



**Presbyterian Church In America
Potomac Presbytery Study Committee Report**

**Ethnic Diversity In The Potomac
Presbytery**

January 5, 2002

"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

John 17:23

"We cannot expect the world to believe that the Father sent the Son, that Jesus' claims are true, and that Christianity is true, unless the world sees some reality of oneness of true Christians. Now that is frightening. Should we not feel some emotion at this point?"

Francis Schaeffer, ***The Church Before the Watching World***

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"...men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do..."

1 Chroniciles 12:32

Preface

Our Potomac Presbytery study committee has been meeting for more than two years to prayerfully study, constructively debate and address matters related to the demographic context of our region. Our heart goal has been that this work would encourage our presbytery and her churches to faithfully reach lost people for Christ and disciple them into our churches for the glory of God.

Our research has revealed and confirmed:

- We are the fourth largest metropolitan region in the United States with 7.8 million people and growing between 5 and 10 percent with over an estimated 70 percent unchurched population.
- More than 85 percent of the congregations in the US are either on a plateau or in decline.
- Our region is classified as extremely high in terms of ethnic diversity.
- Most of our pastors and lay leaders feel inadequately equipped for the challenging task of leading God's people into the arena of communities that are in transition or in addressing the particular needs of different cultures surrounding them.
- There are great challenges in reaching ethnically diverse unchurched people while keeping the unity of the Spirit.
- Racial tensions, and alienation continue to be major problems in our society.
- Jesus believed that our commitment to unity was a key means for evangelism and reveal His saving presence in the world. John 17

Our prayer is that we of the Potomac Presbytery would be like the battle ready men of Issachar who understood the times and knew what Israel should do. It is our earnest desire that this study work would help us to that end.

Introduction

On November 10, 1998 the Potomac Presbytery approved the following motion: *"that a study committee be formed comprised of leadership from the major ethnic groups represented in our Potomac Presbytery (e.g. African-American, Anglo-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American) and meet to explore and clarify the diversity of ethnic groups within our region from a Biblical perspective that impact the growth and health of our churches, church planting and the witness*

of Christ. The study committee will report its findings and offer non-binding recommendations at the November 1999 meeting of the Presbytery so that we and our churches might be further equipped for every good work."

The genesis of this motion developed as a result of a discussion that took place during a Presbytery meeting in May of 1998. (see appendix) Kevin Smith, an African American church planter, had finished giving a report concerning his vision to see an African American church planted in the Bowie, Maryland area. Kevin had strongly emphasized his desire to see African Americans reached for Christ as well as seeing African American male leadership development. It was after his presentation that a commissioner stood and voiced concern about ethnic church planting. He asked the penetrating question, *"are we going to end up with two PCA churches no more than five miles apart, one white and one black?"* This question evoked a significant amount of discussion and debate on the floor of presbytery.

It is interesting to note that historically our denomination and presbyteries have been actively involved in planting Chinese, Korean, Hispanic churches without arousing controversy. While we can understand that these people groups have additional language barriers to overcome in an English speaking society, this has not been the case with African Americans which for the most part have not found a home in the vast majority of PCA churches. Yet there was something unsettling for some about specifically targeting African Americans. This should not surprise us when we consider the history of race relations in our country and today's charged racial climate. Considering our country's legacy of slavery, civil war, reconstruction, Jim Crow, legalized segregation, civil rights, and controversy over affirmative action, it is not surprising that we become emotionally agitated when the subject of race is discussed. It should not surprise us that the idea of a separate PCA church for African Americans would seem diametrically opposed to everything we stand for as the church of Jesus Christ which should be reflecting the multiracial church in heaven as depicted in Revelation 7:9. It could be argued that we should be working towards an integrated church and not a separate church.

There are some in our presbytery that strongly oppose the idea of an ethnic church. There are others that believe in culture targeting or the homogenous model of church planting and have less of a problem with an ethnic church. Do the scriptures shed light on these missional questions and how shall our MNA committee and churches proceed in their efforts to reach our communities for Christ? These questions seem to naturally raise others. Why are our churches presently

segregated for the most part even when their target regions are ethnically mixed? Should such segregation be a concern of ours? Why aren't significant numbers of African Americans drawn to our PCA churches? Should there be concerted efforts on our part to enfold culturally diverse peoples into our churches? What should a church do in an ethnically diverse and changing community?

It was because of such questions as these and the discussions on the floor of Presbytery that the idea of a study committee was raised. Unfortunately, when the motion was first presented there was so much concern about the language that the final wording was vague about what the committee would specifically do. The original motion included the following language;

"...meet to explore and clarify from a Biblical perspective the cultural issues within our region that impact the growth and health of our churches..."

This was changed to:

"... to explore and clarify the diversity of ethnic groups within our region from a Biblical perspective."

The committee struggled with what this revision meant. Therefore, in order to help us focus, we came up with two questions that we believe get at the heart of the matter:

Question 1: In an ethnically and social-economically diverse community how should the local church demonstrate faithfulness to Christ?

Question 2: What responsibilities do churches have to an ethnically and social-economically diverse region?

The report that follows will endeavor to answer these questions through six major sections.

I Biblical Perspective (We will consider the nature of and responses to cultural diversity from scripture and redemptive history.),

II Church History (We will review the perspectives of various church fathers and historical church convictions concerning cultural divisions and diversity.),

III Historical Challenges and Present Realities (We will outline some of the history, hurdles and present realities facing the predominant ethnic groups that comprise our region.),

IV. Contemporary Applications (We will explore various responses to cultural diversity from churches and church movements.),

V. Proposed Affirmations and Applications (We will conclude by offering various proposed resolutions in answer to our focus questions through the affirmation and application of principles.)

VI. Appendix (This section will provide resources and research to help leaders and churches grow in reaching their culturally diverse regions.)

Note:

It should be noted that while the report will include and address matters related to other ethnic groups in our presbytery there will be considerable weight given to the discussion of American black and white race relations since this gulf is generally more vast, the history longer and discussion was the basis for the formation of the study.

It should also be noted that while this report does begin to answer the two questions listed above, its analysis and recommendations are focused primarily on issues related to ethnic diversity in our region. The Study Committee acknowledges this limitation due to time and space. However, the Study Committee also recognizes our God-given responsibility to minister to the poor, and urges our fellow elders to make this heart issue a matter of further study, reflection and discussion within our presbyteries.

Committee Members

The following teaching elders were approved to serve on the study committee:

John Chiou, Stephen Clark, David Coffin, Walter Coppersmith, Craig Garriott, James Lee, Stan Long, Wy Plummer, Kevin Smith, and Toon Yeo with Craig Garriott and Stan Long serving as co-chairs.

Over the course of time a number of these brothers requested to be excused from the monthly meetings because of other time demands. The following TE's continue to meet to finish the proposed report. Walter Coppersmith, Craig Garriott, Stan Long, Wy Plummer, and Kevin Smith.

I. BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Pre-Fallen Man in God's Image

The climax of creation was the making of man in the image of the triune God. *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness..."* Gen 1:26 Kidner says that the plural pronouns "us" and "our" are considered to express the "plural of fullness" of the God head, "this fullness glimpsed in the Old Testament, was to be unfolded as triunity, in the further 'we' and 'our' of

John 14:23" (*"My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."*)¹

So while the image of God in man embraced being created with *"reasonable and immortal souls, endowed with knowledge, righteousness and true holiness"*² as the Westminster Confession states, the first defining truth of God's image in man focused on the diversity of personalities, male and female, with the calling to function as a co-regent team in exercising a righteous dominion over the earth. (*...in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over..."* Genesis 1:27,28)

We most express the image of God not primarily in our individualities but in our united personalities. Louis Berkhof emphasizes the nature of God as Trinity in Unity,

*"Personality does not develop nor exist in isolation, but only in association with other persons. Hence it is not possible to conceive of personality in God apart from an association of equal persons in Him.... In virtue of the tri-personal existence of God there is an infinite fullness of divine life in Him. In view of the fact that there are three persons in God, it is better to say that God is personal than to speak of Him as a person."*³

This *"association of equal persons"* in the God head, is further affirmed in man as God's image bearers. Paul says in Acts 17:26 *"From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth."* All humans, descending from one blood, are equal before God who does not show favoritism. (Romans 2:11) and are equally worthy of the dignity granted them as God's image bearers.

In addition, our tri-personal God has existed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit from all eternity in intimate community and fellowship. *"Each person in the Trinity loves, honors and glorifies the other and receives love and honor back from the others because He is worthy. There is never any lack."*⁴ Jesus emphasizes and prays for this intimate unity to be the reality for us as God's image bearers, *"...that all of them may be one,*

Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." (John 17:21)

2. Fallen Man

When our first parents fell from that perfect estate in which they were created by rebelling against God in eating the forbidden fruit, all humanity fell with them.⁵ This fall brought man under the inescapable condemnation of God as he became guilty and utterly corrupt in his whole nature, losing righteousness, holiness, and perfect knowledge. The consequence of the fall reveals itself in the radical breaking of relationships between man and God (fear, guilt, judgment), man and himself (shame), man and creation (the curse), and man and the woman (blame).

The human community became tragically altered with the entrance of sin. *"...the fall narrative gives the only convincing explanation of the perversity of human nature that the world has ever seen."*⁶ Paul lists the acts of the sinful nature in Galatians 5:20,21 of which more than two thirds focus on the broken relationship between people: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy. The acts of this sinful nature is the history of humanity from Adam and Eve's broken relationship in the garden, to the murder of Abel by his brother, to the dividing wall of hostility between Jew and Gentile and all relational dissonance whether between individuals, families, tribes, races and nations. Pride, prejudice, partiality, racism, systemic injustice, and basic neglect are some of the ways our broken relationship with God is manifested in our broken relationship with others. (1John 4:20; James 2:1-4)

3. Redeemed Man

God did not leave mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery but out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity entered into a covenant of grace with sinners to deliver them out of their fallen estate and bring them to salvation by a Redeemer, Jesus Christ.⁷ Sinners are made partakers of this salvation through faith which is applied to us through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁸ In this estate of salvation believers are saved from the wrath

¹ Derek Kidner, *Genesis* (London: Tyndale, 1967),52.

² The Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter IV article II

³ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: WM.B. Eerdmans, 1941), 84-85.

⁴ Neighbour, *Where Do We Go From Here?*, 96.

⁵ Westminster Confession of Faith, Shorter Catechism Q & A 16-18.

⁶ J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1993),81.

⁷ Westminster Confession of Faith, Shorter Catechism Q & A 20.

⁸ Westminster Confession of Faith, Shorter Catechism Q & A 29,30.

of God, the dominion of sin, the power of death (Rom. 1:18;3:9;5:21); their natural condition of being mastered by the world, the flesh and the devil (John 8:23-24; Rom.8:7-8; 1John 5:19); from the fears that a sinful life engenders (Rom. 8:15; 2Tim 1:7;Heb 2:14-15), and from the many vicious habits that were part of it (Eph. 4:17-24; 1Thess. 4:3-8; Titus 2:11-3:6)."⁹

Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10). He then sends His redeemed people into the world as the Father sent Him (John 20:21) to be a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that they may declare the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light (1Peter 2:9). This declared praise celebrates that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2Cor 5:19). This gospel of reconciliation radically reveals itself through the reconciliation of the Jew and Gentile and all peoples alienated from one another who have been united together in one family through Christ.

"For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ... His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility (Eph 2:14-16)." *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28)."*

The redeemed church of Christ is under covenantal obligation to show forth this gospel that unites people that the world would know that Jesus came as the Redeemer (John 17:23) and who will ultimately unite people from every nation, tongue and tribe to God.

4. Glorified Man

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10

The Apostle John describes heaven as a panorama of diverse people from every "ethnos", kindred-people group, race, stock and language standing before the

throne of God and the Lamb and crying out in one united chorus of worship. The hope of mankind has been that there will indeed be a time where righteousness reigns upon the earth as the waters cover the sea.

God will bring the redemption of His people to a climax and the New Israel, the promised seed of Abraham, will extend beyond physical genealogy. The promise embraces those of faith from every nation and people who call on the Name of Jesus. This is the fulfillment of David's words when he says, *"All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before Him..."* *"Ps 22:27.* Isaiah envisioned this when he saw all the nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord's temple (Isa 2:2), the Holy City, the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2).

Yet the nations do not come empty handed; in addition to holding palm branches in festive celebration, they bring their wealth *"like a flooding stream"* (Isa 66:12). From distant shores, kings bring tribute: gifts of gold, incense, and gems from their distinct regions and cultures in a continuous procession, proclaiming the praise of the Lord (Isa 60:6). The gates of the city are never locked nor is there night. People are never tired of praising God. They have found their eternal rest. The glory and honor of these diverse ethnics is brought before the brilliant glory of God and the City throbs and swells with joy (Isa 60:5).

This great joy is combined with peace. *"No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise"* (Isa 60:18). The Lamb has been slain; His blood has purchased men for God *"from every tribe and language and people and nation"* (Rev 5:9,10). Jesus has united them into one nation, one new man, to be a kingdom of priests to serve God forever. Territorial disputes, economic injustice, oppression of the weak, hunger, thirst, suffering, disabilities, pain and bloodshed are gone forever. All dividing walls of racial pride, tribal hostility, gang and turf warfare, ethnic cleansing, mob lynchings, and racial profiling have ceased. Theo-centricity replaces ethno-centricity, and the divided family is fully united into one body. The holy temple is now complete (Eph 2:21). There is one flock and one Shepherd, one King, and one Lord (John 10:16; Zech 14:9).

"For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; He will lead them to springs of living water.

⁹ J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1993), 146, 147.

*And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes"
(Rev 7:17)*

Jesus prayed *"thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."* Is the church on earth allowed to wait until we get to heaven to reflect this biblical unity? If not, how and to what degree are we commanded by our Lord to express unity upon the earth to a watching world?

5. The One and the Many in Redemptive History

a. The Old Testament

In the Old Testament, God focused His redemption on the nation of Israel, the treasured possession chosen out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be His people (Deut 7:6). At the same time, He was building them to be a light to the nations that they might bring His salvation to the ends of the earth (Isa 49:6). To achieve this, he chose leaders who could bridge cultures and become lights before the nations. God's intent was that people from every tribe and race would have opportunity to serve Him together with the people of Israel, becoming one holy nation before God. The Old Testament scriptures abound with references to this movement of God: One true and living God worshipped by many people from diverse nations and cultures.

