some members said the sermons were most helpful, others said they were the least helpful. While some said singing every verse of every hymn was least helpful, others said removing verses from hymns was least helpful. While one said not kneeling at the altar rail during communion was least helpful, another has said in another context that not kneeling was most helpful. What one finds inspirational in worship another will find the opposite.

Table 13. Worship at St. Luke's Helps Form My Faith

	n	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0.0
Disagree	2	5.9	5.9
Somewhat Disagree	1	2.9	8.8
Somewhat Agree	3	8.8	17.6
Agree	14	41.2	58.8
Strongly Agree	14	41.2	100.0

Table notes from the conversations following the survey showed that members typically attributed their feelings about worship to their childhood and previous experiences. We saw clearly in this segment of our town hall meetings how people who may appear homogenous can be quite different culturally. Later conversations further

⁸ Michael Foss, *Power Surge*.

revealed that while participants in the group that met with me between sessions one and two were of one mind that worship was not very inspirational, they had different opinions on how to change it. Again, their diverse experiences shaped their beliefs and practices around worship and they were not culturally homogenous in this area.

Church Organization, from Session 3

The table conversations at the same town hall meeting revealed that members of the congregation also have very different ideas around church organization. Each of these represents a different culture. The following models were offered by the various tables.

- 1) “Christ and humanity in the center and we’re all serving”
- 2) Top to bottom: “Pastor → Council (not with financials) → Senior members of church → Rest of congregation”
- 3) Top to bottom: “Congregation → Council and Pastor → Committees”
- 4) Top to bottom: “Church council → Pastor → Congregation”
- 5) Church council leads with the Pastor. Council oversees church business. The pastor oversees spirituality.

This led nicely into a conversation around church size theory. I administered a questionnaire by Roy Oswald designed to determine if members of a congregation desired a pastoral church model or a program church model for St. Luke’s.⁹ Eight questions can be answered *A* or *B*. If one answers *A*, one is looking for pastoral church ministry in that area. A *B* response indicates a preference for program church ministry.

⁹ Oswald, “How to Minister Effectively in Family, Pastoral, Program, and Corporate-Sized Churches.” The questionnaire can be found in appendix B.

There were approximately fifty persons from the English-speaking community present when the survey was conducted; again, there were no Spanish-speakers at this meeting.

The results of the survey, which are shown below in table 14, were overwhelmingly *A* for all but one of the questions. The specific questions are less important than the responses for the purposes of this research. The *A* responses showed while St. Lukes' members crafted organizational structures that could fit either pastoral church or program church style ministry, the English-speaking members generally preferred a pastoral church ministry. This led to a conversation around the different culture of each model and the senior pastor's (my) desire to lead in a program church model. A conversation around the practicality of a pastoral church model for a congregation that is numerically a program church continued at the church council retreat.

Table 14. Responses to Roy Oswald's Church Size Survey

Question	A Responses	B Responses
1	20	13
2	6	22
3	Most	1
4	Most	1
5	25	6
6	30	4
7	22	15
8	30	0

Notes: There were around fifty participants. Not everyone voted. Some people voted twice. The council member who took count was more interested in the general sense of the audience and not an exact count. These data suffice for the purposes of this chapter.

Qualitative Data from the Endline Survey

I asked in the endline survey, “How has this ministry impacted your experience of unity and diversity at St. Luke’s?” This was asked of a number of ministries at St. Luke’s. Table 15, below, shows that seventeen English-speakers and three Spanish-speakers responded to this question as it related to the town hall meetings. Their answers suggest that the town hall meetings were very effective in communicating that culture goes beyond language, that transculturation is a difficult and slow process, and that it requires intentionality and the efforts of members. Only one person expressed not seeing unity and diversity in the sessions. The following three responses capture the spirit of the responses. One Spanish-speaker wrote, “That my opinion is heard and taken into account.” The following English-speaker did not specify if diversity is about language or more, but captured the importance of time and patience, “Developing unity and dealing with diversity will take time and patience.” The following person seems to be speaking of the variety of opinions heard at the meetings and the difficulty of working through them, “In terms of unity and diversity, it has demonstrated the difficulty in resolving the many conflicting views expressed.” Again, these data suggest that the town hall meetings were helpful in fostering a Trinitarian identity of unity and diversity within the congregation while recognizing that certain cultural differences make unity difficult.

Quantitative Data from the Endline Survey

The only statistically significant difference between those who attended one or more town hall meetings and those who did not was in the response to “Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff only.” This is shown in table 16, below, $t_{(61)} = -2.076$, $p = .042$. Those who attended disagreed, a mean of 2.00, while those

who did not attend also disagreed, a mean of 2.80, but significantly less strongly. The congregation agrees that ministering to the congregation is a shared endeavor between the pastoral staff and members of the congregation; however, those who attended the April town hall meeting had a stronger feeling that ministering to the congregation is a shared endeavor than those who did not attend the April town hall meeting.

Table 15. Number of Short Answer Responses to How the Town Hall Meetings Impacted Experience of Unity and Diversity at St. Luke's

	Q _e	N _e	Q _s	N _s
Endline	43	17	27	3

Interpretive Key:

Q is the total number of questionnaires completed.

N is the total number of responses to this question.

e and *s* subscripts are for English respondents and Spanish respondents, respectively.

Table 16. Endline Independent t-Test Results Based on Participation in the April Town Hall Meeting Regarding the Responsibility of Ministering to the Congregation

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 6 is "Strongly Agree."	\bar{x}_p (N _p)	\bar{x}_{np} (N _{np})	df	t-value	p
Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff only.	2.00 (26)	2.80 (43)	61	-2.076	.042

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

p and *np* subscripts are for participant and non-participant, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

I compared the non-paired responses to this same question in the baseline and endline surveys and present these data in table 17, below. The baseline response of the whole population was that it disagreed, a mean of 2.05, and continued to disagree in the

endline but less strongly, a mean of 2.49. Another change that is not statistically significant but corresponds with this shift in congregational thinking is the response to the question on the members' participation in God's work of ministering to each other. The congregation as a whole said that it agreed in the baseline, a mean of 4.13, and agreed but more strongly in the endline, a mean of 4.46. Those who participated in the April town hall meeting agreed slightly more than the whole population, a mean of 4.65. This is also shown in table 17. Together, these data suggest that the town hall meetings assisted in the transculturation of pastoral church and program church models.

Table 17. Means Based on Participation in the April Town Hall Meeting Regarding the Sharing of Ministry Responsibilities within the Congregation

	B	B _n	E	E _n	E _p	E _{pn}
Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff only.	2.05	62	2.49	67	2.00	26
All members of St. Luke's equally participate in God's work of ministering to each other.	4.13	62	4.46	69	4.65	26

Interpretive Key for the data:

B is the means in the baseline survey.

E is the means in the endline survey.

n is the number of responses.

p is means of those who participated in the April town hall meeting.

Church Council Retreat (Intervention 8)

Journal Notes

The church council met for its annual spring retreat on Saturday, April 28, 2018. The retreat was intentionally scheduled after the town hall meetings in order that the council might work through data from those sessions as it planned for the future. The meeting was scheduled to last from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. I had an agenda for the retreat that

had been prepared with the council president. The retreat began with a reminder that I planned to use the notes relevant to my research as part of my thesis. I stated that if anyone had an objection to this arrangement to please let me know at any time and I would not use the material. No one objected and their consent was implied.

I began the retreat with devotions based on 1 Corinthians 12. I was clearly ill the morning of the retreat and sent home shortly after the opening devotions. The president told me he expected the meeting to conclude with lunch at noon as I was leaving. I was delighted to learn that the council met for almost the entire planned six hours.

The council leaders prepared several documents after the retreat. The first was titled *Retreat Papers Pastoral/Program*; it was a collection of notes written on newsprint throughout the retreat. The second document was titled *Council Retreat Next Steps*; it outlined what the council thought the congregation should do next in order to help live into the vision it heard at the town hall meetings. Additional documents were created later but are beyond the scope of this research.

Qualitative Data from Council Documents

The *Retreat Papers Pastoral/Program* title alone shows that the council recognizes that there are different cultures at work in pastoral church and program church congregations. The council recognized key areas where the office of pastor could work with and through committees to accomplish work that had previously been assigned almost exclusively to the pastoral staff. After briefly addressing property maintenance and capital needs, the notes state, “Start organizing committees.” Under worship committee, the notes say, “Pastor can lead and use committees to get resources and carry out mission.” The second area listed for development was discipleship. There the council

reflected on how the whole congregation is tasked with the ministry of connecting and remaining connected with the membership. This was seen in the statement, “How do we contact them regularly?” Their choice of the word *we* reflects the understanding that ministry is the responsibility of the whole congregation. When considering fellowship, the council notes say, “Keep it simple and friendly,” and “Could be Pastor led/planned.” They are looking for ways to engage the congregation; they recognize that if the pastors are not tied up with every administrative and discipleship effort, there can be greater opportunities for the pastors to connect in less formal ways.

The other three areas addressed in the document were: reaching out to the neighborhood, children’s ministries, and St. Luke’s preschool. Not all data from these notes speak directly to this research. It is worth noting, however, that the council’s overall approach suggests a shift in culture from the culture of a pastoral church to a new culture that embodies a hybrid of pastoral church and program church models. This would not be like the previous hybrid that was program church for business aspects of the ministry and pastoral church for discipleship. This hybrid would reflect the nature of the Trinity as pastoral office and lay leaders become equal partners in leading and caring for the whole congregation.

The *Council Retreat Next Steps* reorganized the notes from the retreat and reiterated their main points. The first step was to create the missing discipleship committees. The second step laid out a brief plan for the May congregational meeting. They planned to “re-iterate the congregation size of St. Luke’s and the need for a blend of program-led and pastoral-led operations,” “Explain the objectives of identifying time for increased pastor-congregation interface and connectivity,” and “Suggest that these

organizations—in cooperation with Council—can improve church operations and improve congregational feedback to the pastors.” The remaining steps described ways that ministry teams would partner with the pastors and council in carrying out the ministry of St. Luke’s. For examples: the worship committee would, in part, “Leverage St. Luke’s talents to incorporate more music into worship services”; the publicity committee would, in part, “Add annual church calendar of activities to web, Facebook and [the weekly electronic newsletter]”; and the evangelism committee would, in part, “Coordinate objectives with St. Luke’s congregation and Synod. Provide monthly progress reports.” In each of these areas, the council was looking to shift the culture from the pastor-centric model of a pastoral church to a new culture of equal partners working together within the *missio Dei*.

Comparisons of the Baseline and Endline Data

Qualitative Data about the Vision Statement

Table 18. Baseline and Endline Long Answer Responses to the Statement “One Parish with Many Cultural Voices”

	Q _e	N _e	Q _s	N _s
Baseline	56	50	7	6
Endline	43	36	27	13

Interpretive Key:

Q is the total number of questionnaires completed.

N is the total number of responses to this question.

e and *s* subscripts are for English respondents and Spanish respondents, respectively.

I asked participants what St. Luke’s vision to be “one parish with many cultural voices” meant to them at the end of both the baseline and endline questionnaires.

Table 18, above, shows that fifty English-speaking people responded to the baseline and thirty-six responded to the endline. Six Spanish-speakers responded to the baseline survey and thirteen to the endline.

I analyzed the responses from both surveys for themes. NVivo software was used to identify the most frequently used words in the baseline survey and to create figure 8, below. The word *culture* was used in the question and appeared most often in responses. The most common word used, which did not appear in the question, was *God*. *God* appeared twenty-eight times. *Worship* and *service* were used twenty-four and twenty-one times, respectively. Twenty of the uses of *service* referred to *worship*; therefore, *worship service* appears forty-four times. Both *language* and *together* appear twenty-one times apiece. The general sense of the responses was that offering worship services in Spanish and English has made St. Luke's a welcoming place. The comment of one person captured particularly well the spirit of this thesis. These words from a baseline survey response demonstrate that at least one member recognized the complexity of transculturation before the research commenced.

That people of all cultures and backgrounds are welcome - children of the same heavenly father and workers with us in the kingdom of God. Welcome, share, rejoice in the Glory of God - all can and should bring their unique talents to our congregational family to worship together, care for each other, and support and sustain each other in the one true faith. Diversity is a gift to be celebrated. Be careful to not overly emphasize diversity as a proxy for English-Spanish cultural differences. Diversity is far more complex. We are all DIVERSE. We may have cultural similarities w/in native English-speakers, but we are still a diverse community. Just as native Spanish-speakers bring diversity w/in their "group." Don't oversimplify - and don't add complexity where it need not be.



Figure 8. Frequently Used Words by Size¹⁰

The responses to the baseline survey were generally positive. Only four of the fifty-six responses wrote something negative about multicultural ministries at St. Luke's. One wrote, "I'm not sure bilingual services are meaningful to either congregation. Perhaps it is my age." Another contrasted this, writing, "good but too few people." This is contrasted in the endline survey.

There were thirty-six responses to this long answer question in the English-language endline survey. Eight of them could be classified as negative, "it means a split congregation"; having a negative tone, "it means the pastor and council want diversity in St. Luke's"; or suspicious about or not understanding the meaning of the statement, "a difficult decision not able to answer at this time." All of these come from the demographic of those who have been members of St. Luke's for twenty-six years or more. Since there were twenty-three responses from that demographic, 35% of them, therefore, are at minimum suspicious of the vision to be "one parish with many cultural

¹⁰ Illustration created using NVivo software. The more a word is used, the larger it is.

voices.” This does not mean there are no members in this demographic who understand and support the vision. At least one person expressed excitement, “love that and working to make it happen.” Others showed appreciation and understanding, such as “It means that we need to work with all cultures and study their customs so we can better participate.”

What was most striking was that every comment that might even be perceived as potentially negative came from the demographic of those who had been members of St. Luke’s for twenty-six years or more. This came as a contrast to those who have been with the congregation for zero to five years. Among them were comments like, “Everyone is equal,” “everyone matters—no matter what your background is and everyone is valued,” and “I think as one parish all voices should be heard and considered, regardless of culture.” One member in the sixteen to twenty-five-year demographic captured the spirit of the 35% of the twenty-six year or more when they wrote:

In a perfect world, we could all recognize that we are together in a world worshipping one God, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Spanish service and holiday celebrations seem to still be strongly Catholic with a bent towards very contemporary music. While I would not resist or fret about their practicing their ways in St. Luke’s, I don’t wish to attend such a service—even if conducted in English. Just as I wouldn’t want a steady dose of contemporary (young??) Christian music. I get a sense that congregation members fear that the current English service will evolve to have more and more content transferred from the Spanish service in order to satisfy the “one parish” concept. I don’t think this will work even without a language barrier. People can choose just about any version of Christian worship within 5-10 miles—and have chosen St. Luke’s Lutheran for one or more reasons. Changing the service will create discomfort and a reason to reconsider where to attend. We need to set a solid, descriptive vision of what services will be and what ministries will do in the perfect, one parish/many cultures future.

I find this person’s use of the words “fear” and “discomfort” when reflecting on the vision statement insightful. The responses of this demographic of twenty-six year or more members suggest that there is fear around what living into the vision statement will

look like. Will the council and pastor force integration with Spanish-speaking persons or will contemporary music be insisted upon for worship on a regular basis? The language of the various demographics shows that there is not a shared vision for what living into the statement will look like.

For those who are curious, there were thirteen Spanish responses to this question. Their responses were all neutral or positive. Most of them expressed appreciation for having worship in their own language and cultural expression. As we saw previously in this chapter, Spanish-speakers seem similarly disinterested in worshipping in English and following the traditions of their English-speaking counterparts.

Quantitative Data on the Effect of the Interventions on Prayer

Table 19, below, shows that no one in the baseline survey said that they called upon God as *Son* or *Spirit* while 27.0% said they used *Father*. This changed for the endline. While there was slight decrease in the percentage of respondents who prayed to the Father, from 27.0% to 24.5%, the number of respondents who indicated praying to the *Son* or the *Spirit* increased from 0.0% to 2.8%. Meanwhile, the number of people who previously said *God* or *Lord* decreased from 55.5% to 41.1% and those who said they use *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit* equally increased from 17.5% to 25.7%. The data seem to suggest that the series of interventions helped the population to consider the Son and Spirit equal partners with the Father; and, therefore, equal options to whom prayers might be addressed.

Table 19. Baseline and Endline Survey Frequencies of Names or Titles Used when Addressing God in Prayer

	N _b	% _b	T%	N _e	% _e	Cumulative %
Father	17	27.0	27.0	17	24.5	24.5
Son	0	0.0	27.0	2	2.8	27.3
Holy Spirit	0	0.0	27.0	2	2.8	30.1
all equally	11	17.5	44.5	18	25.7	55.8
simply refer to one, ex God/Lord	35	55.5	100.0	29	41.4	97.2
No response	0	0.0	100.0	2	2.8	100.0

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

b and *e* subscripts are for baseline and endline surveys, respectively.

Table 20. Endline Survey Independent t-Test Results for English-Speaking and Spanish-Speaking Participants in Town Hall Meetings

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 6 is "Strongly Agree."	\bar{x}_e (N _e)	\bar{x}_s (N _s)	df	t-value	p
I saw God at work though the conversations at my table/s.	4.37 (27)	5.19 (21)	46	-2.361	.022
The opinions of participants were treated as having equal importance.	4.85 (27)	4.76 (21)	46	.199	.843
I felt that my contributions were heard and respected.	4.81 (27)	4.90 (21)	46	-.195	.846
This ministry helped me better see how God works through people of different cultures.	3.81 (27)	4.57 (21)	46	-1.407	.166
This ministry showed how people with different gifts and abilities can work together to participate in God's work.	4.78 (27)	5.29 (21)	46	-1.285	.205

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses.

\bar{x} is the mean.

df is the degrees of freedom

e and *s* subscripts are for English respondents and Spanish respondents, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Quantitative Data on the Effect of the Interventions on Sense of Equality

Independent t-tests of the endline questions pertaining to the town hall meetings suggest that the meetings had a greater impact on the Spanish-speaking community than the English-speaking. Results of these tests are shown above in table 20. While the only statistically significant difference between their responses, $t_{(46)} = -2.361$, $p = .022$, came to the statement “I saw God at work through the conversations at my table/s,” an increase in mean from 4.37 to 5.19, the Spanish-speaking community responded more affirmatively to four of the five questions. The only statement with which the English-speaking community agreed more was “The opinions of participants were treated as having equal importance.”

Finding that English-speaking persons feel more affirmatively than Spanish-speaking persons that their opinions were treated with equal importance is consistent with the congregation’s responses to the two questions on equality. In both baseline and endline surveys, the English-speaking community scored higher on questions about equality in the church and in the world. What was most impressive was the change in the feeling among Spanish-speakers. Table 21, below, shows that members of the Spanish-speaking community moved from somewhat disagreeing in the baseline survey that they were treated as equals within the church to agreeing in the endline, a movement from a mean of 3.86 to a mean of 5.29. A similar movement was seen in their sense of equality in the world. In this area, responses moved from disagreeing to somewhat agreeing, from a mean of 2.86 in the baseline to a mean of 4.54 in the endline. This suggests that participation in the town hall meetings increased their feeling of equality in the church *and* in the world. The small number of participants for the baseline survey among

Spanish-speakers prohibits any claim of a statistically significant difference. Nonetheless, a paired t-test for the three persons who did participate shows that this change was consistent for them. The movement for these few was from disagree to agree, a mean of 2.67 to a mean of 5.67, when answering about their experience in the congregation. When answering about their experience in the world, their responses went from disagree to somewhat agree, from a mean of 2.33 to a mean of 4.00. This is shown in table 22, below.