The teaching of Genesis that God is the creator of the world and of man in his image is foundational to missions. Because God *"has made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth"* (Acts 17:26), no individual or race may consider itself above others. Rather, the election by the Creator is for special service to all mankind. Man has been created by God, is dependent on him, is answerable to him, in rebellion against him, but at the same time is the object of God's redemptive, seeking love. History in the Bible is the record of God's redemptive activity for the sake of humanity. A new period of salvation history begins with Abraham (Gen. 12ff.) A close relationship is established between the nations and the forefather of the Chosen People (Gen. 12:3). At the very outset the emphasis lies on the importance of God's redemptive purpose for all mankind in the patriarch Abram. *"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed"* (Gen 12:3) Paul in Gal. 3:8 calls this promise the Gospel:

"And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, In you shall all the nations be blessed."¹⁰

God made a stunning promise to Abraham the Hebrew, and sent him to a foreign land where he dwelt among different ethnics--Canaanites, Perizzites, and Egyptians (Gen 12, 13). Abraham, the first Bible character to be identified by an ethnic group, considered himself one people among others (Eber or Heber from which we get "Hebrew", means "the region beyond") (NIV-SBN Gen 14:13). God sent Abraham from an apparently very comfortable home to an unknown "region beyond". God didn't want Abraham to become too settled or comfortable being with his "own kind." *"And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own... a heavenly one"* (Heb 11:14-16). Therefore it was from one man, Abraham, that the Lord chose to bless not only his offspring but the nations who would be blessed by imitating his faith in the true and living God.

Joseph, the youngest of Jacob's twelve son's who was sold into slavery, became the supreme example in Genesis of Abraham's blessing to the world. Joseph was a great example of one who affirmed the culture he was serving and at the same time demonstrated that God was the Sovereign King of the universe and worthy of all allegiance (Gen 41:16,32). His adaptation to the Egyptian culture is very apparent. Joseph, who wore the garments of an Egyptian ruler and spoke the native tongue of the land, was able to accommodate to another culture in order to do good. Even his own brothers, upon entering his court, did not recognize him (Gen 42:8,23). However, Joseph's ethnicity as a Hebrew was still recognized and he would not accommodate his faith to false practices. His Egyptian associates would not eat with him because *"Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews for that is detestable to Egyptians (Gen 43:32)."* It is believed this separation was not for social reasons but for religious-cultic reasons.¹¹ Joseph was willing to be treated differently because of His faith in God. Through him the family/nation was blessed.

"By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time" (Heb 11:24,25). Moses renounced` everything the world could offer: fame, fortune, and power (Acts 7:20-22). After forty years his heart led him to, however. militant civil disobedience: killing an Egyptian for mistreating a Hebrew slave (Exod 2:12). His act of solidarity and justice, did not win any sense of affinity from the other

¹⁰ Richard De Ridder, Discipling The Nations (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 22.

¹¹ Derek Kidner, Genesis, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 204.

Israelites (v14) He was considered an 'Uncle Tom'¹² of the highest class, a collaborator with the oppressive dominant order. When Pharaoh found out about Moses' act, he marked him for death. But as God used him to lead the people out of Egyptian bondage a mixed multitude of the nations came forth with them. (Exodus 12:37-38) He championed the unity of God in the *shema* (Deut 6:4) reminding the nation that their identity was absolutely connected to the only true God who had rescued them out of bondage. They were commanded to give to him alone absolute loyalty. The court of the gentiles in the tabernacle reminded them that the other nations were never far from God's heart, even if they as a people didn't comprehend this fact.

The prophet Jonah represented the common attitude of the nation of Israel towards God's call to oneness and diversity. He had no desire for the foreign people of Assyria to experience God's mercy. Rather his hatred of these historical enemies motivated him to run from God's clear call. Yet God sends revival to Ninevah and chastises the rebellious, prejudiced prophet because God had compassion on all the nations.

Daniel shows us that despite the rebellion and idolatry of the covenant people, God still raises up witnesses for His glory among pagan kings and pagan nations. He is the sovereign Lord who raises one king and humbles others. The gods of the nations are not gods. The blessing upon the Babylonian Empire came about during Daniel's ministry because God humbled pagan Kings who ultimately acknowledged Him as King of Kings.

During the captivity the nation of Israel became a scattered people. In the days after the exile, while some returned to the promised land, others decided to stay dispersed among the nations. This 'diaspora', who built synagogues of worship around the known world, represented a consistent witness to the true and living God. The greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) reminds us that the truth of God was translated into the language of the Hellenistic world. God's covenant people, who were now absolutely committed to the doctrine of monotheism, were beginning to express diversity even in their translations of the word of God. This one nation which had come from father Abraham, had become during the intertestamental period, a people that were very diverse. They had various commitments to orthodoxy, various opinions about being in a world where pagan empires seemed to dominate, various political strategies for understanding their identity and role in the world, and even various languages.

¹² Uncle Tom-a term derived from Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe, that denigrated Uncle Tom who was the black

b. The New Testament

In the New Testament we see Jesus as the Son of Man who came *"to seek and to save the lost."* (Luke 19:10). *"He came to his own, but they did not receive Him..."* (John 1:11). By contrast those who were of another fold seemed to gather as sheep who for many years had been without a Shepherd. (John 10:14-15, Matt 9:36) From the responsive people of Israel, and the responsive people from among the Gentiles came forth the new people of God! This was a people bound not by culture, nor by race, nor by language nor by geographic links. They were bound by Jesus Christ.

In the gospels Simeon held baby Jesus in his arms and said, *"...my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel"* (Luke 2:31-32). Jesus was not raised in religiously revered and prestigious Judea but in God honored *"Galilee of the Gentiles"* (Isa 9:1; Matt 4:15), a blue collar fishing town from which nothing good --and especially not a prophet -- was expected to come (John 1:46;7:41). John the Baptist, preparing the way for this worldwide Savior, fulfills the words of Isaiah, *"And the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all mankind together will see it"* (Isa 40:5; Luke 3:6).

The movement to create a people who were multi-ethnic continues when Jesus, *"astonished"* at a centurion's faith, heals his suffering servant and says, *"I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven"* (Matt 8:10-12). Jesus also forsook the religious taboos of the day, going to Samaria and publicly mingling with an adulterous woman (John 4) challenging the historic division created after 722B.C. when the Assyrians began to co-mingle with the northern tribes.

After the resurrection and ascension, the early church modeled Jesus' commitment to unity with diversity. In Acts 2 the Pentecost revival was more than a time where the NT church was birthed. Dr. Luke seeks to show this event as the fulfillment of prophetic promises that the gospel would go beyond the nation of Israel to anyone *"who calls on the name of the Lord."* (Joel 2:28-32) More than a dozen geographic people groups are listed in Acts 2:9-11. From the one body would come prophets and communicators of the message of Jesus from a diverse people - men and women, young

house servant. He was identified as being an arm of the oppressor and betrayer to the field slaves whom he oversaw.

and old, slave and free. The gifts of languages functioned as a sign that God used to show the apostles this unity He desired to establish among the diverse peoples of the known world. (Acts 2:4, 8:14-17, 11:15-18, 19:1-7)

While Jesus set the stage for a culturally diverse Church which would include Gentiles among its disciples, the initial Church leadership in Jerusalem was composed of Hebraic Jews (Aramaic-speaking, mostly natives of Palestine).

In Acts 6, the leadership base expanded to include the growing ethnic mix represented in the church. At Pentecost a large group of Hellenists or Grecian Jews (Jews whose habitual language was Greek, most of whom were natives of the Greco-Roman lands of the dispersion) became part of the Jerusalem church. There was a history of tension and socio-geographic pride between these two groups. Because the leadership power base was in the sole hands of the dominant Hebraic speaking group, there was a tendency to 'overlook' the needs of the sub-dominant group. *"...the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food"* (Acts 6:1). The Twelve immediately took action, realizing that injustice in the fellowship would be a scandal, disgracing the Name of Jesus, and impeding the expansion of the Church. The disciples were led to choose seven men, most if not all of whom were from the Hellenistic group; all the names listed are Greek names.¹³ *"They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a covert to Judaism."* Acts 6:5 The power base was expanded and *"So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.."* (Acts 6:7). It should be noted that in the act of expanding the leadership base, Biblical standards were not diminished. The candidates had to be *"known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom"* (Acts 6:3). This was not a superficial racial quota that diminished the qualifications or standards of leadership. In this regard the church was above the reproach of paternalism or cheap social action. Theological unity would not be compromised for cultural diversity. Not only was the church becoming diverse, they were consciously affirming leaders among the sub-cultures of Jerusalem church. They were one in Christ, yet they affirmed the cultures of the diverse sub-groups.

The Apostle Peter struggled to accept the vision of God's call to eat the unclean animals. (Acts 10:12) While he came to realize that *"God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right,"* (Acts 10:34,35) we find that the Peter was influenced more by cultural-religious pressures than by theology (Gal. 2:11ff). He bent under the demands of a dominant religious culture and allowed their norms, cloaked in pious language, to persuade him to embrace non-Christian behavior. He withdrew and separated himself from fellowship with Gentile believers. Even the *"Son of Encouragement,"* Barnabas, was persuaded and discouraged from Christian unity with Gentile believers.

Acts 11 and 12 describes the birthing of this unique church of Antioch. Through the persecution and scattering in Acts 8 surfaced a group of worshippers in Antioch whose cultural ties produced evangelism that was focused on several affinity groups. Barnabas comes and brings unity to the church and recruits a gifted cross-cultural co-leader, the newly converted and commissioned Apostle Paul.

The aggressive extension of the Gospel throughout the world demanded exacting stewardship of people's backgrounds, gifts, and callings. It was very apparent to the Apostles in Jerusalem that Paul was qualified and gifted by God to be take the Gospel to the Gentiles, *"just as Peter had been to the Jews"* (Gal 2:2). Paul, a Roman citizen with special privileges, also had a superior education and an understanding of Greek culture that gave him a great advantage in capturing a listening audience. Of course, most fundamental was Jesus' commission for Paul to carry His *"name before the Gentiles and their kings as well as before the people of Israel."* (Acts 9:15). As Paul and his missionary team traveled from city to city, preaching a resurrected Christ, his strategy was to proclaim to the Jewish Diaspora first whenever possible until the synagogue officials grew weary of the message. Then he would expand into the Gentile community (Rom 1:16). Thus Paul's congregations reflected an ethnic and cultural blend, which is clearly reflected in the epistles of Paul.

The representation of culturally diverse leadership was explicit in the church at Antioch, which became the new mission base as the Gospel extended further and further into the world. They are united in their commitment to worshipping the Lord Jesus and yet their diversity and uniqueness is highlighted by Doctor Luke, the inspired author. *"Barnabas, Simeon called Niger,*

¹³F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on The Books Of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 129.

Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul." Acts 13:1 Padilla says,

*A more heterogeneous group could hardly be suggested! Barnabas was a Levite, a native of Cyprus (4:36). Simeon, as his nickname Niger ('Black') suggests was a Jew (or proselyte?) apparently of dark complexion, perhaps to be identified with Simon of Cyrene who carried Jesus' cross. Lucius was a Gentile (or a Jew with a Roman name), a native of the African city of Cyrene, perhaps one of the men who had first preached the gospel in Antioch. Manaen was a "foster-brother" (syntrophos) to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, with whom he had been reared. Saul was an ex-Pharisee, a "Hebrew of Hebrews" and (as a Roman citizen) a member of a small, privileged minority in the eastern Mediterranean.*¹⁴

From Galatians 2 we see the struggle between Peter and Paul concerning the issue of unity and cultural diversity. Paul knew that separation exhibited the features of an 'eternally condemned...different Gospel' (2:6) For this reason he strongly and publicly opposed Peter (2:11). Paul writes his epistle to the Galatians to expose their heresies and reinforce not only the truth of salvation by faith alone but also the reality that there is a unity with diversity among God's enlarged family. *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (3:28).*

The council in Jerusalem in Acts 15 was called because issues of theology and culture had produced great tensions in the early church. The nature of the gospel, the nature of witness to Gentile peoples, the nature of the unity of the church were all in question. The solution of Acts 15:24-29 and the subsequent discussions by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians and Romans indicate a commitment to the unity of God's church and diverse cultural expression, i.e. freedom among the Gentiles to practice a godly lifestyle according to conscience (1 Cor 8:1-13, Rom 14:1-23).

Paul's theology of the church shows his vision of the church as one body with a diversity of gifts. This is seen in 1 Corinthians 12 and in Ephesians. There we see the church as the new family, the new body, the new man, the new bride, the new temple of God where the Spirit dwells in fullness.

II. Church History

Our review of New Testament church history revealed how the early believers were determined to be a fellowship where reconciliation was a core value to be lived out in response to the completed work of Christ on the cross, "who has made the two one" (Eph 2:14). House churches, worshipping assemblies, leadership structures, and the pervasive cultural conflicts with their unifying resolutions all reinforced the fact that union across the racial, cultural, and socioeconomic divides was to be a concrete reality.

1. Early House Churches

Robert Banks affirmed this fact in his work on 'Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches In Their Historical Setting' when he referred to the Gospel as a communal affair:

*Acceptance by Christ necessitated acceptance of those whom he had already welcomed (Rom 15:7); reconciliation with God entailed reconciliation with others that exhibited the character of the gospel preaching (Phil 4:2-3); union in the Spirit involved union with one another, for the Spirit was primarily a shared, not individual experience.*¹⁵

Derek Tidball reveals how the household community in the Roman empire was a large inclusive and socially cohesive unit.

*It can be seen that a household made up of the principal wealthy family, a number of friends and clients and a host of slaves was a thoroughly mixed community in terms of social status. Such a mixed community would need a powerful binding agent to keep its members united.... Christianity gave both women and slaves a new status and a new opportunity to participate fully in religious activity. There was no theological barrier to their full participation (Gal 3:28 and Col 3:11)....A careful look at those who became Paul's converts or sponsors demonstrated that the Christian church from the very beginning was socially mixed. It was no homogeneously proletarian movement.*¹⁶

¹⁴Padilla, Mission Between The Times: Essays In The Kingdom, 152.

¹⁵Robert Banks, Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 3.

¹⁶Tidball, The Social Context of The New Testament: A Sociological Analysis, (Grand Rapids: Academe Books, 1984), 79,85-86, 94.

2. First Century Rome

Michael Green reveals the depraved moral state of Roman society in the first century which was a formidable obstacle to those who would join the early church:

In high society and in the slave community alike, we read of prostitution, adultery, homosexuality, child exposure, concern only for "bread and circuses", for gladiatorial shows and wild beasts fights, for money and for power over others at any price.¹⁷

Yet in this depraved social state, the Christian community was described as a people with not only with a radically different moral ethic but also a radically different social ethic. Apologist Justin gives an example:

We who were formerly delighted in fornication now embrace chastity alone; we who formerly used magical arts, dedicate ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; we who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock and share with everyone who is in need; we who hated and destroyed one another and, on account of their different customs would not live with men of a different race, now since coming of Christ, live on excellent terms with them and pray for our enemies and endeavor to persuade those who hate us unjustly to live conformably to the good precepts of Christ to the end that they may become partakers with us of the same joyful hope of a reward from God the ruler of all.¹⁸

Again, it must be remembered that the context for this kind of Christian community of sacrificial love was the small context of the house church. "Justin in his First Apology refers to several distinct house-based meetings in Rome as much as a century after the New Testament."¹⁹ Hadaway, Wright and Dubose, writing about house churches, point out that, "Until the year 200, the house church was the common structural expression of the Christian congregation".²⁰

¹⁷Michael Green, Evangelism in the Early Church (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970),45.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Derek Tidball, The Social Context of the New Testament: A Sociological Analysis (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 83.

²⁰Kirk C. Hadaway, Stuart A. Wright, and Francis M. DuBose, Home Cell Groups and House Churches (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), 42.

3. Historical Exegesis and Application of Ephesians 2:11-22

In his study, The Church And Racial Hostility²¹ William Rader interprets Ephesians 2:11-22 and demonstrates that the reconciliation between Jew and Gentile has relevant ethical implications for the reconciliation of blacks and whites and other alienated groups today. The following section outlines some of his salient arguments in the chronology of church history. These reveal the revolutionary nature of the early church "in that it broke out of the established structures which separated Jews and Gentiles."²²

4. Early Church Fathers (1st Three Centuries)

Rader shows that when the early church fathers spoke of the cross uniting Jews and Gentile they referred to all men. "The two arms united in one cross symbolize the uniting of all Jews and Gentiles in the death of Christ for both groups."²³

Irenaeus of Lyon (d. ca. 202), the first great anti-Gnostic theologian, said that the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the church is the sign that Christ has healed the fundamental division of mankind. This unity, he writes, is revealed in the very shape of the cross since Christ died with outstretched hands:

"Through the divine stretching out of hands he joined the two peoples in one God. There were two hands because there were two peoples scattered to the ends of the earth". He further indicates that Isa. 11:6-9, which pictures unity and peace, meant that "men of different races shall come together in unity and peace, thanks to the name of Christ."²⁴

5. From The Forth Century To The Close of the Patristic Age

²¹William Rader, The Church and Racial Hostility (Germany: Gulde-Druck, 1978)

²²Ibid., 255.

²³Ibid., 22.

²⁴Ibid., 10.

Cyril Of Alexandria (d. 444) linked the Ephesian text to the fulfillment of Christ's prayer for the church in John 17:20, 21. Here he argued that just as there is unity in the diversity of the Trinity, so should there be unity in the diversity of the church.

*Taking the essential unity which the Father has with him, he has with the Father as an image and type of undivided love, harmony and unity of thinking in one spirit, Christ wants us to mingle with one another in some such way--in the power of the holy and consubstantial Trinity. He wants the whole church to be regarded as one body, through the meeting and joining of the two peoples into a union of one complete people, growing up in Christ.*²⁵

The great north African theologian Augustine (354-430) implied that it was the nature of the church to unite groups of people as different from one another as Jews and Gentiles, of whom he considered demonstrated the greatest of all differences. This point was important in his day because of the vast cultural/social gaps between landowners and tenants, town and country dwellers, African and Roman, Punic-speaking and Latin-speaking.

*What was so different as the circumcision and the uncircumcision, having one wall from Judah, the other from the Gentiles? But they are joined together by the cornerstone, for "the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner." There is no corner in a building unless two walls coming from diversity (ex diverso) join in one.*²⁶

6. The Reformation

John Calvin (1509-1564) points out the universal implications of the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles. He writes that all believers have the same spiritual parentage of Abraham through faith. In this the sacraments are not to be limited to any one race or nation but will unite people of all backgrounds.

*There is no one certain nation that God has preferred today in the world ... And baptism and the Lord's Supper are today to unite all the world, because if the most barbarous come, they will be accepted by God; baptism will be bestowed upon them, for it belongs to all those who are united in the body of the only Son of God.*²⁷

Calvin further points out that the Apostle Paul is combating both Gentile and Jewish racial pride, which he says is the enemy of Christian faith, in Ephesians 2:11-22. He emphasizes the fundamental connection between fellowship with God and fellowship between different people groups. Calvin may be thinking about the hostility between the old-line citizens of Geneva and the French Protestant refugees of his day.

*Now put all these things together, and you will form this syllogism: If the Jews want to have peace with God, they must have Christ as mediator. But Christ will not be their peace in any other way than by making one body of them with the Gentiles. Therefore the Jews have no fellowship with God unless they grant fellowship to the Gentiles.*²⁸

Calvin continues to show how people can overcome this pride, whether it be due to racial, social, or religious history:

*Here then is the means to unite us as is required: It is that each one in his estate recognize(s) that it is a poor and miserable condition. And after he shall have attributed everything to the pure grace of God, then he should recognize that it is today scattered through all, and that it is not for us to impose on it law and bound: but inasmuch as he has chosen us we should also accept those whom he has put in our rank and company.*²⁹

7. WTS Lecture Series on Racial Reconciliation

Vern Poythress, Professor Of New Testament Interpretation at Westminster Theological Seminary, in addressing Ephesians 2:14 highlighted the magnitude of the related cultural barriers. He said, "*It (the religious/cultural difference between Jew and Gentile) was the hardest barrier between people in the first century.*" In commenting on how God brings reconciliation between people and Himself and between Jew and Gentile Poythress adds,

Old cultural attachments must die for everyone who is united with Christ. When it says He made the two one, nobody stays the same. Nobody has the luxury of clinging to his old upbringing and old culture....The new man is one new man, not pre-Christian Jew or Gentile. But in the process

²⁵Ibid., 36.

²⁶Ibid., 48.

²⁷Ibid., 86.

²⁸Ibid., 87.

²⁹Ibid., 87.

*Gentiles are not required to become Jews or visa versa. Both retain a good deal of their former cultural identity... this struggle (of cultural and ethnic conflicts) runs throughout the pages of Biblical history.*³⁰

Poythress continues to address the root and remedy of racism today. *"Racism and ethnic tensions are nourished by root sins-- idolatry, love of self and comfort, money, and power. The comfort of my own upbringing from that of those radically different from me. What is the remedy? He has triumphed. He will triumph. God is triumphing. 'He has made the two one.'"*³¹

8. The Evangelical Revival of 1724

Church historian Richard Lovelace reports that in 1724, during what is considered the 'Evangelical Revival,' Count Ludwig Von Zinzendorf of Germany established on his estate a community of refugees including Moravians, Reformed and Catholics. He sought to build this heterogeneous group into an instrument for promoting renewal in the church. Zinzendorf named the community Herrnhut, *"The Lord's Watch"* after Isa 62:1, 6-7 which summed up the longing for renewal and reformation in the Church.³²

However, for three years the settlers quarreled constantly, almost leading to the community's demise. *Zinzendorf's response was to set up the famous round-the-clock prayer watch in which Moravians prayed for the revival of the church for one hundred years. In August 1727, the community experienced a "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" climaxing in a communion service. From that point on unity prevailed. Within the larger community Zinzendorf organized smaller cells, the prayer bands, in which lay people were encouraged to confess their faults to one another, counsel together and support each other in prayer.*³³

From this vital experience of the Herrnhut, Zinzendorf began to send out community missionary teams for evangelism and renewal in the church. This laid the foundation for the evangelical movement as an international, ecumenical coalition for reforming and reviving the church on the basis of Reformation theology.³⁴

While the Herrnhut *"was organized around an urgent concern to revive professing Christendom and to reach the whole planet with the gospel,"* members did more than verbal proclamation. Lovelace continues, *"The patterns of foreign missionary effort ...included both the preaching of the Lamb and initiatives of social and cultural healing. They cared for the sick, established schools and provided for the aged, widows and orphans."* Because of the influence of the Herrnhut, the Evangelical mission movement has rarely lacked social dimensions.³⁵

9. Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) Urban Advocate Of The Poor

Thomas Chalmers was a Scottish minister who was called to the Tron Church of Glasgow. Although tempted to return to his rural environment because of the shocking poverty of the city, he was transformed through his relationships with the poor and remained.³⁶ He created a new parish, St. Johns, out of three existing overgrown ones. Because his parish included 10,000 people within its limits, Chalmers divided it into twenty-five areas of 400 people in each. He appointed an elder and deacon to each area for spiritual oversight and social welfare. He also provided day and Sunday schools for all children.³⁷ Ministry to the poor became the major theme of Chalmers' ministry. He exalted this as the distinguishing trait of the Christian faith: *"Christianity-- the proudest of her recorded distinctions is that she is the religion of the poor"*.³⁸ He gathered various officers who were sympathetic to this call and began to clarify a ministry vision that made the

³⁰Vern Poythress, Lessons from the N.T.; Lessons from the O.T., lecture presented as part of the "Racial Tensions Racial Reconciliation" at the Second Annual Conference on Contemporary Issues, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA., 9-11 March 1993.

³¹Ibid.

³²Lovelace, Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Revival, 36.

³³Ibid., 37.

³⁴Ibid., 37.

³⁵Ibid., 367.

³⁶Douglas L. Perkins, "Urban Pilgrims and Pioneers: Thomas Chalmers, Urban Advocate of the Poor," Urban Mission, March 1993, 25.

³⁷J.D. Douglas, ed., Dictionary of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 210.

³⁸Perkins, "Urban Pilgrims and Pioneers: Thomas Chalmers, Urban Advocate of the Poor", 26.

interaction between rich and poor Christians a church norm.

*"I know of nothing which would tell more effectively in the way of humanizing our families-- affluent and poor--than if so pure an intercourse were going on: an intercourse of piety between families of reputable station ... and our families of labor and poverty. I know of nothing which would serve more powerfully to bring and to harmonize into one firm system of social order the various classes of our community."*³⁹

Monthly team meetings of twenty-five lay leaders and their spouses met to pray and plan for outreach home visits, which were frequent and personal. From these meetings ministry innovations emerged. Lower and upper-class women who had been sharing sewing skills began to hold home training classes together for children of both socioeconomic classes in the same tenement. Soup kitchens decentralized in their own neighborhoods were also established to reach those untouched by home visits. Where conditions were too great for the leaders and lay people address, Chalmers linked wealthy suburbanites with specific impoverished families.⁴⁰ But Chalmers' social intercourse went beyond the ministry of one class to another. True class interdependence was established as leadership was developed among the poor and as the poor and working class contributed financially to the ministry. This kind of ministry was *"unprecedented in the city of Glasgow."*⁴¹

In this reciprocal fellowship of interdependence, prejudice was being purged. Men and women who recognized in the very poorest of their brethren those high capacities which entitle them to a full and equal place of humanity, and would rejoice in admitting them to the brotherhood of all those privileges which belong to our common nature [in] heaven.

*Distinctions of rank and of fortune are all unknown.*⁴²

Chalmers' dream -- where charity would become solidarity and advocacy -- had become a reality.⁴³

III. Ethnic Realities & Historical Challenges

We have observed from our survey of scripture and church history how the Old Testament leaders, the ministry of Jesus, the instruction and practice of the Apostles, the life of the early church, and the convictions and applications of devoted believers throughout the ages have clearly demonstrated God's covenantal plan to unite alienated people to Himself and to each other in one church. The gospel of Jesus Christ that unites sinners to God unites redeemed sinners into one spiritual family. This spiritual unity of the accomplished work of Christ is to be visibly manifested in the church as a key testimony of His salvation (John 17). The aggressive evangelism of people groups with the accompanying practice of reconciliation in the Body were both preserved and pursued in the Church wherever cultural diversity existed.

This spiritual reality and obligation has always created tension for true followers of God from Jonah to Peter to the modern reformed church. Unity is not uniformity. This oneness in Jesus Christ unites people who are diverse in their histories, lifestyles, worldviews, traditions and values. The gospel challenges all of our natural thoughts, instincts and cultural preferences. But does it mandate that every thought, natural instinct, behavior, or cultural preference be eradicated (Acts 15)? We submit ourselves with every thought and every behavior to the Lordship of Jesus. (2 Cor 10:5-6) The Apostle Paul even leaves room for people to come to different conclusions in regards to various questions of preference, cultural practice and style of living. (Rom. 14) Ultimately according to the Apostle, under the Lordship of Jesus, we will all give an accounting for our lives. Just as the early church had to wrestle with this biblical tension between unity and diversity, so must we in our day.

The following section seeks to address the nature, challenges, and present realities of the predominant cultures that exist in our Potomac Presbytery. If we are able to effectively expand the place of our tents and stretch our curtains wide (Isaiah 54:2) in order to reach and disciple the growing people groups that are streaming and abiding in our region then we can be used by God to reach our nation and world as well for the world has literally come home to us.

Again, the questions we are seeking to answer are:

In an ethnically and social-economically diverse community how should the local church demonstrate faithfulness to Christ? and

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 31.

⁴¹Ibid., 30.

⁴²Ibid, 27.

⁴³Ibid., 35.

What responsibilities do churches have to an ethnically and social-economically diverse region?

1. Anglo American Culture by Craig Garriott

What do the following quotes and statements reveal about Presbyterianism?

“Now there are in American Presbyterianism two distinct streams, both of which many be traced back to the Reformation in the British Isles, and more especially to that in Scotland. As such it constitutes the mainstream of American Presbyterianism as originally represented by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The other, much smaller flows from those Presbyterians dissenting from the established Church of Scotland....”⁴⁴

“The Protestant Reformation came slowly to Scotland...it was not until 1560 that the Scottish Parliament declared Scotland a Reformed nation. This, the first Reformation in Scotland, was from the beginning thoroughly Protestant, Reformed, and Presbyterian.”⁴⁵

“The solemn League and Covenant (1643)..was solemnly ratified by both the Scottish and English Parliaments, by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and by the Westminster Assembly of Divines in England. Indeed, the very purpose of the Westminster Assembly, as convened by the English Parliament, came to be that of defining and securing uniformity of doctrine, worship, and government in the established churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland.”

This can be observed in the heart of the Covenant.

“We shall sincerely, really and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavor, in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the Kingdoms of England and Ireland...and shall endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith....that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴George P. Hutchinson, The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (Cherry Hill N.J.: Mack Publishing Company, 1974),23.

⁴⁵Ibid., 25.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 28.

In reference to the pursuit of the life of purity and ecclesiastical separation it has been said,

“Find a Scotsman.. and you’ll find a Presbyterian church; find two Scotsmen, and you’ll find two Presbyterian churches.”⁴⁷

“Presbyterianism crossed to the New World in the form of Scotch-Irish, Dutch, English, and French Huguenot settlers. In these early days of the late to early 17th century it was the middle colonies who harbored the majority of Presbyterians, while the New England colonies were predominantly Congregational in church government. Francis Mackamie, an Irishman trained in Scotland, is known as the father of organized American Presbyterianism. He was ordained and sent to America by the Irish Presbytery after a call from a Maryland Presbyterian, Colonel William Stevens in 1680. He started several churches on the eastern shore of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia but is most noted for bringing together the first American Presbytery at Philadelphia in 1706. The churches organized in this Presbytery were mainly from Maryland (the first being in Snow Hill, Maryland just west and south of present day Ocean City, Maryland), Delaware and the Philadelphia area. Some of the Puritan churches of New Jersey and what is now New York later joined the Presbytery.”⁴⁸

The Great Awakening in America broke out through the Dutch Reformed preaching of Jacob Frelinghuysen in New Jersey in the 1720’s and continued on through the Presbyterian preaching of Gilbert Tennent, the Congregational Calvinist Jonathan Edwards as well as the revival preaching of George Whitfield.