Table 21. Difference in Sense of Equality in the Church and in the World between English-Speaking and Spanish-Speaking Communities

	CHURCH		WORLD	
	x_b (N)	x_e (N)	x_b (N)	x_e (N)
English	5.48 (56)	5.51 (43)	4.89 (56)	5.09 (43)
Spanish	3.86 (7)	5.29 (24)	2.86 (7)	4.54 (26)

Interpretive Key for Results:

N is the total number of responses; x is the mean.

b and e subscripts are for baseline and endline surveys, respectively.

Table 22. Baseline and Endline Paired t-Test Results for Sense of Equality among Spanish-Speakers in the Church and in the World

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is “Strongly Disagree” and 6 is “Strongly Agree.”	\bar{x}_b (N_b)	\bar{x}_e (N_e)	df	t-value	p
Pair 1. I feel that I am treated as an equal by other members of St. Luke’s.	2.67 (3)	5.67 (3)	2	-1.964	.188
Pair 2. I feel that I am treated as an equal by people in the world, such as at work, at school, or in the community.	2.33 (3)	4.00 (3)	2	-1.147	.370

Interpretive Key for t-Test Results:

N is the total number of responses; \bar{x} is the mean; df is the degrees of freedom

b and e subscripts are for baseline and endline survey data, respectively.

p is the probability ($T \leq t$) two-tailed. Boldface shows statistically significant change ($p < .05$).

Key Observations

Seven key observations emerge through analysis of the findings in this chapter. Understanding culture is complicated. Homogenous units tend to stay apart from other homogeneous units. Homogenous units can come together. Crossing boundaries of homogeneity can be difficult. Ongoing education is helpful for transculturation. Transculturation comes mostly through conversation. People can experience a reflection of Trinitarian equality through transculturation.

Understanding Culture is Complicated

In this research, people at St. Luke's often made assumptions about culture based on language, age, and other obvious differences between members. Participants began to see expressions of culture where they once did not. This was seen especially within the Spanish-speaking and within the English-speaking communities where members began to understand that cultural expression goes deeper than language alone. Examples of this were Spanish-speakers who did not understand or participate in the vigil for the Virgin or Las Posadas; or, English-speakers who had very different opinions on church organization or ideas about what is inspirational in worship. The Christmas pageant demonstrated that our cultures change over time. Members who had once attended regularly no longer did as their children have grown out of the program. Through conversations at town hall meetings, members began to see that one's experience and upbringing had a direct impact on their preferences and opinions—that is, their culture.

Homogenous Units Tend to Stay Apart from Other Homogenous Units

This was seen mostly in the cross-cultural interventions. Spanish-speakers tended not to attend traditionally English-speaking events, such as the Sunday school pageant;

and, English-speakers tended not to attend those that were traditionally Spanish-speaking, such as Las Posadas. This was also seen within the language communities where, for example, older members did not regularly participate in youth and family events, like the Sunday school pageant. The same reality was seen within the Spanish community where some members would not attend events that appear “too Catholic,” in this case, the vigil for the Virgin. The data also revealed that those who had participated in cross-cultural worship events are more likely to want to maintain their own cultural identity in worship; this was true for both English-speakers and Spanish-speakers.

Homogenous Units Can Come Together

Members wanted people to be able to worship God in their own languages and own cultural traditions; they did, however, appreciate coming together for worship occasionally and they especially enjoyed gathering for social events. The potluck meals following the Epiphany service, the celebration after the Presentation of Our Lord, and the town hall meeting meals were well received and had the highest attendance of all cross-cultural events at the church. Members also expressed appreciation for having both language communities present for the town hall meetings, as they were able to learn from one another.

Crossing Boundaries of Homogeneity Can Be Difficult

Members indicated that these same town hall meetings were also a challenge for them, particularly as translation was needed. Translations made the conversations very long and broke up the flow. The fact that members tended to not cross cultural boundaries and stay within their own homogeneous groups was already noted earlier. Lastly, it was particularly helpful to see in the long-answer responses to the baseline survey how fear of

the unknown can challenge transculturation. This was evidenced through the concerns of survey respondents who had been at the congregation twenty-six years or more.

Ongoing Education Is Helpful for Transculturation

A major component of the interventions for this research was education. Cultural practices were taught through articles, announcements, and fliers. I taught theology through a sermon series. The congregation explored ideas together at town hall meetings. The data show that ongoing education helped members reimagine culture, the nature of the church, and the nature of the Trinity. One-time educational pieces were less helpful. In fact, many in the community never heard these one-time offerings, even if they were present to hear or read it. Repeating a message time and again might seem repetitive for the ones delivering the messages, but the data show this is most helpful for the process.

Transculturation Comes Mostly through Conversation

The most effective tool for transculturation is conversation. People physically coming together, particularly over meals, helped them to engage one another and learn from each other in a safe and non-threatening way. This occurred at the potlucks. It was particularly seen in the conversations around tables at the town hall meetings and in the participants sharing their group conversations. Many of the cultural expressions within St. Luke's came to light through these conversations. This happened within both language communities as well as between the two. Members realized they were not very homogenous and began to consider how they might better navigate being a united but diverse community of faith. Then, the council at its retreat demonstrated transculturation beautifully as it presented a new hybrid organization between pastoral church and program church models.

People Can Experience a Reflection of Trinitarian Equality through Transculturation

It seems that most of the equality experienced in this research came through the town hall meetings where all people were heard in their native tongue. A broad understanding of equality was seen in four ways through this research: (1) More members recognized the three persons of the Trinity in their prayers at the end of the research than they did at the beginning (see table 19); (2) The congregation began to see the ministry of the church more as a partnership among all members (see tables 11-12); (3) Members, particularly Spanish-speaking ones, experienced being treated as equals more at the end of the research than they did at the beginning (see tables 20-22); and (4) It is also worth noting that for Spanish-speaking members, equality is generally more of a dream for the future than it is a current reality (see tables 20-22).

In the following and final chapter, I will collapse the seven findings of this chapter into three categories: (1) Understanding Culture Is Complicated, (2) Transculturation Is a Slow Process, and (3) The Common Culture of a Community Is Cultivated in its Context through Conversation and Communion. I will also answer the research question, viewing each of these through the theoretical, biblical, and theological lenses of this research. I will then conclude by sharing thoughts on how these findings and the related conclusions might be lived out in the future of St. Luke's and the larger church.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

The question for this research was:

How might action research interventions clarify a bilingual-multicultural congregation's identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity?

The biblical and theological lenses through which this project was designed and evaluated are all related to some aspect of the Trinitarian nature. The biblical lenses love the stranger, led by the Spirit, and unity and diversity in God's family are all aspects of the theological lenses *imago Trinitatis* and *missio Dei*. The ways in which church people understand this nature of God impacts upon the way their congregations are organized. This brings us back to the theoretical lenses. St. Luke's is facing adaptive change as it lives through the transculturation of different expressions of church size theory among English-speaking and Spanish-speaking persons of a variety of ethnic practices, religious experiences, and social backgrounds.

The data collected before, during, and after the eight interventions of this research project led to the seven main observations presented at the end of chapter 6. These might be categorized into three main conclusions in the following way. The first conclusion is the observation that *Understanding Culture Is Complicated*. The second conclusion is *Transculturation Is a Slow Process*. This was seen in the observations that "homogenous units tend to stay apart from other homogenous units," "homogenous units can come together," "crossing boundaries of homogeneity can be difficult," and "ongoing education

is helpful for transculturation.” The third conclusion, *The Common Culture of a Community Is Cultivated in its Context through Conversation and Communion*, comes from the findings that “transculturation comes mostly through conversation,” and “people can experience a reflection of Trinitarian equality through transculturation.”

Conclusion 1: Understanding Culture is Complicated

Our definition of culture for this research is “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; *also*: the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time.”¹ Culture goes much deeper than language alone. It is about what we do and what we believe and the connections we make with other people in society based upon these beliefs and practices. This research helped members of St. Luke’s recognize that even within what appear to be homogeneous groups there are a diversity of practices and beliefs. These include obvious things like foods but also less obvious ones like expectations of the worship services and understanding around how to organize the church’s administration. Some already understood culture in this way before the research began. For others, it was a new concept.

The following lenses are active in this conclusion. The first two are *imago Trinitatis* and *unity and diversity in God’s family*. Throughout this research project, the congregation reflected on God’s nature as one God in three persons and three persons in one God and the congregation’s own expressions of unity and diversity. Some of their cultural diversity is seen through the next set of lenses. Through the lens of *church size*

¹ *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “culture,” accessed December 5, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture>.

theory, we saw that members of the congregation had diverse ways of organizing the congregation's leadership and ministry. Through the lens of *missio Dei*, this research showed that members had different ways of understanding their mission as a congregation. Some felt God calling St. Luke's to grow in their connections with each other; others see the emphasis as being sent to connect with neighbors. These two aspects of the *missio Dei* represent another layer of diversity within the congregation. In both of these, there is a shared element of *loving the stranger*, whether these be our neighbors outside of the church or those within our own church community who are currently strangers to us.

This brings us to our two theoretical lenses. Helping a congregation navigate its way through the coming together of multiple cultures is a matter of *transculturation*. The work required to help it embrace its diversity as it celebrates its unity is an exercise in *adaptive change* because there are no existing road maps for such work in the congregation. Understanding the nature of culture is itself an obstacle for understanding how the church reflects the *imago Trinitatis*. The lenses of this research bring this complexity to light and show that a bilingual-multicultural congregation such as St. Luke's can more fully understand itself as a reflection of God's nature through a series of action research interventions. These interventions are often *adaptive changes* in that they are new and creative ways to bring together people with different cultural expressions. St. Luke's will need to be intentional with its future *transculturation*, regardless of which cultures are coming together, because the human tendency is not to adapt but to remain with familiar ideas and programs.

Conclusion 2: Transculturation Is a Slow Process

This second conclusion builds upon the first. The fact that culture is difficult to understand contributes to the fact that transculturation is a slow process. That the process is slow is evidenced through the observations that “homogenous units tend to stay apart from other homogenous units,” “homogenous units can come together,” “crossing boundaries of homogeneity can be difficult,” and “ongoing education is helpful for transculturation.” The lenses employed for this research helped to show areas where the process of transculturation gets slowed down and other ways it can be moved along.

The following lenses are active in this conclusion. Through the lens of *transculturation*, particularly the angle of the homogeneous unit principle, this research showed that people will typically associate with others of similar beliefs and practices. Most people will not make regular efforts to participate in activities outside of their own cultures. This was seen in how members chose not to come together for cross-cultural worship experiences. They will, however, come together in situations designed to bring them together, such as town hall meetings and fellowship events. Those who participated in such activities often enjoyed them.

The lenses of *church size theory*, the *missio Dei*, *love the stranger*, and *led by the Spirit* are among those that help us to see some of the specific cultural diversity that can separate the members from one another. Much of this came to light during the town hall meetings. There it was learned, for example, that there were many visions for how the church leadership and ministry ought to be organized. People also saw different aspects of the *missio Dei* as having greater urgency. Some people saw the focus on God’s call to build relationships within the existing congregation; others saw the focus on going into

the neighborhood to form relationships with strangers in the community. The *missio Dei* includes both, but this was not immediately understood.

Finally, the fact that transculturation is a slow process is clearly seen in the observation that “ongoing education is helpful for transculturation.” The five-week sermon series helped to influence the congregation’s thinking on the nature of the Trinity and the church. While some of the gain in understanding was lost over time, as the concepts and language about the Trinity were not repeated on a regular basis, the education alone did help the congregation to reimagine the Trinity as a community of coeternal and coexisting equals and the church as a reflection of the Trinity in both identity and practice. Instruction that was offered once or twice—such as Sunday morning announcements or bulletin inserts—showed little to no effect. These instructional offerings sought to educate the membership about various cultural expressions and to increase cross-cultural participation in events. More frequent education might have helped people gain a better understanding of these events.

For the future, it may even be best to offer an equivalent version of some of these activities in English at the English service. It would be quite simple, for example, to hold Las Posadas, *the inns*, in English. English-speaking members of the congregation would certainly see unity of faith in this event, just as some of their Spanish-speaking members for whom Las Posadas is a foreign practice have found unity in their diversity. To answer the question of this research, “How might action research interventions clarify a bilingual-multicultural congregation’s identity as *imago Trinitatis* in unity and diversity?” this research found that *unity and diversity in God’s family* can be taught; however, relying solely on such education for *transculturation* is not very effective.

**Conclusion 3: The Common Culture of a Community Is Cultivated in Its Context
through Conversation and Communion**

The observations that led to this conclusion are “transculturation comes mostly through conversation” and “people can experience a reflection of Trinitarian equality through transculturation.” The first is in contrast to the educational piece, above. Education has a role in transculturation, as seen above in the sermon series in the Trinity. However, the greatest appreciation for the church’s identity as a diverse yet united body of equals in partnership with God and each other seems to have come through the experience of the town hall meetings. In these meetings, members learned firsthand from other members who, though they looked like themselves, had very different opinions about what the church ought to be doing. This was particularly true in the second and third gatherings where the English-speakers gathered independently of the Spanish-speakers. The varied opinions around worship content and style, the congregation’s vision and mission statements, and the conversation around church size theory are all examples of this that came to light through the experience of conversation in these meetings. It was in the town hall meetings and not in the cross-lingual interventions where people found their unity in the midst of their diversity.

All eight lenses can be seen at work through the town hall meetings. God’s people were led by the Spirit to come together and participate in the *missio Dei*. Their conversations, such as the church size theory topic, revealed that there were many differences among them. Working through these differences required members to love the stranger, where in this case the stranger was someone with different beliefs and practices. Different cultures coming together to navigate a mutual way forward is what

transculturation is all about. Working through their differences, particularly their language barrier and their movement from one type of church organization to another, would require adaptive change, as they did not have in their proverbial toolbox developed skills for this particular work. Unity and diversity in God's family were evident through their conversations and adaptive efforts. This unity and diversity reflects the *imago Trinitatis*.

The second observation contributing to this conclusion is different. It seems to me that a fundamental aspect of Trinitarian transculturation is a sense of equality. In the process of diverse cultures coming together to form one new culture, the cultural expressions of the participants are experienced, appreciated, and even celebrated. People find their unity not in the creation of one new homogenous unit but in the coexistence of diverse but equal cultural expressions. The observation that "transculturation comes mostly through conversation" demonstrates that this research helped St. Luke's to see that there are many assumptions made about the cultural preferences of its members. It is easier to move forward when these assumptions are brought to light and members see they are not all of one mind. Seeing their differences makes it possible for the congregation to negotiate its future culture in unity and diversity.

I shared my own personal story of transculturation in chapter 3 when I wrote about how two cultures came together the night my wife and I married. I share another marriage example given to me by a member of St. Luke's. Her experience with her husband illustrates this third conclusion. The statement of this conclusion is "the Common Culture of a Community is Cultivated in its Context through Conversation and

Communion.” Using the story of her relationship with her husband, the lenses of this research can help bring each piece of this statement into focus.

Common culture of a community. Any time two or more people come together in relationship there is community. In order for the relationship to flourish, there must be some negotiation of their unique cultural expressions. The woman explained to me one such negotiation she and her husband experienced when they married. People in her family did not avoid conflict or difficult conversations; in his family they did. The young couple needed to find a way to work through this together when they married. This is *transculturation*. Their relationship reflects the *imago Trinitatis*; they are two people but one couple, one couple but two people. Unlike God, they are not one substance and not eternal, but they still reflect God’s nature. Their relationship is ***cultivated in its context***. The context is the marriage. Cultivation is the active process through which they grow as one couple. Each person in the couple is *led by the Spirit* to love the other; in other words, they *love the stranger* that they are to each other throughout life as they become more and more like one. Their nearly fifty years of marriage illustrates *unity and diversity in God’s family*. All of this occurs through ***conversation and communion***. Their unity grows stronger as they negotiate their diversity through ongoing dialogue and simply being together.

Living into the Future

Understanding culture is complicated; transculturation is a slow process; and, the common culture of a community is cultivated in its context through conversation and communion. These three conclusions drawn from the data of this action research project create a helpful framework for any community of faith. Most communities are likely to

have people of different cultural expressions coming together. These differences are clearly seen in a place like St. Luke's where two languages are spoken. This research demonstrated that there are cultural differences within what appear to be homogeneous groups, such as particular age groups or people from various parts of the country. For example, people from urban, rural, and suburban communities, though they may look alike, are likely to have very different cultures.

The seven key observations that emerged through analysis of the data flow from one to the next in a way that I suspect will have some semblance to other communities of faith, whatever their demographics might be. It would be interesting to see if further research in other places would reveal the following pattern. As participants begin to see expressions of culture where they once did not, they see that their homogenous units tend to stay apart from other homogenous units. They then see that there are times when these homogenous units do come together. An honest look at the times of coming together then reveals that crossing boundaries of homogeneity can be difficult. They then see, as they try to teach one another about their cultural beliefs and practices, that while ongoing education can be helpful for transculturation, it is limited. They then discover that transculturation comes mostly through conversation. Finally, having done the hard work of bringing cultures together in a loving and honest way, people experience a reflection of Trinitarian equality through transculturation.

The research for this paper was conducted in a specific place, with a specific people, at a specific time. One cannot claim universality of the conclusions. While it might be true that the conclusions can help a community navigate the coming together of different cultures to find unity and diversity, additional research would need to take place

in several other locations to demonstrate this. It would be particularly helpful for this to be done in a place where the demographics seem homogeneous.

Visions and Dreams for the Future

In Acts 2:17, Peter quoted the prophet Joel when explaining how everyone heard the Gospel proclaimed by the apostles in their own native tongue saying, “your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” While the story of Pentecost is a beautiful image to use when considering bilingual ministry at St. Luke’s, I find this to be a helpful verse for when considering how people from various demographics react when immersed in transculturation. The members of St. Luke’s who have been with the congregation twenty-six years or more have seen much change in the church and the community. They have been with the congregation through great challenges and shifts in direction and leadership. There were many people who left St. Luke’s because of these changes, but this group remained. They were, in many ways, pioneers trying new things for the sake of the Gospel in the congregation and community, such as beginning ESL and the Spanish service. They did not have the proverbial tools in their toolbox, so they adapted. Now, as was seen in this research, a large minority of this same population is resistant to further change. A question for further research might be, “how might action research interventions reignite the fervor of missional dreaming for those who once envisioned God’s promised and preferred future in their new cultural context?”