A key player within the newly formed United States was John Witherspoon a Presbyterian minister and the only clergy to sign the Declaration of Independence. Witherspoon was not only a pastor and statesmen, he was also the president of the College of New Jersey which later became Princeton Seminary. During Witherspoon’s tenure as President from 1768 to 1794 the College had great influence throughout the Presbyterian Church and the newly forming country. The General Assembly of 1789 listed over a quarter of its members as graduates. Eleven percent of the ministerial graduates during Witherspoon’s term either

⁴⁷ J. Barton Payne, What is a Reformed Presbyterian? (Lookout Mountain: Mandate, 1974),10.

⁴⁸ Notes from Chris Garriott’s ordination examination preparation taken from Loetscher, A Brief History of the Presbyterians, (), 60,61.

founded or were presidents of new colleges! In the newly formed Government, "Witherspoon was responsible for the education of six members of the Continental Congress (including James Madison who is attributed with the writing of the Constitution), twenty one United States Senators, thirty nine Congressmen, ten cabinet officers, and twelve state governors".⁴⁹

"The Presbyterian Church in the United States was founded as a separate ecclesiastical entity in 1861. A theological tug-of-war had been going on in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for several decades prior to that date. This struggle included several issues, the most important of which were the nature of the Church and her mission, and the question of slavery.....the Southern gentlemen who founded the Presbyterian Church in America recognized the inevitability of division in the face of irreconcilable differences; and they sought re-alignment as peacefully as possible....Even though the Presbyterian Church in America has expanded far beyond the borders of the Confederacy, it still owes much of its theology and heritage to Southern Presbyterian roots."⁵⁰

As early as 1800 the Reformed Presbytery took the lead among American denominations in decreeing that:

"No slaveholder should be allowed the communion of the church," even at the loss of southern congregations."⁵¹

"The Evangelical Synod has also been concerned with the racial issue as it has come to the fore in American society in the 1960's. In 1966 a committee on racial issues presented a comprehensive statement of Biblical principles on racial questions. It is a strong affirmation of the unity of the human race and the universal offer of the Gospel as prohibitive of racial discrimination in the church of Jesus Christ. Its spirit is expressed in the concluding paragraph: 'We look upon our approach to the Negro, whether Christian or unbeliever, in a spirit of repentance, and we exhort one another to greater obedience to the Great Commission to make disciples, and to Christ's commandment to His disciples of whatever race 'that ye also love one another'" (John 13:34).⁵²

"The PCA is one of the faster growing denominations in the United States, with over 1400 churches and missions throughout the USA and Canada. There are almost 300,000 communicant and non-communicant members as of December 1998.....Now on the threshold of a new millennium, the Presbyterian Church in America continues its commitment to evangelism world-wide and the building up of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁵³

"Some time between the years 2025 and 2055, for the first time in the history of the country, there will be more people of color in the United States than there are white people!"

Truly, the demographic face of North America is changing rapidly. Will the demographic face of our PCA denomination change with it? Will we be His "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)? Jesus not only commissioned us, He went Himself in bold defiance of all the cultural traditions and instructions of His day! (John 4)⁵⁴

The above quotes and statements reveal to us that God in His providence has grown historical Presbyterianism out of the ethnic origins of the British Isles of England, Ireland and especially Scotland. They also reveal that these Anglo-Saxon protestants have been zealous for Biblical truth, were influential in the Great Awakening and the formation of the United States, but were divided in dealing with the institution of slavery and have struggled with living out the value of racial equality. Yet there remains a passion for reaching the nation for Christ and for being aggressive witnesses of the Gospel of grace to the changing face of North America.

Such a calling is a formidable challenge when you consider the demographics of our denomination which reveal that of the 3000 teaching elders (T.E.) in the PCA about 200 T.E. (6.7%) are Korean with 20 T.E. (less than 1%) being African Americans and even far less T.E. for the growing Hispanic population. The hurdle becomes even more formidable when one realizes that whites are now a minority in the nations one hundred largest cities which is certainly the case in our Potomac Presbytery for Washington D.C. and Baltimore.

⁴⁹ Ibid., William K. Seldon, Princeton Theological Seminary, A Narrative History 1812-1992, () 12.

⁵⁰ Frank J. Smith, History of the PCA: Continuing Church (Manassas: Reformation Educational Foundation, 1985), 1,4.

⁵¹ J. Barton Payne, What is a Reformed Presbyterian? (Lookout Mountain: Mandate, 1974),17.

⁵² George P. Hutchinson, The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (Cherry Hill N.J.: Mack Publishing Company, 1974), 398.

⁵³ A Brief History of the Presbyterian Church in America, PCA Website

⁵⁴ Tim McKeown, MNA Multicultural Ministries, PCA Website

In order for the Potomac Presbytery to make significant progress in making disciples among the diverse people groups in our region we must grow in our own ethnic consciousness. Professors Harvie Conn and Mannie Otiz reveal one of the key hurdles that impede this growth. *“Interestingly, as long as we are surrounded by people just like us, we do not think of ourselves as being ethnic.”*⁵⁵ There is a great tendency for those of us from the present dominant culture not to consider ourselves as being an ‘ethnic’. This tendency can be observed in numerous books that explore multicultural education in the US. All the predominant cultures in the US are listed and examined such as African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Native Americans.⁵⁶ Yet they leave out the present majority Anglo or European American culture as though it was not a particular culture. Our Mission to North America committee of the General Assembly has listed two kinds of church planting: Church Planting and Multicultural Church Planting. The Multicultural Church planting part is focused on Korean, Haitian, Brazilian and African American communities while the Church Planting part, unspecified or stated, is focused on Anglo Americans.

It has been established that until we as Anglo Americans start considering ourselves as being connected with a particular ethnic group, our ability to effectively reach other cultures for Christ will be hindered. Robert Terry discovered the benefits of having whites consciously explore the meaning of their own culture then to focus exclusively on minorities. *“I have been encouraged when white groups who have to face their own whiteness move quite rapidly to fresh insight and creative action.”*⁵⁷ The point is the more we as Anglo Americans understand our own culture, its distinctive values, privileges, history (good and bad), and interaction with other cultures the more we will be able to appreciate and extend a welcome to those from culturally diverse and distant backgrounds. The Apostle Paul encourages us in this missional understanding,

Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 1 Corinthians 9:19,20

Rodney Cooper suggests several stages that whites have to go through to advance in the areas of healthy

race relations. Two of these last stages are introspective and integrative stage.

*“During the introspective stage the white person begins to ask the serious question, ‘What is biblical, and what is cultural?.. The white person in this stage no longer denies that he is white; he lessens his defensive attitude and guilt associated with being white....During the integrative awareness stage, a white person has a solid racial/cultural identity. He begins to truly affirm that part of his culture that is nonexploiting and character building. He no longer denies personal responsibility for perpetuating racism and is not immobilized by guilt. He has an increased awareness of how the ‘system’ works and how it affects race relations, an increased appreciation for cultural diversity (different is just different- not inferior or superior), and a solid commitment toward the eradication of racism.”*⁵⁸

The facts are the PCA and the Potomac Presbytery is predominantly made up of Anglo Americans and is culturally Anglo. God made us Anglo Americans. We can be grateful that God has given us a rich heritage in so many ways. Yet there are other ways we have been taken captive by the world in how we have either mistreated, neglected, or avoided image bearers of culturally different people. As the present majority culture in the PCA, the onus is on us to understand these realities, demonstrate faithfulness and apply the reconciling work of Christ to our culturally diverse communities while resting on the grace of God.

2. African Church Experience By Stan Long

Though obviously providential, the emergence and continuing presence of what we call the African American church is an indictment against the American church at large. It has often been stated that Sunday morning at 11:00am is the most segregated hour of the week. We will later address the myth that there is an American melting pot where every culture is allowed to come, mix, be accepted, blend in and become part of that savory cultural soup called America. What follows is a brief overview of the origins and impact of the African American church.

⁵⁵ Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz, Urban Ministry, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001): 321.

⁵⁶ James & Lillian Breckenridge, Multicultural Education in the Church (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995)

Barbara Wilkerson, Multicultural Religious Education (Birmingham: Religious Education Press, 1997)

⁵⁷ Robert Terry, For Whites Only (Michigan: W.M.B. Eerdmans, 1977) VII.

⁵⁸ Rodney L. Cooper, We Stand Together: Reconciling Men Of Different Color (Chicago, Moody, 1995),141,142.

The European slave trade brought Africans to this nation to be used as chattel. The American economy was built upon the blood, sweat and tears of these oppressed individuals. An amazing by-product of the presence of African Americans in the nation was that they heard the true message of Jesus and savingly embraced God's Suffering Servant. Allowed to gather as slaves, often under white supervision, biblical verses regulating slave behavior were continually preached to the unlearned labor force. Slave songs, however, revealed that these slaves understood that God was a liberating God, who expected his creatures to treat one another with a certain measure of human dignity.

*Go down Moses, way down in Egypt-land.
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.*

*Heaven, heaven,
Everybody talkin' bout heaven ain't goin' there...*

Amazingly solid leadership emerged from the Negro church community among both uneducated but 'annointed' southern slaves and trained free blacks in the north. For example:

"In 1773, Rev. George Liele became one of the first American missionaries overseas. Rev. Liele, a freed slave and Baptist pastor, joined a British merchant going to Jamaica. In 1784, Liele planted the first Baptist church in that country. He planted a church of 3000 and founded the Jamaican missionary society. In 1782 David George pastored the first black Baptist church in America. He also preached in Nova Scotia. In 1792, Rev. George was recruited to settle in Sierra Leone and organize a Baptist church."⁵⁹

Some African American slaves sat under the preaching of white preachers. With some notable exceptions, white clergy were primarily prophets for the status quo on race matters. Social myths of the inherent inferiority of the slave population were endorsed by the scholars of the day. (See appendix for discussion of the Ham and Babel controversies.) Whites in the north often allowed free Negroes to worship under the same roof. Unfortunately the church balcony was reserved for Negro worshippers. It was in that kind of context in Philadelphia in 1787 that a protest of Methodists, led by Absalom Jones and Richard Allen gave birth to the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Tragically attempts for equality within Christ's church failed and parallel branches of the church emerged.

In the pre-civil war days there were movements to develop separate churches. It became evident that the same lack of equality experienced 6 days a week would

carry over into Sundays, despite the clear biblical mandate against oppression and prejudice (Eph.6:9, James 2:1-13). Post Civil War America witnessed the emergence of social and religious movements which expressed black pride, black unity and a sense of mission and calling to reach the masses in the name of Jesus. Despite the separate but equal Jim Crow laws in the south the African American church grew. The field songs evolved into the Negro spirituals. From these roots flowed two significant musical modes. A brand of rural music known as "the blues" expressed the pain, despair and hopelessness that comes from oppression. But then there were the more sanctified rhythms simply known as 'gospel' which expressed hope in the midst of oppression.

In the 20th century the formal, indigenous African American church emerged as the most significant black organization in black communities. While white religious bodies were wrestling over the great theological issues of the day, African American congregations were addressing the practical survival needs of their communities. Thus a theology of justice emerged which addressed the practicalities of living in an oppressive culture. Out of that theology of justice came the Civil Rights movement which was the fruit of the African American church. There were marches, demonstrations and sit-ins in towns big and small. These were often coordinated and led by African American church leaders seeking to address an oppressive nation which spoke words of equality, but showed very little desire to make equality a reality.

Because of the absence of social justice in conservative theological thought, the Civil Rights movement was embraced by the white liberal church in America which also were the first to open their seminaries to African Americans. Theologically conservative Bible schools and seminaries finally opened their doors to all peoples in the last third of the twentieth century. As more African Americans reaped the benefits of educational opportunities, we are now seeing a new brand of African American church emerge. We see more and more churches which seek to maintain the richness of African American tradition while embracing classical theological truths and categories which were never afforded the luxury to be the primary concerns because of the African American experience in America.

We also now see an African American Church which has more connection with the broader evangelical church through the sharing of common media and literature. For example, nationally renowned Black preachers such as Tony Evans and E.V. Hill may be as popular among white evangelicals as they are in the

⁵⁹ Clarence Shuler, Winning the Race to Unity-Is Racial Reconciliation Really Working? (Moody Press 1998) p.70

African American church. Another interesting phenomena is the fact that the Pentecostal and Charismatic wings of the church appear to be able to unite more easily. This may be due to the common heritage they share. What should be quite interesting to those of us in the Reformed camp is that the leaders of the Azusa Street revivals in the early 1900's were leaders from different races. However, their common understanding of doctrine, and experience could not even keep them from major racial schism. In recent years, the offspring of Azusa have reunited and we therefore are beginning to see many Charismatic and Pentecostal churches who, with a common view of doctrine and worship, are breaking through racial and social barriers.⁶⁰ Since we in the reformed community claim to have a proper theology of worship, of salvation, of the church, why don't we see similar expressions of cooperation and unity among us? It is time that we address this issue so that the honor of Christ and the witness of Christ in the world not be blemished.

With slavery as such a central dynamic in social relationships in our land, how could there develop this phenomena called the Black Church in America? Indeed the emergence and survival of the Black church is an expression of the supernatural power of our sovereign God. People from Africa, worshippers of their ancestors, and kidnapped to a strange nation, ultimately worshipped the God proclaimed by their oppressors. Only our God could produce this! Borrowed elements of African religious experience combined with the great doctrines of the Bible produced this uniquely incredible thing known as the African American Christian experience. Joseph in Genesis looked back and saw that God sovereignly used suffering to redeem and deliver his people. African American believers can also look back and declare with Joseph that *"you intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Gen 50:20)"*

3. African Americans & Presbyterians by Stan Long

We must admit that there is very little to report in a positive way about the relationship between American Presbyterians and the African American community. Since the civil war, African Americans have tended to be comfortable in Baptist, Methodist and 'Sanctified' (Pentecostal) circles. Baptist and Methodist churches embraced more easily the freer worship style and the social agenda. Among Presbyterians the social agenda of African American community was, sad to say,

embraced by the liberal wing of American Presbyterianism.

Rather than speak against oppression Presbyterianism adopted the values of the nation. Notice the following episode reported by Ralph Bell of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association who states,

*"Some ministers of Presbyterian churches in Prince Edward County, Virginia, for example, bought two slave women in 1767. The women and their descendents were hired out and the money was appropriated to the payment of the salary of the common pastor. This arrangement continued on for 68 years, by which time, the two women had increased to 70 people. By 1835, 70 slaves were bought and sold and the money reinvested."*⁶¹

Religious historian Winthrop Hudson writes about the post civil war changes in black church life,

*It is scarcely surprising that the defeat of the South should have been accompanied by the withdrawal of most Negroes from the churches of their former masters. For one thing the mere act was a symbolic expression of their new freedom. Furthermore, few congregations were prepared to give the Negro any different status than he had as a slave...Negro Episcopalians and Presbyterians defected in large numbers. The Episcopalians made no effort to form them into a separate church, while the Presbyterians waited until 1898 to transfer its Negro remnants in a new Afro-American Presbyterian Church. The smaller Cumberland Presbyterians acted more expeditiously, organizing the Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church as a separate body in 1874.*⁶²

The Presbyterian Church with its educated urban and frontier revivalists flavors did not know how to effectively embrace the African American community. Apparently they chose the solution that other denominations chose which was to set up these parallel African-American movements. A world missions thrust to evangelize Africans which emerged after emancipation included Presbyterians. In 1890 Willie Shepherd went to the Congo with medical aid and eventually became the first black leader of the African Presbyterian Mission.⁶³

During the 20th century conservative Presbyterians, as did much of the evangelical church, failed to embrace the civil rights struggle of African American people. Thus in the eyes of most African Americans, evangelicals were part of the problem rather than part

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Farrell ed., *The Dream Is Alive*, Scottsdale, The Katalasso Group, 1999

⁶¹ Ralph S. Bell, *Soul Free*, Denver, Accent Books 1975 pp.13-14

⁶² Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion In America*, New York, Scribner's Sons, 1981 p.226

⁶³ Clarence Shuler, *Winning the Race to Unity-Is Racial Reconciliation Really Working?* (Moody Press 1998) p.72

of the solution. This sad truth must be faced. Other than with a few exceptions, such as the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod with its history of disciplining the owners of slaves, the Presbyterian and Reformed churches were silent when they should have been prophetic.

Dr. Edmond Clowney, in a lecture on Urban Theology at Westminster Seminary,⁶⁴ mentioned that during the early 1970s some Presbyterian churches in the south discouraged blacks from worshipping with them through the function of men who were called "Guard Of Arms." These men would stand at the church door to turn away black visitors. While there are no longer overt reports of this, the attitude of "wouldn't you feel more comfortable in a church with your own kind" still exists.

The PCUSA, has come to understand this historic rift and the need to intentionally embrace African Americans. An article in the Washington Times (1999) reported that the Presbyterian Church (USA) had successfully developed a contextualized congregation in the Atlanta area, the First African Presbyterian Church of Atlanta. The Atlanta church sought to "fuse European Calvinism and the African American Experience. Worshippers in bright African garb fill the pews and African readings come from the pulpit amid Pentecostal worship." The Capital Union Presbytery, according to the Times, was considering putting \$1,000,000 behind a similar work. We may not agree with their analysis of the problem or even with their solution completely, but we in the PCA must agree that there is a big problem and we need to seek biblically accurate and culturally relevant ways to build these bridges and address this problem.

4. History of Asian-American Immigration by James A. Lee

Even though the Native Americans who populated the Americas came from Asia some 20,000 years ago, the earliest modern Asian immigration began only in the middle of the nineteenth century. Although there were Asians in America from the early nineteenth century as

diplomats and students, it was the Chinese in the middle of the nineteenth century who immigrated en masse to work as laborers for the railroad construction. By the 1880's, however, anti-Chinese sentiment was rampant and as a result, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed by the Congress to effectively halt Asian immigration which was renewed and modified several times throughout the following 80 years until its repeal in 1965.

The first wave of Chinese immigrants has been thoroughly assimilated as is the case for the Japanese who arrived in Hawaii as sugarcane workers in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Some estimate that the Nissei and Sansei Japanese intermarriage rate in California is up to 90 percent⁶⁵. However, the new immigrants who arrived after 1965 tend not to assimilate as thoroughly as the earlier arrivals, perhaps due to the larger number of immigrants and their close contact with their mother cultures through the telephone, television, books, newspapers, videos, and now the Internet.⁶⁶ Presently, there are about 10 million Asian-Americans and they are heavily concentrated in metropolitan areas throughout North America, especially in Hawaii, California, and New York. Census Bureau estimates that in the year 2050, out of the projected US, population of 400 million, about 10 percent or 40 million will be Asians.⁶⁷

As far as the Christian communities among Asian-Americans are concerned, Koreans are the largest with about 3,000 churches.⁶⁸ The Chinese-Americans are the next largest with several hundred churches. The Japanese-American and other Asian-American Christians are a very small minority within the Asian-American Christian community. Some estimate that up to 77 percent of Koreans in the US are churched compared to only 30 percent among Koreans in South Korea.⁶⁹ This probably makes this particular group one of the highest churched immigrant groups in American history. However, according to some estimates, 90 percent of post-college Korean-Americans no longer

⁶⁴Edmond Clowney, "Urban Theology," Lecture presented at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia

⁶⁵ The second generation Japanese-Americans are called Nissei and the third generation Sansei.

⁶⁶ Most Asian immigrants have arrived only in the last 25 years in the 1970's, 80's, and 90's. Now, the oldest members of the second generation are in their 20's and 30's and many of them are bilingual and have decided to stay both Asian and American instead of being drawn into the American Anglo-melting pot.

⁶⁷ Harvie M. Conn, *The American City and the Evangelical Church; A Historical Overview* (Baker, 1994), 130-131. The exact figure is

obtained from the US Census Bureau's Internet website:

www.census.gov/population/projections/nation/nsrh/nprh3550.txt.

⁶⁸ Korean Church Directory of North America (The Korean Christian Press, 1997).

⁶⁹ Harvie M. Conn, *The American City and the Evangelical Church; A Historical Overview* (Baker Books, 1994), 195, citing Yong-soo Hyun, *The Relationship Between Cultural Assimilation Models, Religiosity, and Spiritual Well-Being Among Korean-American College Students and Young Adults in Korean Churches in Southern California*, Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Biola University, LaMirada, Calif., 1990,.1.

attend church.⁷⁰ Unless this trend is reversed very soon, the English-speaking Korean-Americans as well as the rest of English-speaking Asian-Americans will become one of the most unreached people groups in the United States.⁷¹

5. PCA and the Korean-American Church by James A. Lee

Korean churches have always been a part of the PCA since its inception in 1973. In fact, the Koreans are the largest ethnic minority in the denomination. According to Rev. Henry Koh, who is the national coordinator of the MTW's Korean-American Ministries, there are about 150 Korean churches and missions and about 200 ministers and candidates in the PCA.⁷² That is roughly about 10% of the PCA churches and ministers. The largest PCA church is the Korean Central Presbyterian Church located in Vienna, Virginia with about 3,000 Sunday worshippers.⁷³

One of the unique things that the PCA has implemented with regard to the minorities, within its denomination is the formation of seven self-governing Korean-language presbyteries. Until recently, the Korean-language presbyteries had to renew their status every few years, but now they have become permanent presbyteries. (This reflects a shift in the PCA's policy towards minorities). Instead of advocating total assimilation into the Anglo presbyteries, the PCA has realized that the Korean-speaking churches need their own presbyteries in which the elders can take active part in the life of the church instead of being just passive spectators. Unfortunately for other minorities in the PCA, due to the low number of their churches, not many of them can form their own language presbyteries.

⁷⁰ R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner, *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration* (Temple University Press, 1998), 300.

⁷¹ Aside from a small number of assimilated Koreans who attend Anglo churches and bilinguals who attend Korean churches, many English-speaking Koreans, due to their double alienation from the mainstream America and the Korean-speaking community in the US, do not feel at home in either Anglo or Korean-speaking churches. A new strategy must be implemented to plant English-speaking ethnic churches to reach them with the gospel. This need, of course, is also true among other English-speaking Asian Americans.

⁷² In North America, there are about 3,000 Korean churches. Roughly about 60 percent are Presbyterian. The largest independent Korean-American denomination is the Korean-American Presbyterian Church (KAPC) which has about 300 churches. The next is the Korean Presbyterian Church in American (KPCA) which has about 250 churches. Hundreds of

Having Korean-language presbyteries benefits both the Anglo and Korean PCA churches. First of all, the Koreans feel that they are an integral part of the predominantly white denomination. They can take ownership of their own community and play a significant role in the wider denominational scene. Second, many Korean PCA churches with both the Korean-speaking mother congregation and the English-speaking daughter congregation can stay together in the PCA; one belonging to a Korean-language presbytery and the other Anglo. On the other hand, PCUSA does not have Korean-language presbyteries on a national scale. This is one of the reasons why the number of Korean churches in a denomination that is ten-times the size of the PCA has roughly about the same number of Korean churches as in the PCA. Third, this policy toward autonomy for Korean churches in the PCA promotes cultural and linguistic sensitivities on the part of the Anglo churches and at the same time gives a positive impression to the PCA Korean churches that the Anglo brothers are trying hard to accommodate minority churches.

Now, the next most pressing question is whether the PCA can deal prudently with the English-speaking Korean-American congregations and churches. Many in the PCA think that if English is spoken by the minorities, they can somehow join the mainstream and be assimilated. However, many English-speaking Korean-Americans don't feel that way. Many English-speaking Korean-Americans feel that culture and ethnicity are as important as language. Whether the PCA can retain a large number of English-speaking Korean-American churches or not depends on how the leadership deals wisely with not only the Korean-speaking churches but also with the growing number of English-speaking Korean PCA churches.⁷⁴

additional Korean-American churches belong to a dozen or so minor Presbyterian denominations either in America or Korea. Remaining Presbyterian churches are independent which is an oxymoron. Furthermore, PC (USA) has about 200 Korean churches. Among the non-Presbyterian denominations, the Southern Baptist Convention has about 400 Korean churches and the United Methodist about 300.

⁷³This figures includes the children and the English-speaking congregation.

⁷⁴The largest English-speaking PCA church is the independent Covenant Fellowship Church (mission) with about 600 Sunday worshippers. The Korean Central Presbyterian Church, English-speaking Congregation has about 300 worshippers on Sunday. The English-speaking congregation has its own temporary session with elder-supply from the mother

6. Hispanic Growth – “The Sleeping Giant”

By Craig Garriott

“Hispanics are the fastest-growing ethnic population in the United States - increasing almost four times as fast as the rest of the population. (2000 census reveals that the Hispanic population has surpassed projections and has spurred to 35.3 million making them the nations most populous minority group.) They comprise people whose ancestries range from pure Spanish to mixtures that include Native American, African, German, Italian, and other European cultures, U.S. News and World Report said. Most speak Spanish, but many speak only English. There is no all-encompassing Hispanic subculture, but rather a mixture of some 17 dominant subcultures, the report said. Most people think of Hispanics as Catholic, but a growing number are Protestant. Of the more than 27 million Hispanics in the United States, 6.2 million are Protestant.

The National Alliance of Evangelical Ministries, or AMEN, promotes unity among diverse Latino subcultures and develops leaders, director Jesse Miranda told Religion Today. AMEN's ultimate goal is to unify the church as a whole, Miranda said. “We envision the unity of the Spirit among all believers, and to do that we must see unity among ourselves first,” he said.

More leaders are needed to evangelize Hispanic communities. Hispanics need better teaching materials and opportunities for higher education. “Hispanic churchgoers don’t have the same opportunities and materials that Anglos have” because they are poor and may not read English well, Miranda said. Few publishing companies produce study materials in Spanish and none are as good as English materials. Sunday school teachers are not well trained and only about 2% of seminary students are Hispanic.

Hispanic evangelicals “feel they are on the outside looking in,” Miranda said, “because the mainstream church does not embrace Hispanic immigrants.” Because of their darker skin, Hispanics don’t assimilate as easily as earlier European immigrants. They have maintained a separate language and culture, making it more difficult for mainstream churches to minister in their neighborhoods and include Hispanics in services,

church and also is financially self-sufficient with the budget of \$350,000 in the FY2K.

⁷⁵ Evangelical Hispanics Seek Unity, Impact, PCANEWS.COM Web Magazine For The PCA, February 9,2001

he said.

Increased Hispanic immigration could be a sovereign move of God to bring revival to the United States, Miranda said. Churches that reach out to Hispanics are blessed by their lively worship style and an infectious enthusiasm that enlivens the “stale and over-religious services in the average church,” he said. Because many live in poverty they have a greater need of God than others and “may be closer to Him.”

Hispanics want more than just a token participation in churches. An integrated church will reflect Spanish culture in its services and include Hispanic leaders, Miranda said. “It’s more than just cosmetic changes and all being under one roof.” Such churches are likely to attract young Hispanic professionals who are looking for a deeper spirituality and are leaving other churches, he said.⁷⁵

7. The American “Melting Pot” Experiment by Stan Long

The Statue of Liberty rises above the New York shoreline as a symbol to the world, “*Send me your tired your poor, your huddled masses.*” On nearby Ellis Island sits a museum reminding all that, between the years of 1892 and 1924, 17 million immigrants left their homeland for these shores to pursue a better life for themselves and their children. The American story is the story of the “*Melting Pot*” emphasizing equality of opportunity for all people. Yet the statue and the museum are also a reminder that not all ethnic groups share this common immigrant heritage and therefore not all are able to assimilate equally. Thom Hopley addresses this reality by writing:

The melting pot is real; it is just not what we normally think it is. It is not an even mixture of all peoples and ideas. It is unbalanced, biased. Those who want to melt, will have to accept a culture dominated by Northern European Protestants. The further down the scale they are, the harder and longer it will be to melt.

⁷⁶

“*Non-volunteer immigrants*” immigrants include Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans. Native Americans were the victims of a cultural philosophy which became known as manifest destiny. The prejudice of mainstream citizens of America pushed Native Americans westward and finally onto

⁷⁶ Thomas Hopley, *A World of Difference - Following Christ beyond Your Cultural Walls*, Downers Grove, Inter Varsity Press, 1981. p.165

isolated reservations. Puerto Ricans became citizens after the 1898 Spanish American War. African Americans are a victim of a different sort. Kidnapped and dragged across the Atlantic, stripped of family, dignity and honor, even after 140 years since the Emancipation Proclamation there are still serious questions about the ability or desire of African Americans to fully assimilate into the American culture.

We will never understand the present condition of the African American community without understanding the sad history of American slavery. African American scholar Lerone Bennett declares that,

*...the European slave trade-which began in 1444 and continued for more than 400 years. During this period Africa lost an estimated 40 million people. Some 20 million people to the New World. Millions more died in Africa during and after their capture or on the ships or plantations.*⁷⁷

Slavery was and is nothing new. It predates even the biblical events recorded in Exodus. But oppression based on simply skin color and in the manner as was done in the American slave experiment was very rare. From the beginning of our nation there have been constant problems with racial and ethnic tensions. The European settlers of our land in the 16th century lived in a world much different than ours. Their world view assumed that certain people were to serve other people. Sadly, our Mid-Atlantic region, according to Bennett was a leader in the solidification of race-based slavery:

*Virginia and Maryland led the way in the 1660's. (In these states) laws made Negroes servants for life; intermarriage was forbidden; children born of a Negro women were ruled bond or free, according to the status of the mother.*⁷⁸

But why would African slaves embrace the religion of the oppressor? Carl Ellis says that: When the gospel is applied to a particular culture, the result is CHRISTIANITY. CHRISTIANITY-ISM, on the other hand, is a Christianity that has been polluted by the paganisms of its culture.⁷⁹

These comments come as an analysis of a strikingly bold statement by the famous 19th century Maryland abolitionist Frederick Douglass:

"Between the Christianity of this land and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible

*difference-so wide, that to receive the one as good, pure and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt and wicked. I love the pure, peaceable and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, woman-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land.*⁸⁰

The Abolitionist movement of the 18th century was a coalition of people, preachers black and white, men and women, northern and southern, who voiced the belief that American slavery was an evil institution and had to be eradicated. William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglas, Henry Beecher and Richard Garnett (free black Presbyterian from Maryland) were major writers and orators.