EPILOGUE

Seven months of action research interventions, data gathering events, and continual analysis led to three conclusions that may or may not be universal: (1) Understanding culture is complicated, (2) Transculturation is a slow process, and (3) The common culture of a community is cultivated in its context through conversation and communion. These three came from seven key observations: (1) Understanding culture is complicated, (2) Homogenous units tend to stay apart from other homogenous units, (3) Homogenous units can come together, (4) Crossing boundaries of homogeneity can be difficult, (5) Ongoing education is helpful for transculturation, (6) Transculturation comes mostly through conversation, and (7) People can experience a reflection of Trinitarian equality through transculturation. In this epilogue, I will offer a reflection on the research project and what I learned about myself in the process.

Reflection on the Research

This research began as a study on how the cultures of English-speaking and Spanish-speaking members of one congregation come together. The assumption was that there really were only two cultural expressions within the congregation, even though the congregation's vision statement spoke of it as having "many cultural voices." I did not originally see value in studying differences within the language communities. Fortunately for me and the process, the real challenges of transculturation, especially within the English-speaking community, came to light before the baseline questionnaire was finalized. It was also helpful that the research question recognized that the congregation

was “bilingual-multicultural,” and that multicultural was undefined at the time. If I knew just how deep the cultural differences within the communities were, the questionnaires would have dug deeper into specific areas like worship traditions and generation theory. Nonetheless, church size theory was added as a lens because it captured much of what the congregation was experiencing with its contrasting expectations of itself and its pastoral staff.

Another observation through the process was that I had many interventions and an amount of data to analyze that was sometimes overwhelming. The baseline and endline questionnaires had over fifty questions apiece, including large sections with multiple questions and short-answer responses, which brought the actual number of questions closer to 100. This amount of data was both helpful and sometimes unwieldy. As for the interventions, they are counted in the paper as eight, but one of those was a five-week series and another was a set of four town hall meetings, which brought that actual number to fifteen. In the end, it was the large amount of data collected from many interventions that make the findings stronger. I regret that in the data gathering I did not find a way to increase participation within the Spanish-speaking community until the endline survey. Having more respondents for the t-tests across the three surveys in the Spanish-speaking community would have made this a stronger paper.

Reflection on the Impact of the Research on Ministry

One of the ministry teams being formed as the council seeks to create a hybrid of pastoral church and program church models is a worship committee. The chair of the developing committee and I met to review the committee’s charter and immediate plans for action. One of the topics she raised was youth and families at St. Luke’s worship. She

talked about how the congregation wants to see more young people in worship, but that it is difficult for some people to allow for changes in worship that would help these families feel more welcome.

The findings of this research and the conclusions drawn from them could not have been more appropriate for the conversation. We spent the next thirty minutes imagining ways to bring the older and younger members together that they might find ways to navigate through their cultural differences. We determined that a town hall meeting led by the worship committee would be the best way to bring the groups together that they might hear from each other about their core beliefs and practices. We are hopeful that in coming together the groups will gain a better appreciation for each other's cultures and that the older members, in particular, will be less fearful of new experiences and allow for practices that better reach younger people in the worship service. I am looking forward to seeing how this plays out. I am also curious if the meeting being led by members of the congregation will help members have a less hierarchical view of the church.

Reflection on the Impact of the Research on Me

I end this paper where it began, giving thanks to God for the opportunity to serve God and God's people. The four years of this DMin program were not easy. They came following a period of great turnover at my congregation where I serve as senior pastor. It began when my boys were eleven, nine, and seven. Each of them had their unique situations in an age of IEPs and mindboggling food allergies. We certainly had our share of challenges. In the midst of this, I somehow managed to return to playing French horn—it helped that the congregation is filled with fine musicians—and my family and I

built not one but two boats. All of this is meaningful for this epilogue because the DMin program, and especially this research, shaped each of those experiences.

When I was a college student, I had a flier on my apartment door that said, “Building relationship between people and people and people and God.” My email tagline was a paraphrase of Ephesians 4, “Equipping and sending the baptized for the work of the church.” Somewhere in my young life, God had already planted seeds for missional life and leadership. I did not see church as a building; I saw it as being everywhere, such as the street I lived on. I believed God wanted to be a part of the lives of everyone who lived there.

The missional seeds were there, but life can get in the way. My spiritual vision dimmed after years of trying to perform well in a declining congregation that could not imagine a missional life. The vision was reignited when I took my call to St. Luke’s, but even there it began to dim again as I slowly realized I was looked upon more as a Chief Executive Officer and less as a Chief Discipleship Officer or mission director.

I entered the DMin program at Luther specifically for its emphasis on mission and leadership. I knew the missional seeds were within me. I added to those from my youth during my first call when I spent a great deal of time with those I now realize were knowingly or unknowingly part of the missional church movement. These seeds needed to be watered that they might once again blossom and grow. I also felt that I needed to develop a better mission vocabulary and to understand better the theological groundwork it is built upon. The program at Luther helped me meet these goals, and more.

What surprised me most in the program was the focus on Trinitarian theology. I have always prayed to all three persons of the Trinity fairly equally. I would call upon

one or the other or the other based upon the need or circumstance. What surprised me was not the idea that the three persons are coequal, coeternal, and cohabitating; what surprised me was that I never had given much thought to the relationship of the three and what that means for the church, and for me. We are made in the image of God. That is one of the very first things we learn about humanity in Genesis. We are made in God's image; and that image is one of relationship, even in the first words of Genesis.

This unexpected and fresh understanding of the image of God and my part in creation has changed me. I see the church, the world, even my own family differently. Everything is about connecting: connecting with God, one another, and our neighbors. This has become our unofficial tagline at the church and it is the driving force behind our new vision and strategies. These vision and strategies, by the way, were not written by one person in prayer or developed by a seminarian writing a thesis, but by members of the church council. These men and women participated in the series of town hall meetings presented in this research, partnered together to dream of God's promised and preferred future, and drafted the vision and strategies for the council and congregation. This is but example of how this DMin program and research project were intimately intertwined with my ministry.

I return to how the process changed me. My wife and I will soon celebrate our twentieth wedding anniversary. Our boys are now fifteen, thirteen, and eleven. We continue work on our twenty-seven-foot homebuilt cabin cruiser and I have become principal horn at a local community orchestra. I am also a son, a friend, and a neighbor. This process has helped me to see God at work wherever I go and among whomever I am with. I see that God is already building relationships and making connections; I am

blessed to be invited to participate in what God is already doing. At home, this means I get a glimpse of God's love for the world through my unconditional love for my wife and boys. Building the boat, this has meant spending time with neighbors and even bringing together a group of people from home, church, and the neighborhood to help us flip it over and enjoy some fellowship (the hull is built upside). At symphony and in the neighborhood, this has meant walking alongside others, bringing people together, and working with them to find hope and peace in the world. Finally, I will add that while equipping and sending the baptized to do the work of the church remains an internal compass for me, I now understand my role as a missional leader as *one who participates in God's promised and preferred future by working with and through others to facilitate relationships between people and God, each other, and the world.*

APPENDIX A

Instruments

Whole Population Survey The Congregation at St. Luke's Lutheran Church Unity and Diversity Survey: Baseline Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in this survey as part of my Doctor of Ministry degree. A follow up will be administered from April 11-22, 2018, at the conclusion of my research. Please review the following sections before completing the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please direct them to me at atriolo@stlukes-elca.org or (571) 555-5555. You may also contact my supervisors _____ at _____@luthersem.edu or _____ at _____@luthersem.edu.

Gratefully,
Albert W. Triolo, Pastor

Purpose

The survey is designed to help me understand how St. _____ understands itself and the nature of God as Trinity as I begin my study process.

Confidentiality

Any information that you provide in connection with this study will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Responses will be used for analysis and only summary results will be presented in the final dissertation.

Voluntary Participation

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with Luther Seminary, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, or me as your pastor. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

Consent

If you decide to participate, please complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your return of this questionnaire is implied consent. If you are under the age of 18, please have a legal guardian give consent below. No financial benefits accrue to you for participation, but your responses will give me meaningful insight that I would not have otherwise. The only cost to you is the time taken to complete the questionnaires.

Informed Consent for a Minor

+ **Minor** I, _____, a minor, have read the consent, confidentiality, and
Print

voluntary participation sections herein and hereby consent to my responses to this questionnaire

being used in this study. Signed _____ Dated _____

+ **Guardian** I, _____, have read the consent, confidentiality, and voluntary
Print

participation sections herein and hereby give _____, a minor

consent to complete this questionnaire. My relationship to this minor is _____.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Personal Information

1. Birth date (*month, day, year*): _____
2. Are you:
 - Female
 - Male
3. What is your primary spoken language?
 - English
 - Spanish
 - Other
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Elementary School
 - Middle School
 - Some High School
 - High School Degree
 - Trade/Technical School
 - Some College
 - College Degree
 - Postgraduate Study
 - Postgraduate Degree
 - Other

Church Participation

5. Have you always considered yourself a Lutheran?
 - Yes
 - No
6. If no, please list the Christian denominations and/or religions you have considered yourself to be:

7. How long have you been worshipping at St. Luke's?
 - 0-5 years,
 - 6-15 years,
 - 16-25 years,
 - 26 years or more
8. At which service do you typically worship?
 - 8:30
 - 10
 - 12
 - Alternate 8:30 and 10
 - Alternate English & Spanish
9. How often do you worship?
 - Nearly every Sunday
 - 2-3 times per month
 - About once per month
 - About once per quarter or less
10. Have you attended bilingual ministries/events at St. Luke's?
 - Yes
 - No
11. If yes, please check all that you have attended
 - Bilingual worship
 - Bilingual fellowship events
 - Bilingual adult education

12. Have you served on a committee or ministry team in the last two years?

- Yes No

13. If yes, please list these committees or ministry teams.

14. Which of these activities did you experience past year, check all that apply:

- Sunday School (children, youth, or adult)
 Youth Sunday
 WELCA or MIELA
 Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
 Dwelling in God's Word Bible Reading (Tuesday or Thursday)
 Christmas Pageant (December)
 Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe
 Las Posadas
 Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (January)
 The Presentation of Our Lord celebration after the Spanish service
 Ash Wednesday
 Stephen Ministry, Lay Visitation & Care Team, or Flower Delivery Ministry

15. If you planned or helped to lead an activity, please indicate this by checking all that apply:

- Sunday School (children, youth, or adult)
 Youth Sunday
 WELCA or MIELA
 Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
 Dwelling in God's Word Bible Reading (Tuesday or Thursday)
 Christmas Pageant (December)
 Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe
 Las Posadas
 Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (January)
 The Presentation of Our Lord celebration after the Spanish service
 Ash Wednesday
 Stephen Ministry, Lay Visitation & Care Team, or Flower Delivery Ministry

Experience of God, Church, and the World

16. When you pray, which person of the Trinity do you address mostly?

- Father Son Holy Spirit
 all equally simply refer to one, such as "God" or "Lord"

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is "Strongly Disagree" & 6 is "Strongly Agree." Circle the appropriate number.

17. God invites all people into partnership to care for the world God made.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

18. God invites all people into partnership to care for other people.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

19. "One body, many parts" illustrates God's plan for unity to be fulfilled through a diversity of gifts and abilities.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
20. Jesus' prayer "that they may be one" means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
21. I feel that I am treated as an equal by other members of St. Luke's.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
22. I feel that I am treated as an equal by people in the world, such as at work, at school, or in the community.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
23. The weight of a person's opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
24. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
25. Members of St. Luke's are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
26. Diversity of cultures is something to be celebrated in the church.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
27. Saying we are "multicultural" means we have many cultures in our congregation; such as, younger/older, English- or Spanish-speaking, tech savvy and not, etc.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
28. When I see Spanish-speaking and English-speaking people together in worship at St. Luke's, I feel I am seeing humanity as it is created to be.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
29. It is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
30. The cultural practices of the entire congregation should be taken into account when planning worship and woven into services.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|

31. Every worship service at St. Luke's should include the languages and cultures of all members of the congregation.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
32. Whenever possible, each culture within the St. Luke's community should have its own unique worship experience.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
33. The cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
34. Being a "bilingual-multicultural congregation" means St. Luke's is one congregation that worships in two languages.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
35. St. Luke's is effectively two congregations.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
36. The gifts God's children receive from the Holy Spirit vary but they are equally important and needed in the world.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
37. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
38. All members of St. Luke's should equally participate in God's work of ministering to each other.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
39. God is one God in three persons, three persons in one God.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
40. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
41. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
42. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

For each of the following ministries, please answer on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being strongly disagree and 6 being strongly agree the questions that follow. Circle the appropriate number.

43. *Sunday School*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

Youth Sunday

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

44. *WELCA or MIELA*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

45. *Altar for the Dead*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

46. *Christmas Pageant (in December)*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

47. *Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

48. *Las Posadas*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

49. *Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (in January)*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

50. *Presentation of Our Lord*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

51. *Ash Wednesday*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

52. *Stephen Ministry*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

53. *Lay Visitation and Care Team*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

54. *Altar Flower Delivery Ministry*

a. I understand the significance of this ministry.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?

55. In the space provided, what does St. Luke's vision to be "one parish with many cultural voices" mean to you?

FINISHED. THANK YOU!

Información Personal

1. Fecha de nacimiento (mes, día, año): _____
2. Género:
 - Mujer
 - Hombre
3. ¿Cuál es tu idioma principal hablado?
 - Inglés
 - Español
4. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que ha completado?

<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela Primaria	<input type="checkbox"/> Algo de Universidad
<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela Intermedia	<input type="checkbox"/> Título Universitario
<input type="checkbox"/> Algo de Escuela Secundaria	<input type="checkbox"/> Estudio de Postgrado
<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela Secundaria	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduado de Postgrado
<input type="checkbox"/> Escuela Comercial/Técnica	<input type="checkbox"/> Otro

Participación de la Iglesia

5. ¿Siempre te has considerado Luterano?
 - Sí
 - No
6. Si no, enumere las denominaciones cristianas y / o religiones que te has considerado a ti mismo como parte de:

7. ¿Cuánto tiempo has estado adorando en St. Luke's?
 - 0-5 años,
 - 6-15 años,
 - 16-25 años,
 - 26 años o mas
8. ¿En qué servicio adoras típicamente?
 - 8:30
 - 10
 - 12
 - 8:30 o 10
 - Inglés o Español
9. ¿Con qué frecuencia adoras?
 - Casi todos los domingos
 - 2-3 veces al mes
 - Aproximadamente una vez al mes
 - Aproximadamente una vez por trimestre o menos
10. ¿Ha asistido a ministerios / eventos bilingües en St. Luke's?
 - Sí
 - No
11. En caso afirmativo, verifique todo lo que ha asistido
 - Servicio Bilingüe
 - Eventos de compañerismo Bilingües
 - Educación Cristiana Bilingüe para Adultos

12. ¿Ha servido en un comité o equipo ministerial en los últimos dos años?

- Sí No

13. En caso afirmativo, enumere estos comités o equipos ministeriales.

14. A cuál de estas actividades asistió desde diciembre, marque todas las que apliquen:

- Escuela Dominical
 Domingo de la Joventud
 WELCA o MIELA
 Desayuno de Hombres y Estudio Bíblico
 Estudio Bíblico (Martes o Jueves)
 Programa de Navidad de Niños. (Diciembre)
 Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe
 Las Posadas
 Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)
 Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español
 Miércoles de Ceniza
 El ministerio de Esteban, El Ministerio laico de Visitas y Cuidado o El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores

15. Si planificó o ayudó a dirigir un evento, indíquelo marcando todos los que correspondan:

- Escuela Dominical
 Domingo de la Joventud
 WELCA o MIELA
 Desayuno de Hombres y Estudio Bíblico
 Estudio Bíblico (Martes o Jueves)
 Programa de Navidad de Niños. (Diciembre)
 Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe
 Las Posadas
 Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)
 Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español
 Miércoles de Ceniza
 El ministerio de Esteban, El Ministerio laico de Visitas y Cuidado o El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores

Experiencia de Dios, Iglesia y el Mundo

16. Cuando oras, ¿a qué persona de la Trinidad te diriges la mayoría de las veces?

- Padre Hijo Espíritu Santo
 Todo igual simplemente se refieren a uno, como “Dios” o “Señor”

Califique lo siguiente en una escala de 1 a 6: 1 es “Totalmente en desacuerdo” y 6 es “Totalmente de Acuerdo.” Encierra en un círculo el número apropiado.

17. Dios invita a todas las personas a asociarse para cuidar el mundo que Dios creó.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

18. Dios invita a todas las personas a asociarse para cuidar a otras personas.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
19. “Un cuerpo, muchas partes” ilustra el plan de Dios para que la unidad se cumpla a través de una diversidad de dones y habilidades.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
20. La oración de Jesús “para que sean uno” significa que Dios desea que todas las culturas finalmente se mezclen para formar un pueblo homogéneo.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
21. Siento que otros miembros de St. Luke’s me tratan como a un igual.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
22. Siento que soy tratado como un igual por personas en el mundo, como en el trabajo, en la escuela o en la comunidad.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
23. El peso de la opinión de una persona en la iglesia debe estar directamente relacionado con su nivel de educación.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
24. Hay una jerarquía natural en la iglesia con el pastor a la cabeza, seguido por el consejo parroquial, los comités y luego la congregación en general.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
25. Los miembros de St. Luke’s son socios por igual con los pastores en disciplinar a otros.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
26. La diversidad de culturas es algo que se debe celebrar en la iglesia.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
27. Decir que somos “multiculturales” significa que tenemos muchas culturas en nuestra congregación; como, joven / mayor, inglés-español, conocimiento de tecnología o no, etc.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
28. Cuando veo gente hispano hablante y de habla inglesa juntos en adoración en St. Luke’s, siento que estoy viendo a la humanidad tal como está creada para ser.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
29. Es importante que las personas tengan una oportunidad semanal para adorar a Dios en su lengua y cultura nativa.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
30. Las prácticas culturales de toda la congregación deben tenerse en cuenta al planificarse el servicio de adoración y debe estar entrelazados en el.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

31. Cada servicio de adoración en St. Luke's debe incluir los idiomas y culturas de todos los miembros de la congregación.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
32. Siempre que sea posible, cada cultura dentro de la comunidad de St. Luke's debe tener su propia y única experiencia de adoración.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
33. La expresión cultural de una congregación debe ser la de la cultura dominante.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
34. Ser una "congregación bilingüe-multicultural" significa que St. Luke's es una congregación que adora en dos idiomas.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
35. St. Luke's es efectivamente dos congregaciones.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
36. Los dones que los hijos de Dios reciben del Espíritu Santo varían pero son igualmente importantes y necesarios en el mundo.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
37. El ministerio de la congregación es responsabilidad exclusiva del personal pastoral.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
38. Todos los miembros de St. Luke's deben participar por igual en la obra de Dios de ministrarse unos a otros.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
39. Dios es un Dios en tres personas, tres personas en un Dios.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
40. El Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo son tres personas únicas, cada una con su propio rol.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
41. Las tres personas de la Trinidad son iguales.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
42. La Trinidad es por naturaleza jerárquica con el Padre como cabeza seguida por el Hijo y luego por el Espíritu.
- Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

Para cada uno de los siguientes ministerios, responda en una escala de 1 a 6, donde 1 está "Totalmente en Desacuerdo" y 6 está "Totalmente de Acuerdo" con las preguntas que siguen. Encierra en un círculo el número apropiado.