Elijah Lovejoy was a Presbyterian minister who sought to be part of the pure Christianity in the early 1800's. He used his skills in writing to publish and promote opinions against slavery. He was kicked out of St. Louis for his editorial views so he opened up his own print and publication shop. However several times mobs came and destroyed his presses while the civil authorities did nothing to stop them. On one of those near death occasions in Alton, Illinois he said, *"If civil authorities refuse to protect me, I must look to God; and if I die, I have determined to make my grave in Alton. I have sworn eternal opposition to slavery, and by the blessings of God I will never turn back. With God I cheerfully rest my cause. I can die at my post but I cannot desert it."* Soon afterward a single hate filled bullet took his life. John Quincy Adams described Elijah Lovejoy as the *"first American martyr to the freedom of the press."*⁸¹

From the civil war to 1877 Negroes in America were in a unique position. They were the majority of the population in many southern states and able to vote. Farming was the main skill of this uneducated labor force. In many states, political power shifted and uneducated negroes were actually placed in political office. With a growing awareness that progress would only come as the Negro became educated many educational institutions were birthed, often with the aid of whites.⁸²

But a backlash quickly occurred. In 1866 in Pulaski, Tennessee a new organization was birthed known popularly as the Knights of the Klu Klux Klan (KKK)

⁷⁷ Lerone Bennett, Jr. Before the Mayflower-A History of the Negro in America 1619-1964 (revised edition) New York, Penguin books, 1976, p 30

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.37

⁷⁹ Carl F. Ellis, Project Joseph: Muslim Awareness Seminar Notebook, Chatanooga, 1995 Chapter, p.

⁸⁰Carl F. Ellis, Project Joseph: Muslim Awareness Seminar Notebook, Chatanooga, 1995 Chapter, p.

⁸¹ Max L. Christensen, Turning Points: Stories of people who made a difference. Kentucky, John Knox Press p.45,46

⁸² Lerone Bennett, Jr. Before the Mayflower-A History of the Negro in America 1619-1964 (revised edition) New York, Penguin books, 1976, chapter 8, Black Power in Dixie, p.183ff

spreading hatred, fear and seeking to proclaim white supremacy. The burnt cross which was used in intimidate African American citizens reminds us that the Klan had (and has) a particular "christian theology" which Ellis would say is part of the culturally bound "Christianity-ism." The political Compromise of 1877 returned power in the South back to the former slave holders. Separate but equal, "Jim Crow" laws were established and solidified.

How did many African-Americans interpret their experience? Carl Ellis writes:

*In the antebellum south where slavery was king, the theological paradigm was the exodus. The slaves identifies with the children of Israel in Egyptian bondage and saw the hand of God at work in terms of their hope in deliverance from slavery. The theology addressed the issues of survival, refuge and resistance to oppression. In the antebellum north where slavery had died out, the theological paradigm was the "exile." The freedman saw the hand of God at work in terms of a special calling they sensed to bring the gospel of Christ to the rest of the African diaspora (people of African descent living in the South, Canada, the Caribbean and Africa). Had it fully developed, this would have been a theology addressing the issues of dignity, African identity, and the global significance of the African-American experience in the economy of God.*⁸³

The early 20th century saw the apex of Klan activity amidst the sharecropping system of the South and waves of new immigrants from around the world. By the latter half of the 20th century a movement of liberation emerged from the church and led by the clergy.

Civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the historic March on Washington in August of 1963 articulated the vision for a nation that lived up to its religiously grounded national creeds and declarations. The night before he was assassinated in Memphis in April 1968, identifying with Moses, he declared that he had seen the promised land, but knew he might never get there. The sad reality is that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had to rally Jews, Catholics, liberal protestant clergy, atheists and communists to do that which the true Church of Jesus Christ should have been doing all along: modeling and proclaiming reconciliation and justice in the land.

Dr. John MacArthur, internationally famous pastor and evangelical Bible teacher, shares the following story regarding southern evangelicalism in the 60's:

*"...the pastor of a prosperous white church in a southern town became burdened for the community at large. The black janitor of his church was a gracious and obedient Christian, and the two men began a weekly Bible Study and prayer time together. After a few months the church board approached the pastor and told him he had to stop having fellowship with "that man" because it was bad for the church's image. When he told them he could not do that because he felt fellowshiping with and ministering to him was the Lord's will, virtually no store in town would do business with him. He could not buy clothes, gas, or even groceries. Before long he had a nervous breakdown and was taken to the psychiatric ward of a hospital in a nearby large city, where on the second day he dived out of the window and killed himself."*⁸⁴

In our own day, Dr. John Perkins continues to be a man who is a champion for reconciliation and justice within the evangelical world. His testimony includes learning how forgive white racist policemen who beat him and left him for dead to intimidate him from working for justice. He reminds us of the evangelical silence during the days of the civil rights movement and calls us to truly live out our biblical theology.

In America there has historically been a divided nation and a divided church. As we enter the 21st century the challenge we face in the PCA is whether we will continue in this division or whether we will begin to address the need for the Body of Christ to reflect the vision of the biblical writers.

IV. CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

1. Homogeneous Unit Principle And Tensions -

By Craig Garriott

The predominant theology that has guided church planting and church growth in the United States in the last half of the 20th Century has been the Homogenous Unit Principle (HUP). The principle was originally formulated by Donald MacGavern, missionary to India and founder of the School of World Mission of Fuller Theological Seminary. In his classic work, *The Bridges of God*, which launched the Church Growth Movement, he summons missionaries to utilize the bridges of family and kinship ties within each people group thereby

⁸³ Carl F. Ellis, *Project Joseph: Muslim Awareness Seminar Notebook*, Chatanooga, 1995 chapter 5, p.12

⁸⁴ Dr. John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentaries-Ephesians*, Chicago, Moody, 1986,p.67

prompting 'people movements' to Christ.¹ Such missionaries will concentrate on one people, one caste, one tribe, one segment of society.⁸⁵ This is in contrast to the slow growth of the "Mission Station Approach" made up of conglomerate congregations which are comprised of various individual believers who have become alienated from their families and cultures. This church growth principle was later popularized by Peter Wagner in *Our Kind Of People* where he claims that the weight of cumulative data supports the homogeneous unit approach for the development of Christian churches. He says;

*"Disciples are more readily made by people within their own homogeneous unit, and congregations develop into healthy communities when they concentrate on only one kind of people....men like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic and class barriers."*⁸⁶

The 15,000 plus attender Saddleback Valley Community Church in Orange County, California led by Pastor Rick Warren is a church that would support Wagner's claim. Warren was dramatically impacted by McGavran's philosophy of church growth and the application of the HUP has become a key factor in Saddleback's growth. In reference to Jesus ministering principally to the Jews and not to the Canaanites or Samaritans (Matt. 15:22-28; 10:5-6) Warren said, "Jesus targeted his ministry in order to be effective, not to be exclusive."⁸⁷

However, there has risen a significant controversy over the legitimacy of the HUP and its applications. Many would claim that 'effective' church growth principles have often superceded 'Biblical' church growth principles. In 1984 the Asian Theological Association and Evangelical Fellowship of India Theological Commission met in Bangalore and came up with a ten point Declaration On Caste and The Church in which they jointly expressed their concern for the eradication of the evil caste system.

*"We confess and repent that on occasions and places we have permitted the evils of caste to influence the Church and to mar the beauty and unity of the body of Christ....that wherever the evil of caste system has permeated the church's worship and witness we see corrective measures in the light of biblical teaching through the empowering of the Holy Spirit."*⁸⁸

¹ Donald McGavran, *The Bridges of God: A study in the strategy of missions.* (New York: Freindship, 1955)

⁸⁵ Donald McGavran, *A Church in Every People: Plain Talk About A Difficult Subject.* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981) Perspectives on the world Christian movement: a reader. 622

⁸⁶ Peter Wagner, *Our Kind Of People,* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), 4, 147.

C. Rene Padilla General Secretary of the Latin America Theological Fraternity declares that the homogeneous unity principle for church growth has no biblical foundation. "Its advocates have taken as their starting point a sociological observation and developed a missionary strategy.." Padilla claims that, "Throughout the entire New Testament the oneness of the people of God as a oneness that transcends all outward distinctions is taken for granted. The thought is that with the coming of Jesus Christ all the barriers that divide humankind have been broken down and a new humanity is now taking shape in and through the church."⁸⁹ John M. Perkins, founder of the Christian Community Development Association declares that a gospel that doesn't reconcile is a powerless gospel. "We have learned to reproduce the church without the message. It is no longer a message that transforms... The church-growth philosophy of homogeneity is a heresy that... has sacrificed principle for expediency."⁹⁰

These competing theologies would not be an issue if the Potomac Presbytery were culturally homogeneous. But our cultural diversity forces us to address the question of what our theology and practice is and should be. Everyone agrees that the scriptures elevate our call to aggressively evangelize, establish churches and disciple people into churches. Everyone agrees that the church needs to promote and protect the unity of the Body. Yet when there exists cultural diversity within our Jerusalem we are faced with the tension of how we marry evangelism and unity. In essence the question addresses the nature of our discipleship and how we "make-disciples of all nations" in our region.

This present church debate revolves around degrees of unity and timing. The Homogeneous Unit Principle sector focuses on the 'not yet' timing of the kingdom of God. A response would sound something like this:

Someday God will unite His people into a united fellowship but His agenda now is to redeem people within their specific cultures. Seeking the unity of the body is satisfied when Christians experience authentic fellowship within their own culture, send out missionaries to reach other

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 158

⁸⁸ "Declaration ON Caste and The Church" (Transformation: April June 1985, vol 2) 1

⁸⁹ Renee C. Padilla, *Missions Between The Times: Essays On The Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 142.

⁹⁰ Tapia, Andres. *The Myth of Racial Progress.* (Christianity Today October 1993) 8.

cultures and occasionally experience some cross-cultural fellowship.

Those who advocate an inclusive, reconciled church across the racial and socio-economic divides emphasize the 'already' present kingdom of God on earth.

The Church is responsible not only to reach out and reconcile people to God but also to apply Christ's reconciling ministry between people from alienated cultures. The power of the Gospel and authentic Christian fellowship is witnessed in the regular communion of enemies who have become friends.

This tension and challenge has been evident in the PCA. In the Twelfth General Assembly of 1984, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the Committee on Mission To North America reported that it had committed itself to giving greater priority to ethnic ministries. It acknowledged that, *"The difficulties in the way of our achieving a better representation of the ethnic catholicity of the body of Christ are formidable-- not the least of which is our own ethnicity and cultural isolation as a denomination."*⁹¹

The challenge continues to present itself to the church. How do we aggressively seek to win the lost from the diverse cultures in our regions and disciple them into the church while making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit?

2. Another Perspective on the Homogeneous Unit Principle by Kevin Smith

When God chose Abram He made him a promise that would encompass the world and history, *"all the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you."* That promised blessing is realized in our Lord Jesus Christ. For in Christ, salvation leaves the confines of Israel and is preached to the entire world. People groups from all nations and lands are responding to the effectual call of the Gospel. God never intended for salvation to only be a Jewish phenomenon. He could never be satisfied with just one segment of His image. All people bear His image and thus all people groups will experience His regenerating love. And therefore *"the earth will be filled with the knowledge of glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."*(Hab. 2:14 KJV) It is said of the Lamb in Revelation 5 that He *"purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."* He does this because all of these people groups bear the

sin-marred image of God. God's glory was assaulted in the Fall. His image rebelled against Him! Nothing that represents Him can be allowed to be unholy. And He will not rest until His honor is satisfied. He is bringing His image back to its rightful complexion. We are lovingly saved for His glory. Therefore the universal church is made up of people from all races and cultures. God's image is being renewed throughout the earth. Not all are saved, but that is to demonstrate His justice. The marring of the image of God in rebellion deserves punishment.

But does the fact that God is saving men from all people groups tell us definitely what our individual congregations should look like? Surely it tells us that the Gospel message is powerful and can save anyone. And should be preached to everyone. It would definitely be a great sin to withhold the Gospel message from a person because of his race or culture. It would seem to me that if we are serious about the Gospel reaching every people group in every nation, then we will have to be intentional about how we go about it. God is sovereign and ultimately the make up of any congregation is in His hands, but He also uses means to accomplish His ends. If the end is the renewal of His image throughout the nations of our world for His glory, then the ends would seem to point to a church that is targeting these people groups (without withholding the message from any other group) in their presentation of this glorious message. The ultimate end is the nations *will* be represented around the throne of God, but in the earth we may worship in separate congregations until then. But we must be diligent to make sure that our various congregations are not caused by racial or ethnic hatred between us. One of the ways to demonstrate unity is via a connectional church structure that fosters joint worship services and ministry opportunities between congregations. Therefore, our Presbyterian structure is the highest form of church government to nurture this unity, but our Presbytery meetings alone fall woefully short of practicing the true unity of the Body of Christ.

3. National Church Movements For Reconciliation

In the last ten years, the American church has been addressing race relations as never before in its history. Despite progress from the civil rights movement, voting rights legislation, and affirmative action programs, the incessant issues of cultural disharmony between blacks, whites and other nationalities, immigration, and the growing gap between the rich and poor classes have forced the Church to respond. The Spirit of God is

⁹¹Commissioner's Handbook for the Twelfth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church In America, (Baton Rouge: 1984), 606.

moving believers across racial, class and denominational lines to pursue reconciliation.

a) The Christian Community Development Association (CCDA)

CCDA, fathered by John Perkins, has grown to over three hundred churches and mission organization in six years. African-American, Anglo, Asian, and Latino workers at the grassroots, community based level have joined together to promote the Kingdom of God among the poor. The key elements of CCDA include beginning with the felt needs of the people in the community, responding to those needs in a wholistic, Biblical way, developing and utilizing leaders from within the community, encouraging relocation among the poor, demanding reconciliation, and empowering the poor through the redistribution and sharing of skills, talents, education and resources.⁹²

b) The 'Memphis Miracle'

This event, which occurred in 1994, was the reuniting of leaders of the 18 million black and white Pentecostals after 70 years of racial division. Capping a three day meeting in Memphis, leaders of the major Pentecostal denominations voted to set up a new alliance while 21 denominations voted to disband their individual groups for the new union. Church leaders were moved to tears by an act of humility and racial reconciliation as a white pastor unexpectedly stepped forward, knelt and washed the feet of a black Bishop. At the same time another black pastor washed the feet of the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.⁹³ B.E. Underwood, former chairman of the all-white organization predicted, "By the year 2,000, you'll see widespread interracial congregations."⁹⁴

c) Southern Baptist Convention

The 15 million member Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta during the month of June 1995 choose to mark their gathering by apologizing for condoning racism. A part of the resolution stated, "We apologize to all African Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime, and we

genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously." Billy Graham affirmed the action, "Only when we individually and as a corporate group renounce racism in all of its forms and repent of all transgression will God choose to use us in the future to reach all people throughout the world."⁹⁵

d) NAE-NBEA Consultation On Racism

The National Association Of Evangelicals (NAE), with more than 20 million constituents, joined with the National Black Evangelical Association (NBEA) in January of 1995 for a convocation on racial reconciliation. The groups addressed five major barriers to reconciliation: Unbiblical Theology, Repentance and Forgiveness, Fear and Mistrust, Attitudes and Perceptions, and Institutional Racism. One point in their affirmation and commitment states, "We affirm that racism attacks the core of the gospel message. It negates the reason for which Christ died. It also denies the purpose of the church: to bring together, in Christ, those who have been divided from one another." They established five related action steps to overcome the above five barriers to reconciliation.⁹⁶ (See Appendix- Consultation on Racism)

e) Promise Keepers

Promise Keepers began in 1990 as a "Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world." Over 500,000 men have gathered since then in sold-out weekend conferences to commit themselves to seven promises. The sixth promise states, "A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity." Founder and former coach Bill McCartney said, "Every day I'm on my knees asking God how racism in this country can be ended."⁹⁷ In February of 1996 some 42,000 pastors gathered in what has been considered the largest single gathering of pastors and church leaders in the history of the United States and world for a time of confession, repentance and reconciliation. African-American, Anglo, Native Indian, Asian, and Latino pastors took

⁹²Perkins, Restoring At-Risk Communities, 26.

⁹³Religion Report, National and International Religion Report October 31, 1994

⁹⁴Chicago (AP), "Pentecostals move to end racial split," Tribune November 20, 1994

⁹⁵Timothy C. Morgan, "Racist No More? Black Leaders Ask," Christianity Today, 4 August 1995, 53.

⁹⁶Convocation Planning Committee, "Our Resolve For Reconciliation," Paper NAE/NBEA Convocation on Reconciliation 7 January 1995

⁹⁷Kevin Miller, "McCartney Preaches Reconciliation," Christianity Today, 19 July 1995, 43

turns outlining the sins of racism and non-involvement of their people group against others while forgiveness was extended. All would affirm that the Spirit of God was working in mighty ways to bring unity and reconciliation in His church.

We are seeing how the Spirit of God is working among major national church movements to raise the issues of reconciliation and historic injustices between people groups and denominations. Are these movements possibly part of the warm-up act when God will draw all the families of the nations together to worship Him with one heart and one mouth? (Ps 86:9; Rom 15:5,6) May the Church be strengthened through these words to keep in step with His Spirit and continue its part in growing as a united church.

4. Existing Models

Several models of ministry have emerged in the PCA that we want to highlight briefly. MNA has made a commitment to plant churches that reflect the diversity of our nation. There are movements for example among Brazilians, Hispanics, Asians, Haitians, African Americans. MNA is hiring movement leaders to seek to understand the particular cultures, develop strategies, identify and nurture leadership for these various movements. A common struggle faced by believers in these various groups is determining the level of fellowship that the particular culture of believers will have with other cultures. A variety of models have already surfaced within our PCA family.

There is the desire by some to maintain a very limited level of fellowship on essentially the denominational level. (The existence of the Korean Presbyteries is an example of this idea of maintaining an essential autonomy.) Whether this is needed for language reasons or for cultural reasons, the fact remains that this model is allowed. Others seek multicultural, multiethnic fellowship at the congregational level. Examples are churches such as Pinelands Pres. in Miami, where blacks, whites and hispanics worship together, Faith Christian Fellowship in Baltimore, where blacks, whites and Asians worship together, The New City Churches in Chattanooga and St. Louis also seek this model among blacks and whites. Some like Trinity Church in Charlottesville, Va., Park Cities in Dallas pursue mercy ministry and evangelism to the poor while focusing on a target culture within the worshipping congregation. Some such as Redemption Fellowship in Atlanta, Forest Park Pres. and New Song Church in Baltimore are attempting to develop congregations that are African American and homogeneous. These congregations interact with non-African Americans on the Presbytery level. It is an unmistakable fact that

within our circles there are many ways that this oneness and diversity are being applied. As we develop our particular strategies we need to be sure that we allow the scriptures to govern our decisions, rather than tradition, comfort and convenience.

(Our MNA national committee uses the term “multicultural” in two ways 1) To describe the general work of ethnic specific church planting through which congregations are formed that are largely homogenous and non-white, 2) To describe churches whose leaders and members are blended together from a variety of ethnic backgrounds worshipping and serving God.)

V. Proposed Affirmations and Applications

“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”
Eccl. 12:13

After much research, discussion and prayer we offer the following affirmations and applications to the Potomac Presbytery that we might faithfully reach lost people for Christ and disciple them into our churches for the glory of God. These affirmations and applications attempt to give concrete responses to our focus questions.

Question 1: In an ethnically and social-economically diverse community how should the local church demonstrate faithfulness to Christ?

Question 2: What responsibilities do churches have to an ethnically and social-economically diverse region?

A. Proposed Affirmations Of Ethnic Diversity

1. The intentional evangelism of people groups with the accompanying practice of reconciliation in the Body must both be preserved and pursued in the Church wherever cultural diversity exists.(Acts 15)

2. A true presentation of the gospel to the particular people groups in our region demands cultural sensitivity. (1Cor 9:19-23)

3. The gospel that reconciles Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament is the same gospel that reconciles all people regardless of race and class. This work of reconciliation is not optional. (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:14-18; Col. 3:11)

4. We must guard against superficial unity, which is an affront to the dignity of God’s image bearers and

damages an authentic presentation of the gospel. (Acts 6:1-7)

5. Our leaders and church members need to be equipped in order to reach the diverse people of their changing cultural environment. (Eph. 4:1-13)

6. We as the church, in our local expression, as well as our presbytery and denomination need to confess sins of disunity. (racism, prejudice, injustice, ethnic superiority, bitterness, lack of forgiveness, cultural idolatries, etc.) (Gal. 2:11; 1Cor. 11:17-22; James 2:1-7)

7. The church must have a continued infusion of the gospel of grace through prayer and the preaching of the Word in the power of the Spirit in order to know God's love and effectively implement the biblical principles of unity. (Eph. 3:14-19; Acts 20:32)

B. Proposed Applications of Ethnic Diversity

Adopt the seven Affirmations of Ethnic Diversity as part of the values of our presbytery.

1. Recommend that all approved seminaries provide students theological training in areas of urban, cross-cultural ministry and ethnic church history as part their core curriculum.

2. Recommend urban and cross-cultural ministry training as part of our ministerial candidate's internship.

3. Recommend to the Credentials Committee that the church history exam include the contributions of the diverse ethnic groups within the presbytery.

4. Recommend to the Christian Education Committee in partnership with the Mission to North America Committee to develop a curriculum in urban and cross cultural ministry to assist in equipping local churches and lay leadership with resources to reach the people groups in their target regions.

5. Recommend to the Mission to North America committee to pursue church planting strategies that celebrate the ethnic and cultural diversity of the region while guarding the unity of the Body of Christ.

6. Encourage churches to grow in their ministries of mercy and justice.

FINAL: Approved Amended Version January 25, 2002

A. Affirmations Of Ethnic Diversity.

The Committee recommends that Potomac Presbytery affirm that:

1. Evangelism of people from various racial and ethnic backgrounds and social classes, with the accompanying reconciliation of such believers in the Body, is an essential element of the Church's self-consciousness in her calling to preach the Gospel. (Acts 15)

2.A faithful presentation of the gospel to the particular people groups in our region demands cultural sensitivity. (1Cor 9:19-23)

3. The gospel that reconciles Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament is the same gospel that reconciles all believers regardless of race and class. This work of reconciliation is not optional. (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:14-18; Col.3:11)

4. We must not be content with superficial unity among believers. (Acts 6:1-7)

5. Our leaders and church members need to be equipped in order to reach the diverse people of their changing cultural environment. (Eph. 4:1-13)

6. We, as a part of the Church -- in our congregations, in our presbytery and in our denomination -- must call to repentance all who are guilty of sins of disunity (e.g., racism, prejudice, injustice, ethnic superiority, bitterness, lack of forgiveness, cultural idolatries, etc.). (Gal. 2:11; 1Cor. 11:17-22; James 2:1-7)

7. The church must have a continued infusion of the grace of the gospel, through prayer, and the preaching of the Word in the power of the Spirit, in order to implement effectively the biblical principles of unity. (Eph. 3:14-19; Acts 20:32)

8. The power of the Spirit through the ministry of the Word equips God's people to become a transforming community characterized by love for Christ and one another.

B. Applications of Ethnic Diversity.

The Committee recommends that Potomac Presbytery:

1. Communicate to all approved seminaries Presbytery's recommendation that if urban, cross-cultural ministry and ethnic church history do not find a place in the core curriculum for M.Div. students, that the Seminary consider adding such

subjects.

2. Direct the Committee on Christian Education to make urban and cross-cultural ministry training a part of the internship curriculum.

3. Direct the Committee on Christian Education, in partnership with the Committee on Mission to North America, to prepare a guide to readings and other resources in urban and cross cultural ministry to assist in equipping local churches and lay leadership to reach the people groups in their target regions.

4. Direct the Committee on Mission to North America to pursue church planting strategies that are sensitive to the ethnic and cultural diversity of the region.

5. Encourage all elders of the Presbytery to renewed diligence in setting before the people of our churches the Scriptural calling to pursue mercy and justice.

Note: The above affirmations and applications were approved and adopted by the Potomac Presbytery on January 26, 2002.

APPENDIX

I. Summary of Survey Information Given to the Leaders of Potomac Presbytery Congregations

The study committee distributed a survey and did phone interviews with teaching and ruling elders from 29 different congregations within Potomac Presbytery.

Here are the **survey questions**:

1. Please identify the outreach region of your church's ministry.
Name of area _____
Approximate radius from the church's worship center. _____ miles
2. Is the outreach region of your church racially mixed? Yes___ or No___ (check one)
 - a) if yes, what races are represented? (Please list, giving racial make-up in percentages if possible)
 - b) Do you witness significant racial migration in your outreach region in the last 5-10 years?
No___ or Yes___ If yes, briefly describe:
3. If the outreach region of your church is racially mixed please answer the following:
 - a) Does your church have a strategy to reach out to and incorporate into your church the various ethnic groups in your target region? Yes___ or No___
 - b) Do you feel adequately equipped as pastor to lead your church in reaching out to the people groups in your area? If yes, what resources have been most valuable to you in this challenge? If no, what do you feel is your greatest need in becoming equipped?
4. Is the outreach region of your church socio-economically mixed? (i.e. there is a mixture of classes of people living below and above the poverty level) Yes___ or No___
 - a) If yes, what classes are represented? (i.e. poor, working class, middle class, wealthy) Please list and attempt to give percentages.
 - b) Do you sense significant migration in your outreach region? (i.e. have you witnessed significant changes in the past 5-10 years?)
No___ or Yes___ If yes, describe:
5. If the outreach area of your church is socio-economically mixed please answer the following:
 - a) Does your church have a strategy to reach out to and incorporate into your church the various classes in your target region? Yes___ or No___
 - b) Do you feel adequately equipped as a pastor to lead your church in reaching out to the class groups

of your area? Yes___ or No___ If Yes, what resources have been most valuable to you in this challenge? If no, what do you feel is your greatest need in becoming equipped?

6. Please list any other desires or concerns you may have to address in regards to the work of the study committee.

The survey was done in the 1999 as the committee began it's work. We will now summarize the important facts and some of the implications we noticed. We will look at 4 very significant attitudes, trends, or realities that we found:

- 1) Most churches have some sense of seeing a responsibility to reach out to people of different ethnic and social class. Yet only a few make this a significant component in their outreach strategy. Of the 29 churches, 6 stated that they are in a context where whites are not the majority people group. Twenty- two of the 29 stated that they are at some level ministering to a racially mixed community. Seventeen stated there has been "*significant migration*" racially within the last 5 years in their targeted outreach area.
- 2) Many of our churches are wrestling with the shifting demographics of their community and are either presently experiencing the challenge to include minorities and/or new immigrant people or they foresee this as a challenge to come in the near future. Of the 14 who said they had a strategy to reach different ethnic groups, only a few had strategies that were elaborate, intentional and sought to address the context of the culturally diverse community.
 - Chantilly, Harvester, Faith Christian Fellowship - these churches stated that they have a representation of minority people worshipping together with a significant number of anglo worshippers. These seem to be in varying stages of depth. There are various inclusion strategies and minority leadership issues appear to be a key factor in the depth of progress and commitment.
 - Alexandria Pres. is seeking to facilitate the planting of a church with cross cultural Hispanic leadership that is equipped to address specific needs in the non-anglo community.
 - Forest Park Reformed, Mt. Zion Covenant - these are examples of churches that already sense a particular calling to focus on African Americans, a minority population in the context of the national population, but not in terms of the communities where they are planted. They believe that if the PCA is to become more diverse, congregations

must be able to develop leadership for this growth. They are committed to raising up minority leadership, while never excluding others.

- Due to the growing ethnic middle class in our land, many of our churches have a small ethnic representation. This simply highlights the fact that even without intentionally seeking a particular ethnic group, there will be some within that group who may find in the PCA church culture, a congregational life which meets the desires of their hearts.

Several churches are doing some very cutting edge work in the areas of reconciliation between cultures and in the areas of justice for the poor, oppressed, needy

- a. New Song - This congregation, which is in a poor, African American community, has partnered with many suburban congregations for mercy ministry to address needs in the areas of housing, medical care, employment, education and youth discipleship issues.
 - b. McLean - With a long history of partnering with ministries in the city, the McLean congregation is now seeking to do more direct ministry to urban DC community. This includes a desire to plant a daughter church within the city limits.
 - c. Faith Christian Fellowship - This congregation in northeast Baltimore has taken leadership in providing affordable, quality education for the poor, providing evangelism and discipleship ministries to youth and children through athletics, in the context of a multi-ethnic worshipping congregation.
4. All of our leaders (know) believe in the power of the gospel to transform any human heart and any human culture.

Yet very few of our pastors and lay leaders feel they are equipped to address the particular needs of poor and minority cultures around us. Most have had some type of cross-cultural experience either urban or overseas. Yet most feel inadequately equipped for the challenging task of leading God's people into the arena of engaging communities that are in transition.

Survey Conclusion -

The survey indicated that unless we begin to address the issues of ethnic and social class diversity, our congregations will more and more be out of touch with the world around us. There is a sense among most of the leaders that like the evangelical church in general, the PCA church will have to take more seriously these issues if we are to be effective in 21st century America.

The demographic data which follows confirms these survey conclusions.

II. WHAT IS GOD SOVEREIGNLY ORCHESTRATING? (demographics)

The Baltimore-Washington area is the fourth largest metropolitan region in the United States. In the fall of 2000, the Mission to North America Committee of Potomac Presbytery used the services of the Percept Group to "map" the region served by our presbytery. PeopleAreas were created (circles of 3 mile radius) beginning with the most densely populated areas and continuing until 95% of the total population within the region was mapped. A master map of the PeopleAreas within Potomac Presbytery is found on the next page.