43. *Escuela Dominical*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

44. *Domingo de la Juventud*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

45. **WELCA o MIELA**

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

46. **Altar para los Muertos**

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

47. Programa de Navidad de Niños (Diciembre)

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

48. Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

49. *Las Posadas*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

50. *Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

51. *Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

52. *Miércoles de Ceniza*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

53. *El Ministerio de Esteban*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

54. *El Equipo de Visitas y Cuidado Laico*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

55. *El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

56. En el espacio provisto abajo responda la siguiente pregunta, ¿qué significa para ti la visión de St. Luke's de ser "una parroquia con muchas voces culturales"?

TERMINADO. ¡GRACIAS!

**Whole Population Survey
The Congregation at St. Luke's Lutheran Church
In the Image of the Trinity Questionnaire**

Thank you for participating in this survey as part of my Doctor of Ministry degree. Please review the following sections before completing the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please direct them to me at atriolo@stmarks-elca.org or call me at (571) 555-5555. You may also contact my supervisors at _____@luthersem.edu or _____ at _____@luthersem.edu.

Gratefully, Albert W. Triolo, Pastor

Purpose, The survey is designed to help me understand how the sermon series on the Image of the Trinity may have helped the congregation of St. Luke's understand itself and the nature of God as Trinity.

Confidentiality, Any information that you provide in connection with this study will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Responses will be used for analysis and only summary results will be presented in the final dissertation.

Voluntary Participation, Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with Luther Seminary, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, or me as your pastor. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

Consent, If you decide to participate, please complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your return of this questionnaire is implied consent. If you are under the age of 18, please have a legal guardian give consent below. No financial benefits accrue to you for participation, but your responses will give me meaningful insight that I would not have otherwise. The only cost to you is the time taken to complete the questionnaires.

Informed Consent for a Minor

+ **Minor** I, _____, a minor, have read the consent, confidentiality, and
Print
voluntary participation sections herein and hereby consent to my responses to this questionnaire
being used in this study. Signed _____ Dated _____

+ **Guardian** I, _____, have read the consent, confidentiality, and voluntary
Print
participation sections herein and hereby give _____, a minor
consent to complete this questionnaire. My relationship to this minor is _____.

Signed _____ Dated _____

1. Birth date (*month, day, year*): _____
2. Are you:
 - Female Male
3. At which service do you typically worship?
 - 8:30 10 12
 - Alternate 8:30 and 10 Alternate English & Spanish

4. I either read the manuscript or was present in worship to hear Pastor Albert's sermon on (*Please check all that apply*):
- January 7: Introduction to the series on the Trinity
 - January 14: The Nature of the Trinity
 - January 21: The Nature of the Church
 - January 28: Unity & Diversity in the Church
 - February 4: In, With, & Around the World
5. Jesus' prayer "that they may be one" means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
6. The weight of a person's opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
7. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
8. Members of St. Luke's are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
9. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
10. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
11. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
12. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
13. What did you take away from the sermon series on the nature of the Trinity and the church?

14. What was helpful or not helpful?

4. Lei el manuscrito o estuve presente en la misa para escuchar el sermón del Pastor Albert (*marque todo lo que corresponda*):

- 7 de enero: Introducción a la serie sobre la Trinidad
 14 de enero: La naturaleza de la Trinidad
 21 de enero: La naturaleza de la iglesia
 28 de enero: Unidad y diversidad en la iglesia
 4 de febrero: En, con y alrededor del mundo

5. La oración de Jesús “para que sean uno” significa que Dios desea que todas las culturas finalmente se mezclen para formar un pueblo homogéneo.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

6. El peso de la opinión de una persona en la iglesia debe estar directamente relacionado con su nivel de educación.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

7. Hay una jerarquía natural en la iglesia con el pastor a la cabeza, seguido por el consejo parroquial, los comités y luego la congregación en general.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

8. Los miembros de St. Luke’s son socios por igual con los pastores en disciplinar a otros.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

9. El ministerio de la congregación es responsabilidad exclusiva del personal pastoral.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

10. El Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo son tres personas únicas, cada una con su propio rol.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

11. Las tres personas de la Trinidad son iguales.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

12. La Trinidad es por naturaleza jerárquica con el Padre como cabeza seguida por el Hijo y luego por el Espíritu.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

13. ¿Que aprendiste de la serie de sermones sobre la naturaleza de la Trinidad y la Iglesia?

14. ¿Qué fue útil o no útil?

**Whole Population Survey
The Congregation at St. Luke's Lutheran Church
Unity and Diversity Survey: Endline Questionnaire**

Thank you for participating in this survey as part of my Doctor of Ministry degree. Please review the following sections before completing the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please direct them to me at atriolo@stmarks-elca.org or call me at (571) 555-5555. You may also contact my supervisors at _____@luthersem.edu or _____ at _____@luthersem.edu.

Gratefully,
Albert W. Triolo, Pastor

Purpose

The survey is designed to help me understand how a series of events from October through April have helped the congregation of St. Luke's understand itself and the nature of God as Trinity.

Confidentiality

Any information that you provide in connection with this study will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Responses will be used for analysis and only summary results will be presented in the final dissertation.

Voluntary Participation

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with Luther Seminary, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, or me as your pastor. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

Consent

If you decide to participate, please complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your return of this questionnaire is implied consent. If you are under the age of 18, please have a legal guardian give consent below. No financial benefits accrue to you for participation, but your responses will give me meaningful insight that I would not have otherwise. The only cost to you is the time taken to complete the questionnaires.

Informed Consent for a Minor

+ **Minor** I, _____, a minor, have read the consent, confidentiality, and
Print
voluntary participation sections herein and hereby consent to my responses to this questionnaire
being used in this study. Signed _____ Dated _____

+ **Guardian** I, _____, have read the consent, confidentiality, and voluntary
Print
participation sections herein and hereby give _____, a minor
consent to complete this questionnaire. My relationship to this minor is _____.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Personal Information

1. Birth date (*month, day, year*): _____
2. Are you:
 - Female Male
3. What is your primary spoken language?
 - English Spanish Other

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School | <input type="checkbox"/> Some College |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School | <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate Study |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade/Technical School | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
5. Did you complete a baseline questionnaire in the fall?
- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't recall |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|

Church Participation

6. Have you always considered yourself a Lutheran?
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
7. If no, please list the Christian denominations and/or religions you have considered yourself to be:

8. How long have you been worshipping at St. Luke's?
- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 years, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-15 years, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-25 years, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26 years or more |
9. At which service do you typically worship?
- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate 8:30 and 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate English & Spanish | |
10. How often do you worship?
- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nearly every Sunday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About once per month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About once per quarter or less |
11. Have you attended bilingual ministries/events at St. Luke's?
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
12. If yes, please check all that you have attended
- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual worship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual fellowship events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual adult education |
13. Have you served on a committee or ministry team in the last two years?
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
14. If yes, please list these committees or ministry teams.

15. Which of these activities did you experience since December, check all that apply:

- Sunday School (children, youth, or adult)
- Youth Sunday
- WELCA or MIELA
- Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
- Dwelling in God's Word Bible Reading (Tuesday or Thursday)
- Christmas Pageant (December)
- Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe
- Las Posadas
- Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (January)
- The Presentation of Our Lord celebration after the Spanish service
- Sermon series on the *Image of the Trinity*
- Ash Wednesday
- Stephen Ministry, Lay Visitation & Care Team, or Flower Delivery Ministry
- February Congregational town hall meeting with round table discussions
- March Congregational town hall meeting with round table discussions
- April Congregational town hall meeting with round table discussions
- May Congregational Meeting / town hall meeting
- 2018 Church Council Retreat

16. If you planned or helped to lead an activity, please indicate this by checking all that apply:

- Sunday School (children, youth, or adult)
- Youth Sunday
- WELCA or MIELA
- Men's Breakfast and Bible Study
- Dwelling in God's Word Bible Reading (Tuesday or Thursday)
- Christmas Pageant (December)
- Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe
- Las Posadas
- Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (January)
- The Presentation of Our Lord celebration after the Spanish service
- Sermon series on the *Image of the Trinity*
- Ash Wednesday
- Stephen Ministry, Lay Visitation & Care Team, or Flower Delivery Ministry
- Congregational town hall meetings with round table discussions

Experience of God, Church, and the World

17. When you pray, which person of the Trinity do you address mostly?

- Father Son Holy Spirit
- all equally simply refer to one, such as "God" or "Lord"

Please rate the following on a scale of 1-6: 1 is "Strongly Disagree" & 6 is "Strongly Agree." Circle the appropriate number.

18. God invites all people into partnership to care for the world God made.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

19. God invites all people into partnership to care for other people.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

20. “One body, many parts” illustrates God’s plan for unity to be fulfilled through a diversity of gifts and abilities.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
21. Jesus’ prayer “that they may be one” means God desires for all cultures to eventually blend together to form one homogenous people.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
22. I feel that I am treated as an equal by other members of St. Luke’s.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
23. I feel that I am treated as an equal by people in the world, such as at work, at school, or in the community.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
24. The weight of a person’s opinion in church should be directly connected to their level of education.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
25. There is a natural hierarchy in the church with the pastor being at the top, followed by the council, committees, and then the general congregation.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
26. Members of St. Luke’s are equal partners with the pastors in discipling others.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
27. Diversity of cultures is something to be celebrated in the church.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
28. Saying we are “multicultural” means we have many cultures in our congregation; such as, younger/older, English- or Spanish-speaking, tech savvy and not, etc.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
- 29.
30. When I see Spanish-speaking and English-speaking people together in worship at St. Luke’s, I feel I am seeing humanity as it is created to be.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
31. It is important for people to have a weekly opportunity to worship God in their native language and culture.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
32. The cultural practices of the entire congregation should be taken into account when planning worship and woven into services.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
33. Every worship service at St. Luke’s should include the languages and cultures of all members of the congregation.
- | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|

34. Whenever possible, each culture within the St. Luke's community should have its own unique worship experience.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
35. The cultural expression of a congregation should be that of the dominant culture.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
36. Being a "bilingual-multicultural congregation" means St. Luke's is one congregation that worships in two languages.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
37. St. Luke's is effectively two congregations.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
38. The gifts God's children receive from the Holy Spirit vary but they are equally important and needed in the world.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
39. Ministering to the congregation is the responsibility of the pastoral staff alone.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
40. All members of St. Luke's should equally participate in God's work of ministering to each other.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
41. God is one God in three persons, three persons in one God.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
42. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three unique persons each with his/her own role.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
43. The three persons of the Trinity are equals.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
44. The Trinity is by nature hierarchical with the Father as head followed by the Son then the Spirit.
- Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

For each of the following ministries, please answer on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being strongly disagree and 6 being strongly agree the questions that follow. Circle the appropriate number.

45. *Sunday School*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

46. *Youth Sunday*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

47. *WELCA or MIELA*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
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-

48. *Altar for the Dead*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
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49. *Christmas Pageant (in December)*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
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-

50. *Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
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-

51. *Las Posadas*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
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52. *Tres Reyes Epiphany Pageant (in January)*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

53. *Presentation of Our Lord*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
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54. *Ash Wednesday*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

55. *Stephen Ministry*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

56. *Lay Visitation and Care Team*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

57. *Altar Flower Delivery Ministry*

- a. I understand the significance of this ministry.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. I understand how this ministry fits into the overall purpose of St. Luke's.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. This ministry has directly contributed to my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry is not necessary for my own faith development.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry has helped me to better understand another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. This ministry has broadened my awareness of God's presence in another culture.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- g. How has this ministry impacted your experience of diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

58. If you participated in any *congregational town hall meetings with round table discussions*, please answer these questions using the same 1-6 scale.

- a. I saw God at work through the conversations at my table/s.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- b. The opinions of participants were treated as having equal importance.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- c. I felt that my contributions were heard and respected.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- d. This ministry helped me better see how God works through people of different cultures.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- e. This ministry showed how people with different gifts and abilities can work together to participate in God's work.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree
- f. How has this ministry impacted your experience of unity and diversity at St. Luke's?
-
-

59. In the space provided, what does St. Luke's vision to be "one parish with many cultural voices" mean to you?

FINISHED. THANK YOU!

Encuesta para toda la población
La Congregación en la Iglesia Luterana St. Luke's
Encuesta de Unidad y Diversidad: Cuestionario de Línea Final

Gracias por participar en esta encuesta como parte de mi título de Doctor en Ministerio. Por favor revise las siguientes secciones antes de completar el cuestionario. Si tiene alguna pregunta, envíela a la siguiente dirección de correo electrónico: atriolo@stmarks-elca.org o llámeme al (571) 555-5555. También puede comunicarse con mis supervisores, _____, _____@luthersem.edu o _____@luthersem.edu.

Con agradecimiento, Albert W. Triolo, Pastor

Propósito

La encuesta está diseñada para ayudarme a comprender cómo una serie de eventos, de octubre a abril, han ayudado a la congregación de St. Luke's a entenderse a sí misma y a entender la naturaleza de Dios como Trinidad.

Confidencialidad

Cualquier información que proporcione en relación con este estudio permanecerá confidencial y no será divulgada. Las respuestas se usarán para el análisis y solo los resultados resumidos se presentarán en la disertación final.

Participación Voluntaria

Su decisión de participar o no afectará sus futuras relaciones con el Seminario Luterano (Luther Seminary), o con su congregación (St. Luke's Lutheran Church), o conmigo como su pastor. Si decide participar, puede suspender la participación en cualquier momento sin perjuicio.

Consentimiento

Si decide participar, complete el cuestionario adjunto. Su devolución de este cuestionario es un consentimiento implícito. Si eres menor de 18 años, por favor haz que un tutor legal dé su consentimiento a continuación. No se acumulan beneficios financieros por su participación, pero sus respuestas me darán una idea significativa que de otro modo no tendría. El único costo para usted es el tiempo necesario para completar los cuestionarios.

Consentimiento informado para un menor

+ **Menor** Que yo, _____, menor de edad, he leído el consentimiento, la confidencialidad y las secciones de participación voluntaria aquí y por el presente doy consentimiento a que mis respuestas a este cuestionario sean utilizadas en este estudio.

Firmado _____ con fecha _____

+ **Guardián** Que yo, _____, he leído las secciones sobre el consentimiento, la confidencialidad y la participación voluntaria aquí y por la presente doy a, _____, menor de edad, el consentimiento para completar este cuestionario. Mi relación con este menor es. _____.

Firmado _____ con fecha _____

Información Personal

1. Fecha de nacimiento (mes, día, año): _____
2. Género:
 - Mujer
 - Hombre
3. ¿Cuál es tu idioma principal hablado?
 - Inglés
 - Español
 - Otro
4. ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que ha completado?
 - Escuela Primaria
 - Escuela Intermedia
 - Algo de Escuela Secundaria
 - Escuela Secundaria
 - Escuela Comercial/Técnica
 - Algo de Universidad
 - Título Universitario
 - Estudio de Postgrado
 - Graduado de Postgrado
 - Otro
5. ¿Completó un cuestionario de referencia en el otoño?
 - Sí
 - No
 - No recuerdo

Participación de la Iglesia

6. ¿Siempre te has considerado Luterano?
 - Sí
 - No
7. Si no, enumere las denominaciones cristianas y / o religiones que te has considerado a ti mismo como parte de:

8. ¿Cuánto tiempo has estado adorando en St. Luke's?
 - 0-5 años,
 - 6-15 años,
 - 16-25 años,
 - 26 años o mas
9. ¿En qué servicio adoras típicamente?
 - 8:30
 - 10
 - 12
 - 8:30 o 10
 - Inglés o Español
10. ¿Con qué frecuencia adoras?
 - Casi todos los domingos
 - 2-3 veces al mes
 - Aproximadamente una vez al mes
 - Aproximadamente una vez por trimestre o menos
11. ¿Ha asistido a ministerios / eventos bilingües en St. Luke's?
 - Sí
 - No
 -

12. En caso afirmativo, verifique todo lo que ha asistido
- Servicio Bilingüe
 - Eventos de compañerismo Bilingües
 - Educación Cristiana Bilingüe para Adultos
13. ¿Ha servido en un comité o equipo ministerial en los últimos dos años?
- Sí No
14. En caso afirmativo, enumere estos comités o equipos ministeriales.
-
-
-

15. A cuál de estas actividades asistió desde diciembre, marque todas las que apliquen:

- Escuela Dominical
- Domingo de la Joventud
- WELCA o MIELA
- Desayuno de Hombres y Estudio Bíblico
- Estudio Bíblico (Martes o Jueves)
- Programa de Navidad de Niños. (Diciembre)
- Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe
- Las Posadas
- Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)
- Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español
- Serie de sermones sobre *La Imagen de la Trinidad*
- Miércoles de Ceniza
- El ministerio de Esteban, El Ministerio laico de Visitas y Cuidado o El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores
- Reunión congregacional con conversaciones *en febrero*.
-
- Reunión congregacional con conversaciones *en abril*.
- Reunión congregacional con conversaciones *en mayo*.
- 2018 Retiro del Consejo de la Iglesia

16. Si planificó o ayudó a dirigir un evento, indíquelo marcando todos los que correspondan:

- Escuela Dominical
- Domingo de la Joventud
- WELCA o MIELA
- Desayuno de Hombres y Estudio Bíblico
- Estudio Bíblico (Martes o Jueves)
- Programa de Navidad de Niños. (Diciembre)
- Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe
- Las Posadas
- Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)
- Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español
- Serie de sermones sobre *La Imagen de la Trinidad*
- Miércoles de Ceniza
- El ministerio de Esteban, El Ministerio laico de Visitas y Cuidado o El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores
- Reuniones congregacionales con conversaciones (en febrero, marzo, o abril).

Experiencia de Dios, Iglesia y el Mundo

17. Cuando oras, ¿a qué persona de la Trinidad te diriges la mayoría de las veces?

- Padre Hijo Espíritu Santo
 Todo igual simplemente se refieren a uno, como “Dios” o “Señor”

Califique lo siguiente en una escala de 1 a 6: 1 es “Totalmente en desacuerdo” y 6 es “Totalmente de Acuerdo.” Encierra en un círculo el número apropiado.

18. Dios invita a todas las personas a asociarse para cuidar el mundo que Dios creó.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

19. Dios invita a todas las personas a asociarse para cuidar a otras personas.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

20. “Un cuerpo, muchas partes” ilustra el plan de Dios para que la unidad se cumpla a través de una diversidad de dones y habilidades.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

21. La oración de Jesús “para que sean uno” significa que Dios desea que todas las culturas finalmente se mezclen para formar un pueblo homogéneo.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

22. Siento que otros miembros de St. Luke’s me tratan como a un igual.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

23. Siento que soy tratado como un igual por personas en el mundo, como en el trabajo, en la escuela o en la comunidad.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

24. El peso de la opinión de una persona en la iglesia debe estar directamente relacionado con su nivel de educación.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

25. Hay una jerarquía natural en la iglesia con el pastor a la cabeza, seguido por el consejo parroquial, los comités y luego la congregación en general.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

26. Los miembros de San Luke’s son socios por igual con los pastores en disciplinar a otros.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

27. La diversidad de culturas es algo que se debe celebrar en la iglesia.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

28. Decir que somos “multiculturales” significa que tenemos muchas culturas en nuestra congregación; como, joven / mayor, inglés-español, conocimiento de tecnología o no, etc.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

29. Cuando veo gente hispano hablante y de habla inglesa juntos en adoración en St. Luke’s, siento que estoy viendo a la humanidad tal como está creada para ser.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

30. Es importante que las personas tengan una oportunidad semanal para adorar a Dios en su lengua y cultura nativa.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

31. Las prácticas culturales de toda la congregación deben tenerse en cuenta al planificarse el servicio de adoración y debe estar entretejidos en el.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

32. Cada servicio de adoración en St. Luke’s debe incluir los idiomas y culturas de todos los miembros de la congregación.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

33. Siempre que sea posible, cada cultura dentro de la comunidad de St. Luke’s debe tener su propia y única experiencia de adoración.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

34. La expresión cultural de una congregación debe ser la de la cultura dominante.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

35. Ser una “congregación bilingüe-multicultural” significa que St. Luke’s es una congregación que adora en dos idiomas.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

36. St. Luke’s es efectivamente dos congregaciones.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

37. Los dones que los hijos de Dios reciben del Espíritu Santo varían pero son igualmente importantes y necesarios en el mundo.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

38. El ministerio de la congregación es responsabilidad exclusiva del personal pastoral.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

39. Todos los miembros de St. Luke's deben participar por igual en la obra de Dios de ministrarse unos a otros.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

40. Dios es un Dios en tres personas, tres personas en un Dios.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

41. El Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo son tres personas únicas, cada una con su propio rol.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

42. Las tres personas de la Trinidad son iguales.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

43. La Trinidad es por naturaleza jerárquica con el Padre como cabeza seguida por el Hijo y luego por el Espíritu.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

Para cada uno de los siguientes ministerios, responda en una escala de 1 a 6, donde 1 está "Totalmente en Desacuerdo" y 6 está "Totalmente de Acuerdo" con las preguntas que siguen. Encierra en un círculo el número apropiado.

44. Escuela Dominical

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

45. ***Domingo de la Juventud***

- a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?
-
-

46. ***WELCA o MIELA***

- a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.
 Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo
- g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?
-
-

47. *Altar para los Muertos*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

48. *Programa de Navidad de Niños (Diciembre)*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

49. *Vigilia para la Virgen de Guadalupe*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

50. *Las Posadas*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

51. Programa de celebración de la bajada de Reyes o Epifanía (Enero)

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

52. Celebración de la Presentación de Nuestro Señor después del servicio en español

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

53. *Miércoles de Ceniza*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

54. *El Ministerio de Esteban*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

55. *El Equipo de Visitas y Cuidado Laico*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

56. *El Ministerio de Entrega de Flores*

a. Entiendo la importancia de este ministerio.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Entiendo cómo este ministerio se ajusta al propósito general de St. Luke's.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Este ministerio ha contribuido directamente a mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio no es necesario para mi propio desarrollo de fe.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio me ha ayudado a comprender mejor otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. Este ministerio ha ampliado mi conciencia de la presencia de Dios en otra cultura.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

g. ¿De qué manera este ministerio ha impactado tu experiencia de diversidad en St. Luke's?

57. Si participó en cualquier *reunión congregacional*, responda estas preguntas utilizando la misma escala de 1-6.

a. Vi a Dios en el trabajo a través de las conversaciones en mi mesa/s.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

b. Las opiniones de los participantes se trataron como de igual importancia.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

c. Sentí que mis contribuciones fueron escuchadas y respetadas.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

d. Este ministerio me ayudó a ver mejor cómo Dios trabaja a través de personas de diferentes culturas.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

e. Este ministerio mostró cómo las personas con diferentes dones y habilidades pueden trabajar juntas para participar en el trabajo de Dios.

Totalmente en Desacuerdo 1 2 3 4 5 6 Totalmente de Acuerdo

f. ¿Cómo ha impactado este ministerio su experiencia de unidad y diversidad en St. Luke's?

1. En el espacio provisto abajo responda la siguiente pregunta, ¿qué significa para ti la visión de St. Luke's de ser "una parroquia con muchas voces culturales"?

TERMINADO. ¡GRACIAS!

Discipleship Survey

Age range, circle one

0-21 22-34 35-54 55-69 70+

How well is each of the following areas nurturing your faith?

Not at all (1) to Very much (6)

Pray: Prayer

<i>Not at all</i>					<i>Very Much</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6

❖ What at St. Luke's helps you *most* in this area? _____

❖ What at St. Luke's helps you the *least* in this area? _____

Worship: Worship

<i>Not at all</i>					<i>Very Much</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6

❖ What part/s of worship at St. Luke's helps you *most* in this area? _____

❖ What part/s of worship at St. Luke's helps you the *least* in this area? _____

Read: Christian Education

<i>Not at all</i>					<i>Very Much</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6

❖ What education ministries at St. Luke's helps you *most* in this area? _____

❖ What education ministries at St. Luke's helps you the *least* in this area? _____

Confidentiality Agreement–Translator

I, _____ am serving as a translator for the Unity and Diversity research project of Albert W. Triolo, a candidate in the Doctor of Ministry program at Luther Seminary. I may be required to translate or interpret interviews or questionnaires in this role. In carrying out these activities, I undertake to communicate information fully and faithfully, to the best of my abilities.

I understand that all information provided by interview and questionnaire participants is confidential, and I agree not to use or disclose this information except as required in the course of my duties as a translator and interpreter. I will fulfil my duties in the presence of the researcher and will neither keep copies of nor store any records of interviews or questionnaires.

Translator's printed name

Translator's signature

Date

APPENDIX B

Announcements, Fliers, and Articles

Interventions 1-3

Flier



Mid-Week "Holden Evening Prayer"

Wednesdays December 6th, 13th, and 20th at 7:30 PM

Preceded by a soup supper at 6:30 PM

Vigil for the Virgin of Guadalupe

Monday, December 11th at 11:00 PM

"Be Near Me, Lord Jesus"

A Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 17th at 11:15 AM

Las Posadas: Worship, Pageant, & Party

Friday, December 22nd beginning at 5:00 PM

Newsletter article

Dear Friends in Christ,

Merry Christmas!

Our "Star of Wonder" Epiphany pageant on January 7 will begin with these words:

"The story we shared during the Christmas pageant is an ongoing story. After Jesus was born, many around the world heard or saw signs about him and

continued to search for him and come to worship him. Today we remember when the Wise men, sometimes referred to as kings, traveled a long way to worship the baby Jesus and bring him gifts.”

St. Luke’s is “one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices.” These “voices” are not only language; they are the many traditions and practices we bring from a wonderful diversity of regions and nations. Like the “kings” who traveled many miles to arrive in Bethlehem, we (or our ancestors) have come many miles to arrive at St. Luke’s in Springfield.

I hope you plan to join us on January 7 as these cultures come together for a celebration including worship, pageant and food! We will gather at 11AM for a bilingual service with an Epiphany pageant presented by our children. Then we’ll gather in the fellowship hall for a potluck lunch immediately following the service.

If possible, please bring to share an appetizer, entree, or dessert specific to your cultural heritage. Tasting God’s gift of food as experienced around the world is a fun way to celebrate our cultural diversity. (I wonder what the Wise men from the east might have eaten as they journeyed through many lands to reach their destination in Bethlehem.)

May God fill you with hope and joy this Christmas season,
+ Pastor Albert

Intervention 4

Newsletter and Bulletin Announcement



“Star of Wonder” An Epiphany Pageant
Sunday, January 7th at 11:00 AM Bilingual Service
(will still have 8:30 AM Worship)

Intervention 5

Newsletter articlesIn the Image of the Trinity ~ Week 1

Dear Friends in Christ,

We know that we've been created in the image of God; Genesis 1 tells us so. But what does it mean that we are created in the image of the Trinity? Our God is one God in three persons, three persons in one God. We are not created in the image of one but of all three.

This matters! How we understand the nature of God shapes how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world God made. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, and at church. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation's governance.

Beginning this Sunday and continuing through January 28 we will explore through a sermon series the nature of the Trinity and how we are created in the image of God. Then later this winter and spring, we will hold a series of town hall meetings and round table discussions where we will continue the conversation.

St. Luke's is a unique congregation. We not only have typical cultural differences like economic disparity, age gaps, or regional food preferences, we add to this multiculturalism the fact that we speak two languages, and most of us do not speak both! Still, we are created in the image of one Trinitarian God.

I look forward to exploring this with you in January and then later in the winter.

Yours in the Trinity,
+ Pastor Albert

In the Image of the Trinity ~ Week 2

Dear Friends in Christ,

How we understand the nature of God shapes how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world God made. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, and at church. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation's governance.

Consider this, if we understand God as a hierarchy of Father over son and son over Spirit, then we are likely to also understand the church as a hierarchy. But, if we understand God as a communion of three equal persons in one God and one God in three equal persons, then we might see the church as a communion of equal yet differently gifted persons.

In this week's sermon I will explore God's nature as Trinity and how this Trinity is both social and sending within God's self. Next Sunday I will explore how the organization of the church reflects God's nature. Lastly, on Jan 28 I will explore how we as citizens of God's family individually and corporately fit into God's organization, the body of Christ.

Yours in the Trinity,
+ Pastor Albert

In the Image of the Trinity ~ Week 3

Dear Friends in Christ,

How we understand the nature of God shapes how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world God made. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, and at church. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation's governance.

In last week's sermon (found below) I explored the social nature of our Trinitarian God. This Sunday I will explore how the organization of the church reflects God's nature. Next week I will explore how we as citizens of God's family individually and corporately fit into God's organization, the body of Christ.

Yours in the Trinity,
+ Pastor Albert

In the Image of the Trinity ~ Week 4

Dear Friends in Christ,

How we understand the nature of God shapes how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world God made. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, and at church. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation's governance.

In last week's sermon (attached) I reviewed the social nature of our Trinitarian God and considered how the church is brought into perichoretic communion with God. This Sunday I will further explore how the church reflects God's nature with a particular

focus on how we as citizens of God's family individually and corporately fit into God in this communion.

We will very appropriately add an additional session on 2/4 when we will celebrate the Presentation of Our Lord. Is there a better day to consider how we might individually present ourselves to the Lord than the day we remember Mary and Joseph bringing the infant Jesus to the temple to dedicate his life to God's service?

Yours in the Trinity,
+ Pastor Albert

In the Image of the Trinity ~ Week 5

Dear Friends in God's Family,

Whew! We completed our five-week series on the nature of the Trinity and the church. I preached all of January and five consecutive weeks in both English and Spanish. Pardon me for celebrating that milestone and THANK YOU to everyone who made that possible!

Copies of each sermon are available here in both English and Spanish. There are two ways that we will follow up on this series: 1) A series of three monthly town hall meetings beginning on February 18; and, 2) A congregational survey which you can complete by clicking [here](#) for English and [here](#) for Spanish.

The survey is part of my thesis and is intended to help me learn what we at St. Luke's may or may not have taken away from the series. It is a midpoint check-in that I hope you all will take 3-5 minutes to complete. Data from this survey, as well as the November-December survey, will also help inform our town hall meetings.

Our town hall meetings will be held from 5-7PM on Sundays February 18, March 18, and April 15. They will include brief presentations and round table discussions in both English and Spanish. Childcare will be provided so that everyone can attend.

We will begin each town hall meeting night with a meal, potluck suppers on February 18 and March 18 and a youth sponsored supper on April 15. Council members will serve as scribes for the discussions. The notes they take will be reviewed at the May council retreat and inform our present and future discernment and planning for the future of St. Luke's.

These are important conversations for our congregation. All are highly encouraged to attend.

Perichoretically yours,*
Pastor Albert

* If you don't know what perichoretically means, read the sermons. ☺

Intervention 6

Flier

The Presentation of Our Lord is on February 2nd, and in St. Luke's will celebrate it on February 4th

Traditionally with this feast we end the Christmas season.

We remember that Jesus is the Light of the World!

We remove baby Jesus from the manger and a family will take him to their home for a year, until next Christmas Eve.

We will also have a meal Party hosted by those who got the baby Jesus in piece of Rosca de Reyes on January 7th when we had the Three Kings' celebration and lunch.

Everyone is welcome to our meal at 1:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall.

Intervention 7

ArticlesTown Hall Meetings with Round Table Discussions #1

Join us on Sundays 2/18, 3/18, and 4/15 from 5-7PM as we continue the conversation Pastor Albert began with us on the nature of God and the church. We hope every confirmed member of St. Luke's will attend. Childcare will be provided and the meal will be potluck, so please bring something to share. Our youth will provide the meal on 4/15.

We have much to talk about. Topics will include the Trinity, ministries of St. Luke's, our congregation's organization, our current vision statement and vision for the future, our expectations of each other and our pastors, and others. We look forward to having these important conversations with you.

Town Hall Meetings with Round Table Discussions #2

Our second town hall meeting with round table discussions is coming up this Sunday evening from 5-7PM. Childcare will be provided and our meal will be potluck, so bring something to share. ☺ To help our conversation move along more smoothly, we've decided to hold our English and Spanish language sessions separately. The Spanish session will be held the following Sunday, 3/25 after a reception to honor Julio Cuellar. Here are some things for us to think about prior to the meeting:

Discipleship, How do these discipleship ministries at St. Luke's help form your faith?

- ❖ Worship
- ❖ Christian Education
- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Social Ministry
- ❖ Evangelism
- ❖ Giving of your time, talent, and treasure

Also, how are we discipling those who will come after us?

St. Luke's Vision Statement, *"Called by God into community with our neighbors, nation, and world, St. Luke's is one Lutheran parish with many cultural voices and room for everyone to be at home."*

There are many ways we might understand this vision statement. At our first town hall meeting I shared one member's answer to the question in my research survey about what the statement means. I think this person captured well the meaning the Mission Planning Team intended in 2013n -14. The member wrote:

“The key word to me is ‘parish’... We are NOT one congregation...but we can be one parish. As a single parish, there can be different cultures that are welcomed into the St. Luke’s Community of Faith and that live within the house of God (i.e., St. Luke’s) but the cultures of all are preserved, respected and celebrated, not diminished or combined. It does not mean we have to worship together, socialize together, break bread together - all of which should be encouraged - but are not necessary to be one parish. It also means an equal sharing of responsibilities for each group’s part in the parish - church leadership, financial support, participation, etc. - by those who call St. Luke’s their cultural church home...”

Consider this definition. Are we there yet? How? How not?

Town Hall Meetings with Round Table Discussions #3

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We continue our series of town hall meetings with round table discussions this Sunday at 5PM. Our meal will be provided by our youth as a fundraiser. This meeting takes the place of our annual program meeting. Our Spanish-language meeting will be at 1:15, following the Spanish service. Your participation is important for St. Luke’s as we continue our consideration of a variety of topics. This month we will focus on our church organization.

We have been in membership decline for about twenty years, or more. I have been considering for some time our recent accelerated decline and believe we are naturally right-sizing to the size of our pastoral staff. We will make use of a questionnaire, copied below, to test this hypothesis. While this will be part of our discussion at our meeting on the 15th, I’ve included it for your early consideration.

In case you are wondering, yes, this does relate to my thesis and I will report what we find. The Doctor of Ministry program is set up to study the congregation. I am studying how we, a bilingual-multicultural congregation, reflect the social nature of the Trinity. Because culture is about much more than language, and our church organization is itself a culture, this is an important part of what I am studying.

Additionally, we will also consider the ministry teams we do and do not have in place at St. Luke’s, and some recent attempts to fill some of the holes. Whatever our answers to the questions in the questionnaire, these are important areas that need to be filled at St. Luke’s, and will be another important part of our conversation.

Moving into the future, we plan to continue to hold town hall meetings with round table discussions like these at least once a quarter for the foreseeable future. There are

many different voices at St. Luke's and we want everyone to be heard to hear each other. So, please do participate.

Yours in the Trinity,
+ Pastor Albert

Survey by Roy M. Oswald found, among other places, at
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200702/200702_000_various_size.cfm

If your pastor has only limited time available in his/her week, would you prefer that he/she choose to:

- A. Do more visiting to shut-ins?
- B. Put more time into sermon preparation?

- A. Attend a wedding reception?
- B. Go on a retreat with parish staff?

- A. Call on prospective members?
- B. Conduct a training session for church officers?

- A. Visit a bereaved family?
- B. Help two church officers resolve a conflict?

- A. Make a hospital call on a fringe member?
- B. Attend a continuing education event?

- A. Engage in pastoral counseling with members?
- B. Attend a planning event with officers?

- A. Do more parish calling?
- B. Recruit leaders for parish events?

- A. Attend an activity with parish youth?
- B. Critique a meeting with a church officer?

Town Hall Meetings with Round Table Discussions #4

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Part of our congregational meeting this Sunday evening (from 5-7 with a potluck supper beginning at 5) will be to continue our town hall meeting conversations. In addition to the annual program meeting agenda items, this month we will spend some time talking about ministry teams. As you may know, St. Luke's has committees for Finance, Property, Personnel, Stewardship, Publicity, and Preschool; we do not have

committees for areas such as Worship, Christian Education, Youth, or Evangelism. We plan to change that!

Part of begin a reflection of the social nature of the Holy Trinity means, 1) that St. Luke's has within itself all the gifts we need to carry out the work to which God is calling us; and, 2) that the people of the congregation are called to work together, sharing these gifts to accomplish God's work. We are looking for members of the congregation to participate in the above ministry teams (and some others) to do the work we believe God is calling us to.

The new teams will be made up of both English and Spanish speakers, will meet together about five times a year, (that's only about ten hours each year for "committee meetings!"; and, in coordination with the pastoral staff and council, they will work together to discern, plan, and implement a variety of ministry programs in their specific areas. This is important work God is calling us to. I look forward to exploring this more with you on Sunday and seeing all whom God will lead into this new venture.

Yours in the Trinity,
Pastor Albert

APPENDIX C

Sermon Series on the Trinity

Week 1: Introduction

English Version

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit—one God in three persons, three persons in one God. Amen.

I couldn't imagine a more fitting day to begin a four-week series on the Trinity and the Church than on a Sunday during which we have a bilingual service and a multicultural potluck lunch. We chose today for the bilingual service because we are celebrating the Epiphany, the day the magi arrived in Bethlehem to pay homage to Jesus. Until the 19th Century, Epiphany was considered equal in importance with Christmas. Europeans often celebrated Christmas for the full twelve days and finished the festivities with Epiphany. Today, many Hispanic and Latino communities remember Epiphany with parties, parades, and gift exchanges.

Through the centuries, the wise men—or magi—have come to be called kings, thus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies like Psalm seventy-two that kings would come and bow before God's Messiah. The kings have even been given names: Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar. Today scholars tell us that they weren't actually kings, that we don't know their names, and that they likely weren't three specific persons but people from three different regions. Some eastern churches believe there were twelve. For all we know, there could have been three hundred. Whether there were three, twelve, or some other number, the point is they represented three parts of the world coming to pay homage to the one born to be king. During Jesus' time, most gold came from Persia, frankincense from India, and Myrrh from Babylon. The main point is that the magi came from around the known world to worship Jesus, God made flesh. This is a wonderful image for us at St. Luke's.

The magi coming from around the world to worship Jesus is a wonderful image for us at St. Luke's. We come from many different cultures for one common purpose: to worship and serve our God. This is being embodied at our eleven o'clock bilingual service this morning. Our Epiphany pageant had sections in both languages. Those who typically worship in English or Spanish are worshipping side-by-side. Our singing of the hymns is a fun example. We are all worshipping God, all singing from red books, but some of those books are in English and others in Spanish. Then after the service we will gather in the fellowship hall for a multicultural culinary celebration. I'm looking forward to tasting food from all around the world. In our house we had to choose between Greek, Italian, German, French, Irish, and English dishes. The Greeks won and we made chicken bites and homemade tzatziki sauce, (that is cucumber yogurt sauce). We come from many cultures, but we come for one purpose: to worship and serve our God.

You might be wondering how the cultures of the magi have anything to do with the four-week series on the Trinity and the church that I said I was starting today. It has everything to do with it. I believe the image of the church that St. Luke's presents today is a beautiful image of God's Trinitarian nature. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One God in three persons, three persons in one God. Three equal partners in an eternal society of love and mutual respect. St. Luke's is one church with many cultural voices, many cultural voices in one church. A society of differently gifted but equal persons partnering in God's work to bring peace, justice, and equality right here and right now.

Made in the image in the Trinity, we are a society of differently gifted but equal persons partnering in God's work to bring peace, justice, and equality right here and right now. In the coming weeks we will:

- explore more of God's nature as one-in-three and three-in-one.
- reflect on how we embody that nature.
- consider how God is both social and sending.
- ponder our unique giftedness with the understanding that all of God's children are equal and that no one person is greater or more important than the next.
- celebrate how each of us are given gifts from God to participate in God's work.

Then in February, March, and April, we will continue the conversation with a series of town hall meetings and round table discussions. There we will:

- consider how our congregation's organization reflects God's Trinitarian nature.
- reflect on the work God has done, is doing, and may be looking to do through us.
- envision and plan for a future of St. Luke's where all of God's children share their varied gifts to work side-by-side in the work God is calling us to.

So, you see, Epiphany is a great day to begin this series. We might not have gold, frankincense, or myrrh to lay at the altar today. But like the magi, we come from a variety of cultural expressions and have unique gifts to share. And share them we will. In the name of our triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Spanish Version

En el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo: un Dios en tres personas, tres personas en un solo Dios Amén.

No podía imaginar un día más apropiado para comenzar una serie de cuatro semanas sobre la Trinidad y la Iglesia que un domingo durante el cual tenemos un servicio bilingüe y un almuerzo multicultural. Elegimos hoy para el servicio bilingüe porque estamos celebrando la Epifanía, el día en que los magos llegaron a Belén para rendir homenaje a Jesús. Hasta el siglo XIX, la epifanía se consideraba de igual importancia que la Navidad. Los europeos a menudo celebraban la Navidad durante los doce días completos y terminaban las festividades con Epifanía. Hoy en día, muchas

comunidades hispanas y latinas recuerdan la epifanía con fiestas, desfiles e intercambios de regalos.

A través de los siglos, los hombres sabios—o magos—han llegado a ser llamados reyes, cumpliendo así las profecías del Antiguo Testamento como el Salmo setenta y dos de que los reyes vendrían e se inclinarían ante el Mesías de Dios. A los reyes se les han dado nombres: Melchior, Caspar y Baltasar. Hoy los estudiosos nos dicen que en realidad no eran reyes, que no conocemos sus nombres, y que probablemente no eran tres personas específicas, sino personas de tres regiones diferentes. Algunas iglesias orientales creen que hubo doce. Por lo que sabemos, podrían haber sido trescientos. Si había tres, doce o algún otro número, el punto es que representaban tres partes del mundo que venían a rendir homenaje al que había nacido para ser rey. Durante el tiempo de Jesús, la mayoría del oro provenía de Persia, el incienso de la India y la mirra de Babilonia. El punto principal es que los magos vinieron de todo el mundo conocido a adorar a Jesús, Dios hecho carne. Esta es una imagen maravillosa para nosotros en San Lucas.

Los magos que vienen de todo el mundo para adorar a Jesús son una imagen maravillosa para nosotros en San Lucas. Venimos de muchas culturas diferentes para un propósito común: adorar y servir a nuestro Dios. Esto se está materializando en nuestro servicio bilingüe a las once esta mañana. Nuestro concurso de Epifanía tenía secciones en ambos idiomas. Aquellos que típicamente adoran en inglés o español están adorando uno al lado del otro. Nuestro canto de los himnos es un buen ejemplo. Todos adoramos a Dios, todos cantamos de libros rojos, pero algunos de esos libros están en inglés y otros en español. Luego, después del servicio, nos reuniremos en la sala de confraternidad para una celebración culinaria multicultural. Estoy ansioso por probar comida de todo el mundo. En nuestra casa tuvimos que elegir entre platos griegos, italianos, alemanes, franceses, irlandeses e ingleses. Los griegos ganaron e trajimos pollo y salsa tzatziki casera (es la salsa de yogur y pepino). Venimos de muchas culturas, pero venimos con un solo propósito: adorar y servir a nuestro Dios.

Quizás te estés preguntando cómo las culturas de los magos tienen algo que ver con la serie de cuatro semanas sobre la Trinidad y la iglesia que dije que comenzaba hoy. Tiene todo que ver con ello. Creo que la imagen de la iglesia que San Lucas presenta hoy es una bella imagen de la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios. Dios es Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Un Dios en tres personas, tres personas en un Dios. Tres socios iguales en una sociedad eterna de amor y respeto mutuo. San Lucas es una iglesia con muchas voces culturales, muchas voces culturales en una iglesia. Una sociedad de personas con talentos diferentes pero iguales que se asocian en el trabajo de Dios para traer paz, justicia e igualdad aquí y ahora.

Hecho a la imagen en la Trinidad, somos una sociedad de personas con talentos diferentes pero iguales que se asocian en el trabajo de Dios para traer paz, justicia e igualdad aquí y ahora. En las próximas semanas:

- explorar más de la naturaleza de Dios como uno en tres y tres en uno.
- reflexionar sobre cómo encarnamos esa naturaleza.
- considerar cómo Dios es social y enviar.
- reflexionar sobre nuestros dones únicos con la comprensión de que todos los hijos de Dios son iguales y que ninguna persona es más importante o más importante que la siguiente.

- celebrar cómo cada uno de nosotros recibe dones de Dios para participar en la obra de Dios.

Luego, en febrero, marzo y abril, continuaremos la conversación con una serie de reunions. Allí haremos:

- considerar cómo la organización de nuestra congregación refleja la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios.
- reflexionar sobre el trabajo que Dios ha hecho, está haciendo y puede estar buscando hacer a través de nosotros.
- imaginar y planificar para un futuro de San Lucas donde todos los hijos de Dios compartan sus diversos dones para trabajar codo a codo en la obra a la que Dios nos llama.

Como ven, la epifanía es un gran día para comenzar esta serie. Puede que no tengamos oro, incienso o mirra para poner en el altar hoy. Pero al igual que los magos, venimos de una variedad de expresiones culturales y tenemos regalos únicos para compartir. Y, sí, los compartiremos. En el nombre de nuestro Dios trino: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amén.

Week 2: The Nature of the Trinity

English Version

In the name of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. We continue our series on our being created in the image of the Trinity today with the nature of God. Who is God within God's self? Or, what are the relationships between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Our answers to these questions are critically important because our understanding of the nature of God shapes how we understand ourselves, each other, and the world God made. It informs how we function in our relationships with family, friends, church, and world. It shapes how we administrate our households and organize our congregation's governance. Consider this, if we understand God as a hierarchy of Father over son and son over Spirit, then we are likely to also understand the church as a hierarchy with pastor over council and council over congregation. But, if we understand God as a communion of three equal persons in one God and one God in three equal persons, then we might see the church as a communion of equal yet differently gifted persons united in God's mission.

Our Christian understanding of God as Trinity is not clearly explained in the Bible. It developed over time. The early church fathers made it more and more clear with each passing generation. According to Augustine, "the three Persons are three respective subjects; that is, they are concerned with one another and related to one another. *Being* means being-for-itself; *person*...means being in relation to others or with others." Thomas Aquinas affirmed this saying, "we have the divine Persons as Subsistent Beings permanently and eternally *related*, forming one God or one divine nature." Three-in-one, one-in-three. The early church fathers understood God's Trinitarian nature as a communion of three equal persons.

Unfortunately, a linear understanding of God also developed. God the Father was seen as superior to the Son and the Spirit. The Father begot the Son and breathed the Spirit. Being sent by the Son, the Spirit was then inferior to the Father and the Son. Some have even considered the Spirit nothing more than the relationship between the Father and the Son. That's not even a trinity! This hierarchical view of the relationships within the godhead better reflected the government of the empire and the leadership of the church than it did God's Trinitarian nature. Theologian Leonardo Boff rejects these un-Trinitarian theologies, writing, "theological visions of an a-trinitarian monotheism can serve as an ideological underpinning of power concentrated in one person: dictator, prince, monarch or religious leader." Theologian, Miroslav Volf similarly wrote, "For both the Trinity and for the church, the 'one' is structurally decisive..." and "corresponds to the...linear doctrine of the Trinity..."

Sadly, this un-trinitarian theology continues to be at work today, not only in the world but in the church as well. We see it whenever a congregation functions hierarchically or wherever the gifts of one Christian are even perceived as being dominant to another. Boff attributes this unfortunate turn to our "losing the memory of the essential perspective of the triune God: the communion between the divine Persons. ...the Father is always in the Son and the Holy Spirit." "The Son is interiorized in the Father and in the Spirit. The Spirit unites the Father and the Son and is totally united to them." Yes, we have forgotten the communal nature of the Trinity. We have allowed our own tendency to subjugate one human to another to shape our understanding of God's nature rather than allowing God's nature to shape us.

In Genesis 1, "When God created the heavens and the earth... a *ruach* wind/breath/spirit from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." The Trinity was at work, not as one dominating another but as one-in-three and three-in-one. Father, Son, and Spirit are one God in three persons, equal yet distinguishable one from another. The fancy theological word for this is perichoresis. As Boff defines it: perichoresis within the Trinity means a "cohabitation, co-existence, interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another... a complete circulation of life and a perfect coequality between the Persons, without any anteriority or superiority of one over another." There is no hierarchy, just one eternal communion of equal "persons... who" as Boff says, "engage in mutual dialogue, love one another and are intimately related. Each Person is *for* the others, *with* the others and *in* the others."

This offers a very different model for human relationships. Not one of superiors and inferiors but differently gifted and equal persons in communion with God, each other, and the world. It is all too obvious that this is not where humanity is today. There is no perichoresis here. As long as people are denigrated because of their gender, color, language, nation of origin, and so forth, we know that we are not reflecting God's Trinitarian nature. How can we even begin to understand cohabitation, co-existence, or interpenetration of one another if we can't even bare to consider each other equals? But God is not finished with us. God will one day make this a full and complete reality. In the meantime, we might work toward that reality by, as Boff says, becoming "a society that takes its inspiration from [this] trinitarian communion," ... one that does not "tolerate class differences, dominations based on power... subjects those who are different to those who exercise that power [or] marginalizes the former from the latter." But as one that

“seeks transformations in social relations because we believe in God, Trinity of Persons, in eternal interrelationship and infinite perichoresis.”

Next week we will consider how we at St. Luke’s embody this perichoretic society. And on the twenty-seventh, we’ll consider our unique personal roles. Then on February eighteenth we’ll begin a conversation as a whole congregation on these topics and others. I hope you plan to join us. In the name of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Spanish Version

En el nombre de nuestro Dios Triuno: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amén. Continuamos nuestra serie sobre nuestro ser creado a la imagen de la Trinidad hoy con la naturaleza de Dios. ¿Quién es Dios en el ser de Dios? O bien, ¿cuáles son las relaciones entre el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo? Nuestras respuestas a estas preguntas son de importancia crítica porque nuestra comprensión de la naturaleza de Dios determina la forma en que nos comprendemos a nosotros mismos, a los demás y al mundo que Dios creó. Informa cómo funcionamos en nuestras relaciones con la familia, los amigos, la iglesia y el mundo. Da forma a cómo administramos nuestros hogares y organizamos el gobierno de nuestra congregación. Considere esto, si entendemos a Dios como una jerarquía de Padre sobre Hijo e Hijo sobre Espíritu, entonces también es probable que comprendamos a la iglesia como una jerarquía con el pastor sobre el concilio y el concilio sobre la congregación. Pero, si entendemos a Dios como una comunión de tres personas iguales en un Dios y un Dios en tres personas iguales, entonces podríamos ver a la iglesia como una comunión de personas iguales pero con diferentes talentos unidos en la misión de Dios.

Nuestra comprensión cristiana de Dios como Trinidad no se explica claramente en la Biblia. Se desarrolló con el tiempo. Los padres de la iglesia primitiva lo hicieron cada vez más claro con cada generación que pasaba. Según Agustín, “las tres personas son tres temas respectivos; es decir, se preocupan el uno por el otro y están relacionados entre sí. *Ser* significa ser para sí mismo; *persona* ... significa estar en relación con otros o con otros.” Tomás de Aquino afirmó este dicho: “tenemos las Personas divinas como Seres Subsistentes permanentemente y eternamente *relacionados*, formando un Dios o una naturaleza divina.” Tres en uno, uno en tres. Los primeros padres de la iglesia entendieron la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios como una comunión de tres personas iguales.

Desafortunadamente, también se desarrolló una comprensión lineal de Dios. Dios el Padre fue visto como superior al Hijo y al Espíritu. El Padre engendró al Hijo y sopló el Espíritu. Al ser enviado por el Hijo, el Espíritu era inferior al Padre y al Hijo. Algunos incluso han considerado al Espíritu nada más que la relación entre el Padre y el Hijo. ¡Eso ni siquiera es una trinidad! Esta visión jerárquica de las relaciones dentro de la divinidad reflejaba mejor el gobierno del imperio y el liderazgo de la iglesia que la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios. El teólogo Leonardo Boff rechaza estas teologías no trinitarias, escribiendo: “las visiones teológicas de un monoteísmo a-trinitario pueden servir como un apuntalamiento ideológico del poder concentrado en una sola persona: dictador, príncipe, monarca o líder religioso.” El teólogo, Miroslav Volf escribió similarmente: “Tanto para la Trinidad como para la iglesia, el ‘uno’ es estructuralmente decisivo ...” y “corresponde a la ... doctrina lineal de la Trinidad ...”

Lamentablemente, esta teología no trinitaria sigue funcionando hoy en día, no solo en el mundo sino también en la iglesia. Lo vemos cada vez que una congregación funciona jerárquicamente o donde los dones de un cristiano se perciben como dominantes para otro. Boff atribuye este desafortunado giro a nuestra “pérdida del recuerdo de la perspectiva esencial del Dios trino: la comunión entre las Personas divinas.” ... el Padre siempre está en el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo.” “El Hijo está interiorizado en el Padre y en el Espíritu. El Espíritu une al Padre y al Hijo y está totalmente unido a ellos.” Sí, hemos olvidado la naturaleza comunitaria de la Trinidad. Hemos permitido nuestra propia tendencia a subyugar a un ser humano a otro para dar forma a nuestra comprensión de la naturaleza de Dios en lugar de permitir que la naturaleza de Dios nos moldee.

En Génesis 1, “Cuando Dios creó los cielos y la tierra ... un *ruach* viento / aliento / espíritu de Dios barrió la superficie de las aguas. Entonces Dios dijo: “Hágase la luz”; y “había luz.” La Trinidad estaba trabajando, no como una que domina a otra sino como uno en tres y tres en uno. Padre, Hijo y Espíritu son un Dios en tres personas, iguales pero distinguibles entre sí. La palabra teológica de lujo para esto es perichoresis. Como Boff lo define: perichoresis dentro de la Trinidad significa una “cohabitación, coexistencia, interpenetración de las Personas divinas entre sí ... una circulación completa de la vida y una perfecta igualdad entre las Personas, sin ninguna anterioridad o superioridad de uno sobre otro.” No hay jerarquía, solo una comunión eterna de “personas ... iguales” que, como dice Boff, “entablar un diálogo mutuo, amarse y estar íntimamente relacionados. Cada persona es para los demás, con los demás y en los demás.”

Esto ofrece un modelo muy diferente para las relaciones humanas. No uno de superiores e inferiores sino personas con talentos diferentes e iguales en comunión con Dios, entre sí y con el mundo. Es demasiado obvio que esto no es donde está la humanidad hoy en día. No hay perichoresis aquí. Mientras las personas sean denigradas por su género, color, idioma, nación de origen, etc., sabemos que no estamos reflejando la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios. ¿Cómo podemos siquiera comenzar a comprender la cohabitación, la coexistencia o la interpenetración de unos con otros si no podemos ni siquiera considerarnos iguales? Pero Dios no ha terminado con nosotros. Dios algún día hará de esto una realidad completa y completa. Mientras tanto, podríamos trabajar hacia esa realidad, como dice Boff, convirtiéndose en “una sociedad que se inspira en [esta] comunión trinitaria,” ... una que no “tolera diferencias de clase, dominaciones basadas en el poder ... sujetos que son diferente a aquellos que ejercen ese poder [o] margina a los primeros de los segundos.” Pero como uno que “busca transformaciones en las relaciones sociales porque creemos en Dios, la Trinidad de las Personas, en la interrelación eterna y en la perinorteresidad infinita.”

La próxima semana consideraremos cómo en St. Luke’s encarnamos esta sociedad pericorética. Y el día veintisiete consideraremos nuestros roles personales únicos. Luego, el dieciocho de febrero, comenzaremos una conversación como una congregación completa sobre estos temas y otros. Espero que planees unirte a nosotros. En el nombre de nuestro Dios Triuno: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amén.

Week 3: The Nature of the Church

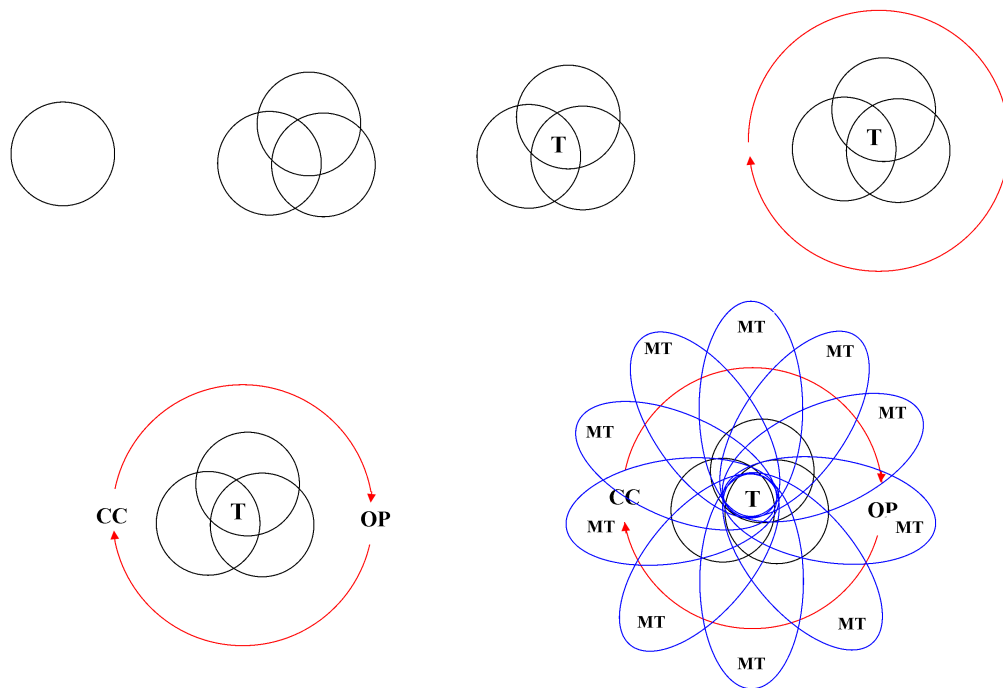


Figure 9. The Perichoretic Nature of God and the Church

English Version

In the name of Our triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. Last week I reflected on God's nature as three persons in one God, one God in three persons in an eternal relationship of indwelling and equality. The Greek word used for this is perichoresis. We saw God at work in the creation story beginning in Genesis one. God the creator (whom we call Father), the Word (whom we call the Son), and the *ruach*: wind/breath/Spirit of God (whom we call the Holy Spirit) are three distinct and eternal equals bringing creation into existence. I shared how this image of the very nature of God as one of equality and mutual indwelling gives us a very different model than a linear or hierarchical one.

[Using cards...] Here's how a linear or hierarchical image of God's nature might look. If we see God the Father as coming before God the Son, we might put God the Father here at the top of this sheet...and Jesus, God the Son below him. Then, if we understand the Spirit as proceeding from the Father and the Son we might get the Spirit coming between them like this... Or, if we understand the Spirit being sent by Jesus, we might place the Spirit at the bottom like this... In both cases we have a linear or hierarchical understanding of God.

As Lutherans we use the scripture to interpret scripture. Granted, the lenses through which we read the scripture also impact upon how we read the texts and what

we'll find there. If our understanding of God has always been linear, we will likely find a linear representation of God in the scripture. The western church has had such a view for centuries. The eastern church has not. The eastern church's view of the trinity is not linear but relational. If we revisit the scriptures with minds open to the possibility that God's nature might be different than we'd thought, we can be pleasantly surprised, as I was. Consider the beginning of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...The word became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus is God. Then in our Gospel for today, Jesus prays for his church: "I ask...that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us." Notice, that in his prayer Jesus asks that the church would also be brought into this perichoretic relationship. More on that in a few moments.

But what about the Spirit in John one or in our Gospel? Jesus doesn't even mention it. Reading these texts apart from the rest of scripture we might understand the Father and Son as being one God and the Spirit being somehow inferior. Ah, this is where I get really excited and will limit myself greatly! :-) A survey of the scripture from genesis on reveals that God the Holy Spirit is not only present and active in creation but that the Holy Spirit sends and directs Jesus throughout the gospels. The Spirit is not inferior but an equal part of the Trinity. Consider these passages: In Luke one, thirty-five, the Spirit conceives Jesus. In Luke four, the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness where he is tempted. Then in verse fourteen Jesus begins his ministry "filled with the power of the Holy Spirit." In the same chapter he quotes Isaiah saying that the Spirit of God is upon him. These passages do not reveal to us a linear image of the Trinity. They reveal the perichoretic image of one God in three equal yet distinct persons.

Let's try to diagram this. This circle can represent any person of the trinity. Since we have an eternal three-in-one, one-in-three, it may be Son, Spirit, or Father. Let's add two more circles. But let's not do it in the traditional form that resembles a triangle. Let's add them randomly. And overlapping each other. Here no one comes before another or is superior to another. Unfortunately, this image is static. If it were dynamic, there would be movement in every direction. Let's add these curved arrows around the circles to represent that.

Now, let's talk about how the church fits in. Jesus prayed that the church would be brought into this perichoretic relationship. Genesis 1 tells us that humanity is created "in the image of God." We are created not as superiors and inferiors to one another. Like the persons of the trinity, we are distinct from one another but we are equals. Next week we will talk about our rich diversity and individual parts in this perichoretic communion.

Today I want to consider how the church as a whole embodies this nature. The ELCA has two model constitutions for its congregations. One places the pastor as president of the council. Few congregations use this model. The other, which we use, has a lay person as president. This model places the office of pastor alongside the congregation council as equals. If we add it to this diagram, we have the office of pastor

and the congregation council moving perichoretically as one around (or within) the Trinitarian presence of God. Let's add them to these curved lines.

It doesn't end there. The whole congregation is part of this perichoretic communion through committees and ministry teams. Like petals on a flower, these ovals overlap each other, the church leadership, and God's presence. They are all with, in, and around each other. As part of our town hall meetings beginning in February, I plan to talk about how some of the petals are missing at St. Luke's. I hope you plan to join us for these important conversations.

Finally, this perichoretic relationship that the church is graciously invited into is not the end game for God's people on this earth. Another survey of scripture reveals that for as long as there have been people, there has been God's desire to be in relationship with us. And as long as people have turned away from God, God has chosen other people to be models of life with, in, and around God. Because God is social, God is also sending. God's mission is to bring the hope and healing that is found within this communion to all people. All people are created in the image of God and are invited into this perichoretic relationship. Jesus prays that we would be one so that the world may know God! Before his ascension, Jesus told his followers that they would receive the Holy Spirit that they might be his witnesses to all people. Like ripples on a lake the church grows in, with, and around the world.

Remember how Leonardo Boff defined perichoresis? It is a "cohabitation, co-existence, interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another... a complete circulation of life and a perfect coequality between the Persons, without any anteriority or superiority of one over another." God invites us, and all people, into this perichoretic life. In the name of Our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Spanish Version

En el nombre de Nuestro Dios Trino: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amén. La semana pasada reflexioné sobre la naturaleza de Dios como tres personas en un Dios, un Dios en tres personas en una relación eterna de morada e igualdad. La palabra griega usada para esto es perichoresis. Vimos a Dios trabajando en la historia de la creación que comienza en Génesis uno. Dios el creador (a quien llamamos Padre), la Palabra (a quien llamamos Hijo) y el ruach: viento / aliento / Espíritu de Dios (a quien llamamos Espíritu santo) Son tres iguales distintos y eternos que dan vida a la creación. Compartí cómo esta imagen de la naturaleza misma de Dios como una de igualdad y morada mutua nos da un modelo muy diferente de uno lineal o jerárquico.

[Usando carteles...] Así es como podría verse una imagen lineal o jerárquica de la naturaleza de Dios. Si vemos que Dios el Padre viene ante Dios el Hijo, podemos poner a Dios el Padre aquí en la parte superior de esta hoja...y a Jesús, Dios el Hijo debajo de él. Entonces, si entendemos que el Espíritu procede del Padre y del Hijo, podemos obtener el Espíritu que se interpone entre ellos de esta manera...O, si entendemos que el Espíritu fue enviado por Jesús, podríamos colocar el Espíritu en el fondo así...En ambos casos, tenemos una comprensión lineal o jerárquica de Dios.

Como luteranos, usamos la escritura para interpretar las Escrituras. De acuerdo, las lentes a través de las cuales leemos las Escrituras también impactan sobre cómo leemos los textos y lo que vamos a encontrar allí. Si nuestra comprensión de Dios siempre ha sido lineal, es probable que encontremos una representación lineal de Dios en las Escrituras. La iglesia occidental ha tenido una visión lineal de Dios así por siglos. La iglesia oriental no la tiene. La visión de la trinidad de la iglesia oriental no es lineal sino relacional. Si revisamos las Escrituras con mentes abiertas a la posibilidad de que la naturaleza de Dios podría ser diferente, entonces pensamos, podemos estar gratamente sorprendidos, como lo estaba yo.

Considere el comienzo del Evangelio de Juan, que refleja Génesis uno. “En el principio era la Palabra, y la Palabra estaba con Dios, y la Palabra era Dios...La palabra se hizo carne y habitó entre nosotros.” Jesús es Dios. Entonces, en nuestro Evangelio de hoy: Jesús ora por su iglesia: “Pregunto ... que todos pueden ser uno. Como tú, Padre, estás en mí y yo estoy en ti, que también ellos estén en nosotros.” Note que en su oración, Jesús pide que la iglesia también sea llevada a esta relación pericorética. Más sobre eso en unos momentos.

Pero, ¿qué hay del Espíritu en Juan uno o en nuestro Evangelio? Jesús ni siquiera lo menciona. Al leer estos textos aparte del resto de las Escrituras, podemos entender que el Padre y el Hijo Son un solo Dios y el Espíritu es de alguna manera inferior. ¡Ah, aquí es donde me emociono mucho y me limitaré muchísimo! :-) Un estudio de las Escrituras desde génesis revela que Dios, el Espíritu Santo, no solo está presente y activo en la creación, sino que el Espíritu Santo envía y dirige a Jesús a través de los evangelios. El Espíritu no es inferior sino una parte igual de la Trinidad. Considera estos pasajes: En Lucas uno, treinta y cinco, el Espíritu concibe a Jesús. Esto es en el credo Apostólico. En Lucas cuatro, el Espíritu lleva a Jesús al desierto donde es tentado. Luego, en el versículo catorce, comienza su ministerio “lleno del poder del Espíritu Santo.” En el mismo capítulo cita a Isaías diciendo que el Espíritu de Dios está sobre él. Estos pasajes no nos revelan una imagen lineal de la Trinidad. Revelan la imagen pericorética de un Dios en tres personas iguales pero distintas.

Tratemos de diagramar esto. Este círculo puede representar a cualquier persona de la trinidad. Como tenemos un eterno tres en uno, uno en tres, puede ser Hijo, Espíritu o Padre. Agreguemos dos más círculo. Pero no lo hagamos en la forma tradicional que se asemeja a un triángulo. Vamos a agregarlos al azar. Y superponiéndose entre sí. Aquí nadie viene antes que otro o es superior a otro. Desafortunadamente, esta imagen es estática. Si fuera dinámico, habría movimiento en todas direcciones. Agreguemos estas flechas curvas alrededor de los círculos para representar eso.

Ahora, hablemos sobre cómo encaja la iglesia. Jesús oró para que la iglesia fuera traída a esta relación pericorética. Génesis uno nos dice que la humanidad fue creada “a la imagen de Dios.” Somos creados no como superiores e inferiores el uno del otro. Como las personas de la trinidad, somos distintos el uno del otro pero somos iguales. La próxima semana hablaremos sobre nuestra rica diversidad y partes individuales en esta comunión pericorética.

Hoy quiero considerar cómo la iglesia como un todo encarna esta naturaleza. La ELCA tiene dos constituciones modelo para sus congregaciones. Uno coloca al pastor como presidente del consejo. Pocas congregaciones usan este modelo. El otro, que usamos, tiene una persona laica como presidente. El constitución de St. Luke’s coloca a

la oficina del pastor junto al consejo de la congregación como iguales. Si lo agregamos a este diagrama, tenemos la oficina del pastor y el consejo de la congregación moviéndose como uno alrededor (o dentro) de la presencia trinitaria de Dios. Este es pericoreosis. Vamos a agregarlos a estas líneas curvas.

No termina ahí. Toda la congregación es parte de esta comunión pericorética a través de comités y equipos ministeriales. Como pétalos en una flor, estos óvalos se superponen entre sí, el liderazgo de la iglesia y la presencia de Dios. Todos están con, dentro y alrededor del otro. Como parte de nuestras reuniones del ayuntamiento que comienzan en febrero, planeo hablar sobre cómo algunos de los pétalos faltan en San Lucas. Espero que planees unirte a nosotros para estas importantes conversaciones.

Finalmente, esta relación pericorética a la que la iglesia es amablemente invitada no es el final para la gente de Dios en esta tierra. Otra encuesta de las Escrituras revela que durante el tiempo que ha habido personas, Dios ha tenido el deseo de estar en relación con nosotros. Y mientras las personas se hayan apartados de Dios, Dios ha elegido a otras personas para que sean modelos de vida con y dentro de Dios. Debido a que Dios es social, Dios también está enviando. La misión de Dios es llevar la esperanza y la sanidad que se encuentra en esta comunión a todas las personas.

Todas las personas Son creadas a la imagen de Dios y Son invitadas a esta relación pericorética. ¡Jesús reza para que seamos uno para que el mundo conozca a Dios! Antes de su ascensión, Jesús les dijo a sus seguidores que recibirían el Espíritu Santo para que pudieran ser sus testigos ante todas las personas. Al igual que las ondas en un lago, la iglesia crece en, con y alrededor del mundo. ¿Recuerdas cómo Leonardo Boff definió la perichoresis? Es una “cohabitación, coexistencia, interpenetración de las Personas divinas entre sí ... una circulación completa de la vida y una perfecta igualdad entre las Personas, sin ninguna superioridad o superioridad de uno sobre otro.” Dios nos invitó a nosotros, y a todas las personas, a esta vida pericorética. En el nombre de Nuestro Dios Trino: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. Amén.

Week 4: Unity and Diversity in the Church

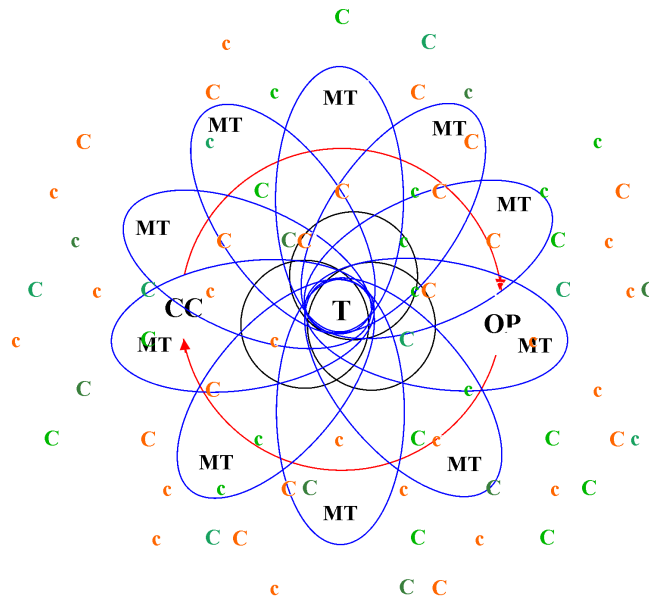


Figure 10. Unity and Diversity in the Church

English Version

In the name of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Or should I say, Son, Father, and Holy Spirit. Or Holy Spirit, Son, and Father. Or... I won't read all six combinations. But the point of offering any of them is the same. It reminds us that within our Trinitarian God there is "no anteriority or superiority." There is one God in three Persons, three Persons in one God. No one comes before another or is superior to another. There is a full and complete "cohabitation, co-existence, and interpenetration of the divine Persons by one another." We call this perichoresis.

These three persons are, as the church father Tertullian said, "three specific, distinct, objective realities...three objective individualities." Theological history has demonstrated that it is easier to understand the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three distinct persons than it is to see them as one God. Most images people use to describe the Trinity are three different realities: like father, son, and grandson; or water, ice, and steam. Both of these are helpful images, but they are limited. The first image collapses when we realize that the three persons are simply not one. I am myself; I will never be my son or my father. If this is our image for God, it is Tri-theistic. Water, ice, and steam is also good. Where it falls short is that these are three states of the same molecule. In this case, God would simply be a shape changer and not a Trinity. So, we start again and look for more images that capture not all of God's Trinitarian nature but give us a glimpse into it.

When you arrived for worship today, you should have received a handout with my attempt to illustrate the church. If you were here last week, you remember that we started with one circle and built up almost to what you received today. We'll get to the green C's

in a few moments, for now, look to the three rings in the center. If God were like a father, son, and grandson, I'd have placed these three rubbing against each other, not overlapping. If God were like water, ice, and steam, I'd have water in the center, then ice around it, and finally steam everywhere. (Yes, I can be a bit literal.) If God were simply a shape changer, I'd have one circle. But God is three Persons in one God, one God in three Persons. So, we have three distinct circles occupying the same space. Remember, the arrows remind us that this is a static representation of a dynamic relationship. The three Persons are in, with, and around each other.

We see these three distinct persons at work in the Scriptures apart from each other. Sometimes we see them all at once; such as at Jesus' baptism which we read at the beginning of this series. The Son came to be baptized. The Father spoke. And the Spirit descended like a dove. In the second week, we read the creation story. The Spirit hovered. The Father spoke. And through the Son (or the Word) creation was brought forth. Some in the church have simplified the roles of the Trinity to be Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. While the roles of each of the three are far wider than these, this is a helpful reminder that we do recognize that the Persons of the Trinity do indeed have "three specific, distinct, objective realities...three objective individualities." In summary, the Trinity is Unity and Diversity all in one: One God, three distinct Persons.

Last week we remembered how humanity is created in the Image of the Trinity. We considered how our own church organization resembles God's perichoretic nature. The Office of Pastor and the Council dance as equal partners around the Trinity. Through ministry teams the whole congregation is brought into the picture. These ministry teams are a reflection of the Trinity. They are diverse but they are united. The finance committee is different than the property committee, The personnel committee is different from the stewardship committee, and so forth, but as diverse as they are, they are one church. I think this is what Paul meant in Galatians three twenty-eight where he said, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer servant or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Of course, there were males and females, Jews and Gentiles. The point wasn't that these individualities were lost. The point was that, being in the image of a perichoretic God, they were united as one and equals in their diversity.

This brings us to today's image where I've added C's throughout the picture. I said last week that when my fourteen-year-old saw the image, he said, "Dad, you drew a nucleus." There was more. He added, "The members of the congregation are the electrons who make everything happen." He's onto something very important! Notice, the C's aren't on the outside looking in. They are everywhere! There is no anteriority or superiority. The Trinity is not a linear hierarchy and neither is the church. Made in the image of the Trinity we are equal partners in God's work.

The point of Ephesians four that we read today—or first Corinthians twelve, or Romans twelve—is that every person is equally important in God's family, regardless of the work to which they are called. Some are pastors. Some are quilters. Others are collators. And others are custodians. Some write dissertations. Others change diapers, for strangers. Some separate trash from recycling at the Lorton plant. Others design bridges and roadways. What do you do? [Pause] You are an equal part in God's work. Paul also said in first Corinthians twelve: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the

common good.” You are called by God to do what you do for the common good of all people.

This picture isn't complete yet. There's one more piece to add. We'll do that in our final installment next week. In the name of our Triune God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Or Holy Spirit, Son, and Father? You get the point Amen.

Spanish Version

En el nombre de nuestro Dios Triuno: Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo. O debería decir, Hijo, Padre y Espíritu Santo. O el Espíritu Santo, el Hijo y el Padre. O... No leeré las seis combinaciones. Pero el objetivo de ofrecer cualquiera de ellos es el mismo. Nos recuerda que dentro de nuestro Dios Trinitario no hay “anterioridad o superioridad.” Hay un Dios en tres Personas, tres Personas en un Dios. Nadie viene antes que otro o es superior a otro. Hay una “convivencia, coexistencia e interpenetración total y completa de las Personas divinas entre sí.” Llamamos a esto pericoreosis.

Estas tres personas son, como dijo el padre de la iglesia Tertuliano, “Tres realidades específicas, distintas, objetivas ... tres individualidades objetivas.” La historia teológica ha demostrado que es más fácil entender al Padre, al Hijo y al Espíritu Santo como tres personas distintas de lo que es verlos como un solo Dios. La mayoría de las imágenes que las personas usan para describir la Trinidad son tres realidades diferentes: como padre, hijo y nieto; o agua, hielo y vapor. Ambas son imágenes útiles, pero son limitadas. La primera imagen colapsa cuando nos damos cuenta de que las tres personas simplemente no son una. Yo soy yo mismo; Nunca seré mi hijo o mi padre. Si esta es nuestra imagen para Dios, es tri-teísta. El agua, el hielo y el vapor también son buenos. Donde se queda corto es que estos son tres estados de la misma molécula. En este caso, Dios sería simplemente un cambiador de forma y no una Trinidad. Entonces, comenzamos de nuevo y buscamos más imágenes que capten no toda la naturaleza trinitaria de Dios, pero que nos den una idea de ello.

Cuando llegaste para adoración hoy, deberías haber recibido un folleto con mi intento de ilustrar la iglesia. Si estuviste aquí la semana pasada, recuerdas que comenzamos con un círculo y crecimos casi lo que recibiste hoy. Llegaremos a las C verdes en unos momentos, por ahora, mira a los tres anillos en el centro. Si Dios fuera como un padre, hijo y nieto, habría puesto estos tres roces uno contra el otro, sin superponerse. Si Dios fuera como el agua, el hielo y el vapor, tendría agua en el centro, hielo alrededor y finalmente vapor a todas partes. (Sí, puedo ser un poco literal.) Si Dios fuera simplemente un cambio de forma, tendría un círculo. Pero Dios es tres Personas en un Dios, un Dios en tres Personas. Entonces tenemos tres círculos distintos ocupando el mismo espacio. Recuerde, las flechas nos recuerdan que esta es una representación estática de una relación dinámica. Las tres personas están en, con y alrededor de la otra.

Vemos a estas tres personas distintas trabajando en las Escrituras separadas unas de otras. A veces los vemos todos a la vez; como en el bautismo de Jesús que leemos al comienzo de esta serie. El Hijo vino a ser bautizado. El padre habló. Y el Espíritu descendió como una paloma. En la segunda semana, leemos la historia de la creación. El Espíritu flotaba. El padre habló. Y a través del Hijo (o la Palabra) surgió la creación. Algunos en la iglesia han simplificado los roles de la Trinidad para ser Creador, Redentor y Santificador. Si bien los roles de cada uno de los tres son mucho más amplios que estos, este es un recordatorio útil de que sí reconocemos que las Personas de la Trinidad sí

tienen “tres realidades específicas, distintas, objetivas ... tres individualidades objetivas.” En resumen, la Trinidad es Unidad y Diversidad, todo en uno: Un Dios, tres Personas distintas.

La semana pasada recordamos cómo se creó la humanidad en la Imagen de la Trinidad. Consideramos cómo nuestra propia organización eclesial se asemeja a la naturaleza pericorética de Dios. La Oficina del Pastor y el Consejo bailan como socios iguales alrededor de la Trinidad. A través de los equipos ministeriales, toda la congregación participa en la escena. Estos equipos ministeriales son un reflejo de la Trinidad. Son diversos pero están unidos. El comité de finanzas es diferente al comité de propiedad, El comité de personal es diferente del comité de mayordomía, y así sucesivamente, pero tan diversos como son, son una sola iglesia. Creo que esto es lo que Pablo quiso decir en Gálatas tres veintiocho donde dijo: “Ya no hay judíos ni griegos, ya no hay siervos ni libres, ya no hay hombres ni mujeres; porque todos ustedes son uno en Cristo Jesús.” Por supuesto que había hombres y mujeres, judíos y gentiles. El punto no era que estas individualidades se perdieron. El punto era que, al estar a la imagen de un Dios pericorético, estaban unidos como uno y son iguales en su diversidad.

Esto nos lleva a la imagen de hoy en la que he agregado C en toda la imagen. La semana pasada dije que cuando mi hijo de catorce años vio la imagen, dijo: “Papá, dibujaste un núcleo.” Había más. Añadió: “Los miembros de la congregación son los electrones que hacen que todo suceda.” ¡Está en algo muy importante! Aviso, las C no están afuera mirando hacia adentro ¡Están en todos lados! No hay anterioridad o superioridad. La Trinidad no es una jerarquía lineal y tampoco lo es la iglesia. Hechos a la imagen de la Trinidad, somos socios iguales en la obra de Dios.

El punto de Efesios cuatro que leemos hoy -o los primeros Corintios doce, o los romanos doce- es que cada persona es igualmente importante en la familia de Dios, independientemente del trabajo al que son llamados. Algunos son pastores. Algunos son quilters. Otros son collaters. Y otros son custodios. Algunos escriben disertaciones. Otros cambian pañales, por extraños. Algunos basura separada del reciclaje en la planta de Lorton. Otros diseñan puentes y carreteras. ¿Qué haces? [Pausa] Usted es una parte igual en el trabajo de Dios. Pablo también dijo en los primeros Corintios doce: “A cada uno se le da la manifestación del Espíritu para el bien común.” Dios te llama a hacer lo que haces para el bien común de todas las personas.

Esta imagen no está completa todavía. Hay una pieza más para agregar. Lo haremos en nuestra última entrega la próxima semana. En el nombre de nuestro Dios Triuno: Padre, Hijo, Espíritu Santo. ¿O el Espíritu Santo, el Hijo y el Padre? Tú entiendes Amén.

Week 5: In, With, and Around the World

T and the interlocking black circles represent the Trinity. They are both in the center and around the whole diagram. The red circle represents the dynamic ever-moving nature of their relationship.

CC and OP are Congregation Council and Office of Pastor. Their placement on the red circle represents their constant movement of discernment around and within the Trinity.

The blue ovals marked MT are ministry teams through which the whole congregation is brought into the work of the CC and OP.

The Cs are the diverse yet united members of the congregation.

The globes represents the world and everyone in it.

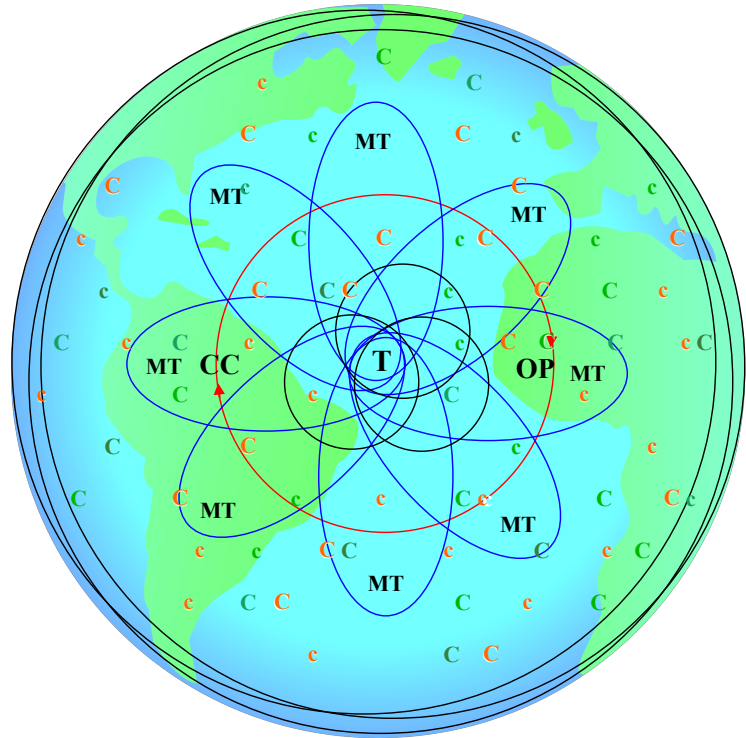


Figure 11. In, With, and Around the World¹

English Version

In the name of our perichoretic Trinitarian God, Amen. Today we are celebrating the Presentation of Our Lord. The holiday has three historic meanings: It is the day Jesus was presented at the temple and dedicated to God. It is the day the church remembers Mary's ritual purification after giving birth to her son. And, in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, it is the day the candles for the coming year are blessed. This is why it is also known as Candlemas or Candelaria.

In many of our Spanish-speaking cultures, this day is celebrated with traditions. A feast is held and the baby Jesus is taken from the altar and brought home to remain with a family until the next Christmas season. The food for the feast is provided by the family (or families) who were blessed to find a baby Jesus figurine in their portion of the Rosca de Reyes on Epiphany. We hope you all plan to join us this afternoon at one o'clock, right after the Spanish service. By the way, if you found a baby Jesus in your cake but did not get contacted, have no fear, all has been taken care of.

This morning I want to briefly explore the dedication of Jesus and the dedication of the candles. Growing up in New York I had many opportunities to attend mass in

¹ The image of the globe is from <http://clipart-library.com/clipart/202734.htm>.

Catholic churches. Though I was baptized Roman Catholic, it wasn't until I was a Lutheran teen that I attended masses with my friends. I always loved going into the chapel and lighting a candle. This candle would burn alongside many other candles to form one brilliant light. Seeing the combined light of the candles reminded me that though God's people are many we are still one.

During the five-week series we conclude today, we discussed how our God is one God in three persons, three persons in one God; and, how we, both individually and together, are created in the image of this Trinitarian God. The Trinity is a relationship of cohabitation, coexistence, and the interpenetration of the three divine persons, with the three being fully equal. We call this perichoresis.

It strikes me how those candles from my youth were very much like the Cs in our diagram of God and the church. I've made two changes to the diagram that I want to point out. I've changed the Cs from all green and capitalized to both cases and a variety of colors and shades. This better represents the diversity of God's church. I've also added a second Trinitarian ring to remind us that the presence of God is not only within in us but with and around us as well. As I said last week, there is one additional piece needed to complete this image. It is the world. With the addition of a W, the diagram is now complete. It is about God who is perichroetically in, with, and around the world. The presentation of Jesus speaks directly to this.

Because God is social, God longs to be with humanity forever. God created us to be in relationship with God and God has been trying to communicate this Good News to us for as long as we've existed. Because God is social, God is also sending.

In Genesis one, God sent God's spirit over the chaos and God's Word into the darkness and God brought forth light and life. Humanity was the centerpiece of that creation. Every time we turned away from God, God would send another messenger, messengers, or even a whole people to remind us of God's desire to be in relationship with us. In today's reading, Mary and Joseph were greeted by Simeon who prophesied that Jesus is the salvation of the world, the light that reveals God's love to all people. Out of God's unconditional love for humanity, God entered into the world as one of us. God was dedicated to us long before Mary and Joseph dedicated Jesus for God's service.

There is one last important point to make in this series. Last week, we remembered that every member of God's family is created in God's image and given gifts for service in God's work. Today, we remember that this service is not only in the church but in the world. Like Abraham in the Old Testament, we are blessed to be a blessing.

Like all of Ancient Israel and Jesus himself we are to be light to all people. This morning we gave thanks to God for Happy Christian and his dedication to the property of St. Luke's. But Happy's ministry went well beyond the walls of this congregation. Did you know, for example, that Happy is actively involved in prison ministry? He brings hope, peace, and healing to those who are incarcerated. We also dedicated to the glory of God four beautiful hand bells in memory of Ginny Peacock. Ginny's ministry also flowed beyond this place into the world. Did you know, for example, that Ginny was an active member of our visitation and care team? Bringing hope, peace, and healing to the sick and their families, she and Paul were typically the first people from St. Luke's to visit anyone in Alexandria hospital. We are all invited by God to participate in sharing God's hope, peace, and healing with all people. Last week, our Stewardship chairperson, Henry

Mora, distributed a commitment of time and talents form for us all to consider. How will you be sharing God's hope, peace, and healing this year?

We read of God's desire to be in relationship with humanity last week. In John chapter seventeen verses twenty-three and twenty-four, Jesus prayed,

"The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." Our perichoretic Trinitarian God desires to be in relationship with all humanity. Just as Jesus was dedicated for that purpose, so too are we dedicated through baptism for this same mission of God. Like the candles that unite to proclaim hope to all who see them, God's church, which is rich with diversity, is united as one to join God in God's mission to bring hope, peace, and healing to all the world. In the name of our perichoretic Trinitarian God, Amen.

Spanish Version

En el nombre de nuestro trinitario pericorético Dios. Amén. Hoy estamos celebrando la Presentación de Nuestro Señor. La fiesta tiene tres significados históricos: Es el día en que Jesús fue presentado en el templo y dedicado a Dios. Es el día en que la iglesia recuerda la purificación ritual de María después de dar a luz a su hijo. Y, en las Iglesias Católica Romana y Ortodoxas, es el día en que las velas para el próximo año serán bendecidas. Es por eso que también se lo conoce como Candlemas o Candelaria.

En muchas de nuestras culturas de habla hispana, este día se celebra con tradiciones. Se celebra una fiesta y se saca al bebé Jesús del altar y se lo lleva a casa para que permanezca con una familia hasta la próxima navidad. La comida para la fiesta es provista por la familia (o familias) que fueron bendecidas al encontrar una figura de Jesús en su porción de la Rosca de Reyes en Epifanía. Esperamos que todos ustedes se unan a nosotros esta tarde a la una, justo después del servicio en español. Por cierto, si encontraste un bebé Jesús en tu pastel pero no te contactaste, no temas, todo se ha solucionado.

Esta mañana quiero explorar brevemente la dedicación de Jesús y la dedicación de las velas. Al crecer en Nueva York, tuve muchas oportunidades de asistir a la misa en las iglesias católicas. Aunque fui bautizado como católico, no fue hasta que fui un adolescente luterano que asistí a misa con mis amigos. Siempre me encantó ir a la capilla y encender una vela. Esta vela ardería junto con muchas otras velas para formar una luz brillante. Ver la luz combinada de las velas me recordó que aunque la gente de Dios es mucha, todavía somos uno.

Durante la serie de cinco semanas que concluimos hoy, discutimos cómo nuestro Dios es un Dios en tres personas, tres personas en un Dios; y, cómo nosotros, tanto individualmente como juntos, somos creados a la imagen de este Dios Trinitario. La Trinidad es una relación de convivencia, coexistencia y la interpenetración de las tres personas divinas, siendo las tres completamente iguales. Llamamos a esto pericóresis.

Me sorprende cómo esas velas de mi juventud se parecían mucho a las C's en nuestro diagrama de Dios y la iglesia. He hecho dos cambios al diagrama que quiero señalar. Cambié las C's de todo lo verde y en mayúscula para ambos casos y una

variedad de colores y sombras. Esto representa mejor la diversidad de la iglesia de Dios. También agregué un segundo anillo trinitario para recordarnos que la presencia de Dios no solo está dentro de nosotros sino también con nosotros. Como dije la semana pasada, hay una pieza adicional necesaria para completar esta imagen. Es el mundo. Con la adición de una W, el diagrama está ahora completo. Se trata de Dios que está pericoréticamente en, con y alrededor del mundo. La presentación de Jesús habla directamente a esto.

Debido a que Dios es social, Dios anhela estar con la humanidad para siempre. Dios nos creó para estar en relación con Dios y Dios ha estado tratando de comunicarnos estas Buenas Nuevas durante todo el tiempo que hemos existido. Debido a que Dios es social, Dios también está enviando.

En Génesis uno, Dios envió el espíritu de Dios sobre el caos y la Palabra de Dios a la oscuridad y Dios dio luz y vida. La humanidad era la pieza central de esa creación. Cada vez que nos alejamos de Dios, Dios enviaría otro mensajero, mensajeros o incluso un pueblo entero para recordarnos el deseo de Dios de tener una relación con nosotros. En la lectura de hoy, María y José fueron recibidos por Simeón quien profetizó que Jesús es la salvación del mundo, la luz que revela el amor de Dios a todas las personas. Fuera del amor incondicional de Dios por la humanidad, Dios entró en el mundo como uno de nosotros. Dios estuvo dedicado a nosotros mucho antes de que María y José dedicaran a Jesús para el servicio de Dios.

Hay un último punto importante que hacer en esta serie. La semana pasada, recordamos que cada miembro de la familia de Dios se creó a la imagen de Dios y se le dieron dones para servir en la obra de Dios. Hoy, recordamos que este servicio no es solamente en la iglesia sino en el mundo. Como Abraham en el Antiguo Testamento, tenemos la bendición de ser una bendición.

Como todo el Antiguo Israel y Jesús mismo, debemos ser luz para todas las personas. Esta mañana le agradecemos a Dios por Happy Christian y su dedicación a la propiedad de San Lucas. Pero el ministerio de Happy fue mucho más allá de las paredes de esta congregación. ¿Sabía, por ejemplo, que Happy participa activamente en el ministerio de prisiones? Él trae esperanza, paz y sanación a aquellos que están encarcelados. También dedicamos a la gloria de Dios cuatro hermosas campanas en memoria de Ginny Peacock. El ministerio de Ginny también fluyó más allá de este lugar en el mundo. ¿Sabías, por ejemplo, que Ginny era un miembro activo de nuestro equipo de visitación y cuidado? Trayendo esperanza, paz y sanación a los enfermos y sus familias, ella y Paul fueron los primeros en llegar a San Lucas para visitar a cualquier persona en el hospital de Alejandría. Dios nos invita a participar en compartir la esperanza, la paz y la sanación de Dios con todas las personas. La semana pasada, nuestro presidente de Stewardship, Henry Mora, distribuyó un formulario de compromiso de tiempo y talentos para que todos lo consideremos. ¿Cómo compartirás la esperanza, la paz y la sanación de Dios este año?

Leemos sobre el deseo de Dios de estar en relación con la humanidad la semana pasada. En el capítulo de Juan diecisiete versículos veintitrés y veinticuatro, Jesús oró,

“La gloria que me diste, yo les he dado, para que sean uno, como somos uno, yo en ellos y tú en mí, para que sean uno solo, para que el mundo sepa que tú me has enviado” y los has amado incluso cuando me has amado.” Nuestro Dios Trinitario pericorético desea estar en relación con toda la humanidad. Así como Jesús fue dedicado

para ese propósito, así también nosotros fuimos dedicados, a través del bautismo, para esta misma misión de Dios. Al igual que las velas que se unen para proclamar la esperanza a todos los que las ven, la iglesia de Dios, que es rica en diversidad, está unida para unirse a Dios en la misión de Dios de llevar esperanza, paz y sanidad a todo el mundo. En el nombre de nuestro Dios trinitario pericorético, Amén.

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