What was discovered may surprise you. God has brought the nations of the world to our region and if we are to be faithful to the Great Commission in the region of our presbytery, we can no longer think in terms of people just like us. The mission field has literally come home to our doorstep.

Consider the following facts that highlight what God is doing in our region:

- Currently, there are 7.8 million people living within the region of our presbytery. This is an increase of 1.7 million (27.8%) since 1980. The 2005 projection is over 8.2 million people.
- In terms of the rate of growth, 96 PeopleAreas will experience High Growth(10% or more) and an additional 153 PeopleAreas will experience Moderate Growth (5% to 10%). Together this means that growth will occur in two-thirds of the region served by our presbytery.
- The population density on average is four times higher than the national average. If we look at the population distribution, we find that 25% of the population resides in 11 PeopleAreas (3% of the geographical region) and that an additional 25% of the total population resides within 32 PeopleAreas (8.8% of the geographical region). See table found on next page.
- Ethnically, our region is classified as *extremely high diversity*. Anglos have decreased to 64.9% of the population. African-Americans now represent 24.4% and Asians 5% of the population. Hispanics/Latinos are projected to be the fastest growing group increasing by 21.5% between 2000 and 2005 and representing 5% of the population. See chart that follows.

- In terms of racial/ethnic diversity in given PeopleAreas on a scale of 0 (totally homogenous) to 10 (totally heterogeneous), 141 PeopleAreas (38.7% of the geographical region and 80.4% of the total population) were classified as either *Somewhat High (5 to 7)*, *Very High (8 to 9)* or *Extremely High (10)*.
- The Percept Group combined several of these factors together to get a sense of the level of change within our region. The "Area Dynamic Level" scale of 0 (very little population and almost no diversity) to 10 (extremely high population and diversity) was used. Hold onto your seat and reread this bullet if necessary to get the big picture of what God is doing among us. 11 PeopleAreas (3.0% of the geographical region and 19.9% of the total population) have an ADL of 10 *Transformational*. 46 PeopleAreas (12.6% geographical, 43.8% total population) have an ADL of 8 or 9 *Very High*. 63 People Areas (17.3% geographical, 16.9% population) have an ADL of 6 or 7 *Somewhat High*. In summary, this means that in one-third of our region where four out of every five people live, the area is experiencing dynamic change.

are excluding anyone. Nevertheless, the church is catering to one primary culture and are not effectively reaching other cultures in their region.

c) Ethnically Mixed Churches. These churches have some degree of cultural diverse blending. However a closer look reveals that one culture dominates in the way ministry is lead and performed. Those from other cultures who have joined this body have agreed to adopt the prevailing culture and not make the concerns and values of their own culture an issue.

d) Ethnically Reconciled Churches. These churches have clarified the cultures in their target region and are intentionally seeking to reach them for Christ and disciple them into the church. They involve more than one culture and have elevated the church's call to unity as a core value. The diversity of cultures and the unity of the body can be observed in the leadership, worship expressions, and small group fellowship.

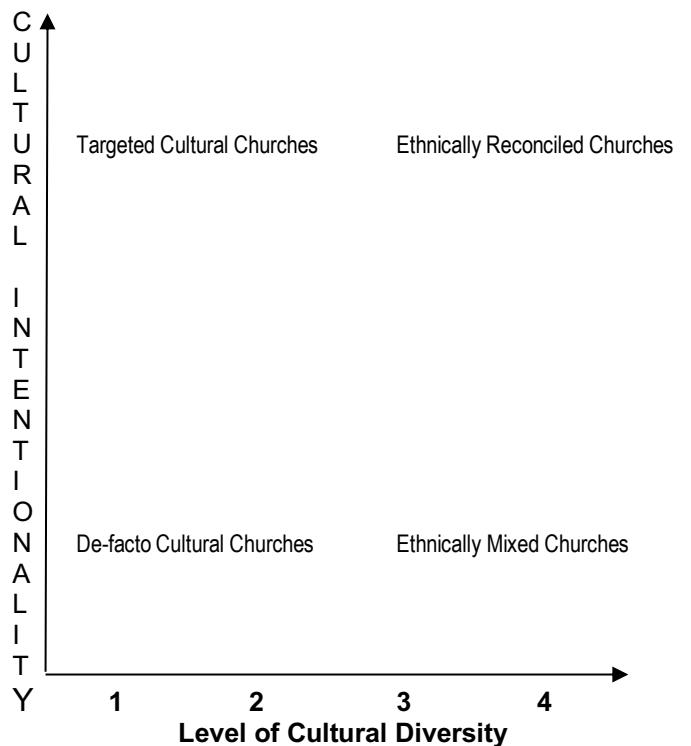
III. CHURCH CULTURAL GRID

In order to help assess where your church is in the process of intentionally seeking to win people of the culture and cultures around your church while pursuing the unity of Christ Body, try to identify what kind of church you presently are and where you believe God is calling you to grow towards. These four descriptions are intended to provide helpful basic references even while it is realized that there exist a lot of fluidity between them.

a) Targeted Cultural Churches. The church is very clear and intentional about the people group they are focused on reaching and discipling into the church. The church's ministry is tailored to one principal culture, even as they may work at reaching various subcultures. Ex. Saddleback Sam, Purpose Driven Church.

b) De-facto Cultural Churches. These churches have not defined the culture they are seeking to reach. They may say "All Are Welcome". They would not think they

CHURCH CULTURAL GRID



IV. Consultation on Racism: Jointly Sponsored by the Social Action Commission Of The National Association of Evangelicals And The National Black Evangelical Association Statement on Prejudice and Racism January 26-27, 1990

We have gathered as a group of Christians to address the resurgence of racism in the United States. Because of the historical and current context in which we meet, we are addressing primarily the white-black expression of racism: we that other ethnic groups have also experienced oppression based on race.

We affirm the core conviction of our Judeo-Christian heritage: human life is created in God's image. This imago dei is expressed in one human race (Acts 17:26), but that one humanity fully expresses God's image in a wealth of diversity. A few obvious examples of diversity are maleness and femaleness, and colors of skin, eyes and hair. There are more subtle diversities as well. These diversities are not intended to divide humans from one another; rather they are to add to the wonder of life's wholeness as a gift from God.

We affirm another conviction of our Judeo-Christian roots: as a consequence of a fall from the original created state, humanity shares a sin nature. One of the marks of this sin nature, prejudice, is distributed among the diverse parts of the whole humanity. This prejudice, rather than allowing celebration of the diversity of our one humanity, causes the holders of prejudice to view those who are different as inferior. When one ethnic group is in a majority or power position, its group prejudices against those who are minorities or out of power are often manifested in racism. Racism is prejudice plus power. Racism is therefore, an institutionalized expression of a controlling group's prejudices.

There was diversity of motivation in the establishment of the United States as a nation, but woven throughout its history was a pattern of racism by the white-dominated society that involved the displacement and destruction of one race, the Native Americans, and the enslavement of yet another, the Africans. The historical record of how white Europeans conquered North America by destroying the native population and building their new nation's economy on the backs of kidnapped Africans who had been turned into chattel are facts which must be acknowledged and confessed.

Racism is a foundational sin of the United States, fueled by economic greed and the exploitation of human and natural resources. It has corrupted the foundations, institutions and cultural mores of this country. It has prevented formation of a true cultural democracy. Racism has enslaved, impoverished, and oppressed people of color in America.

The concept of race must be seen as the sum total of what is known as the physical, psychological characteristics that set one group apart from another. These distinctions are not seen as absolutes since it can be readily observed that some basic characteristics thought to be unique to one group are often observed as part of the make-up of another. This leads us to conclude that the racial group in its make-up can be absolutely separated from another. These points on race must lead us to the repudiation of any and all myths concerning the inferiority of African-Americans, such as: they are by nature childlike, that they came from the poorer stock of Africa, and that they gladly gave up their own history and traditions to embrace the "superior" culture of their masters.

To appreciate the scope of sin against African-Americans, it is essential to understand the following points of history:

1. The European Slave Trade began in 1444 A.D. and continued infamously into the late 1800's. However through the early 1600's there were many blacks who came to America as indentured servants, and who after their service were instrumental in building many early settlements. They lost their freedom when slave traders and businessmen had colonial laws changed to accommodate economic considerations.
2. The recurrent history of America's sin of racism is the sting of continual promises, modest gains, followed by a reversal of those gains which has resulted in entrenched prejudicial attitudes and continued economic disenfranchisement for African Americans. The political gains of the 1860's and 70's were instantaneously halted of white fear, resulting in the enactment of Jim Crow laws that dehumanized African people in poverty and ignorance. Even today, just twenty-five years after the civil rights movement of the 1960's, white American racism is flexing its economic muscle against the African American community and rolling back the positive effects of Affirmative Action.

It must be acknowledged that large segments of Christianity in America have historically been allied with racist institutions and attitudes. Racism attacks the core of the gospel message. It negates the reason for which Christ died. It also denies the purpose of the church: to bring together, in Christ, those who have been divided from one another. Racism has caused many Christians in America to use the Bible to defend segregation, and abandon justice.

Racism is a severe and current sin. It is an idolatry which makes God in the image of the controlling group and

uses God to justify willful and/or unintended evil against minority interest. The soul of the nation is under judgement for the talent drain of potential leaders and for the psychological scarring of young blacks who are born in the ghetto but rarely have the opportunity to develop. Racism has historically hindered us from benefitting from the fullness of God's gift to the nation, which is embodied in what is gained from all the people.

The Psalmist asks, 'When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?' The righteous can fill the leadership vacuum by repenting individually and corporately. It will be necessary to re-educate white evangelicalism into understanding that the pioneer black church has held one of the few authentic expressions of the Gospel in America by holding fast to the conviction that God, through His word, was the authority in all of life; that all humanity was created in God's image; and that humanity had eternal value evidenced by Christ's inclusive death on the cross.

Although prejudice is a universal sin infecting all peoples, racism in America is basically a white problem. Whites established practices, systems, and laws which entrenched racism, and in some instances, still perpetuate it. Confession and repentance are essential starting points for the correction of any sinful past and these are needed now in America if the rising tide of racism is to be turned back.

The black evangelical church, for its part, must commit itself to constructive protest of racism. This should be combined with a readiness to forgive past wrongs.

The black church must help blacks to regain a healthy sense of pride in their identity. The Lordship of Christ must be brought to bear on the life of the black community as well as that of the white community. Economic discipline and investment in the black community, inspired by a spiritual rebirth of the black masses, will be the salvific hope of black America. We affirm that Salvation is in and by Jesus Christ alone. The Gospel of love is transmitted through an inseparable package of faith and action. In and through him we have hope for the life that is and that which is to come.

The white evangelical church must first repent of the sin of racism. It must examine its doctrines, policies, institutions, boards, agencies, and para-church entities and remove any vestiges of prejudice and racism. It must also enter into a meaningful dialogue with black evangelical leaders by means of establishing cultural exchanges on racism in the white community. Most importantly, it must exert pressure for economic justice by witnessing within its own power structures. It must remove the institutional barriers which hinder progress

for blacks and other people of color. It must work to make restitution and repair as soon as possible.

As persons redeemed by the atoning work of Christ, we commit ourselves to renewed efforts toward reconciliation and harmony between people of diverse races. Together the entire evangelical community must and can reaffirm the wonderful ethnic diversity among the body of Christ, while at the same time strengthening its unity. The credible witness of the Church and perhaps the deliverance of the United States depends upon the joint evangelical community effort to dismantle the structure of racism and prejudice. Together we can create a community that will be a monumental witness for Christ in modern times.

We go from this consultation determined to translate these intentions into actions which will exemplify among human kind Christ's reconciling work.

OUR RESOLVE FOR RECONCILIATION

RECOGNIZING THE NEED for racial reconciliation, a convocation was convened in Chicago on January 6-7, 1995. The Convocation on Reconciliation, sponsored by the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and the National Black Evangelical Association (NBEA), was called out of a conviction that God had called us to disciple the nations of the world, and we were hindered in this task by our fragmentation over the sin of racism. We proposed the Convocation, so we could come together and strategize on how to address the sin of racism and undo its harmful effects in the evangelical community. During the Convocation, we isolated five major barriers to reconciliation within our community and established action steps to overcome each one. Those barriers, which we resolve to address through the continuing work of our "*Evangelical Task Force on Reconciliation*," are as follows:

1. **Unbiblical Theology.** Racism has in great part been validated, defended and practiced through the preaching, teaching and living of an unbiblical theology. There is a need to repent for this distortion of the Word of God which has resulted in subtle and blatant expressions of racism. We call on the entire evangelical community, especially Christian organizations, colleges and seminaries, denominations and local churches, theological journals and magazines to raise and address this issue in ways that challenge us to develop, practice and model the unity of all God's people as members of the Body of Christ.
2. **Repentance and Forgiveness.** There exists an unwillingness on the part of many to repent and forgive. We call for services of confession and forgiveness throughout the evangelical community in

order that barriers to the reconciliation process may be removed. This process which began at the Convocation, is expected to continue at the 1995 conventions of both NAE and NBEA, and to culminate at a joint meeting of both groups. Furthermore, to continue modeling the spirit of reconciliation, we call upon NAE and NBEA to maintain and strengthen close working ties. We further call upon our members, and the broader evangelical community to read on the subject of racial reconciliation and enter into a cross-cultural accountability relationship to put the information into practice. We also call upon all evangelical institutions to include racial justice and reconciliation as one of their core values.

3. **Fear and Mistrust.** Racial reconciliation is hindered by fear and mistrust. We call upon evangelical leaders to take the risk necessary to develop honest loving relationships across racial lines, and to educate our various constituencies on the biblical basis for racial harmony and reconciliation, recognizing we best combat fear by demonstrating love that is wholistic in word and deed.
4. **Attitudes and Perceptions.** Attitudes toward other races can be subconscious and subliminally acquired, based on erroneous perceptions caused by fear, ignorance, misleading media images, negative experiences, misinterpretation of Scripture, cultural and historical myths, traditions and stereotypes, and poor modeling from parents, teachers, and others. These attitudes and perceptions are difficult to change and require commitment to intentional action to raise the awareness of the need, possibility and benefits of change. We call upon evangelicals to seriously address this issue and develop strategies to remove this barrier to reconciliation through personal and institutional involvement with persons of other races. We also call for the development of curriculum to train children and adults which reflects a correct exegesis of Scripture and teaches an appreciation for racial and cultural differences and similarities, and encourages the celebration of unity in the midst of diversity.
5. **Institutional Racism.** Given that conscious and unconscious institutional racism the church and society continues to exist in the form of systemic and structural discrimination, segregation, and stereotyping, so that one need not consciously think racist thoughts to carry out exclusive, selective racist policies, we call upon evangelicals to

prophetically engage these injustices in all of the ungodly forms. We acknowledge that "judgment must begin at the house of God" because of our exclusive hermeneutic, our privatized faith and our unbiblical notion of the kingdom. As we set our own house in order, we call upon evangelicals to prophetically and courageously engage society's injustices, and to seek out and establish permanent, committed relationships that will serve to foster among evangelicals an aggressive new climate for the pursuit of true justice and opportunity for all. In so doing, we believe the effectiveness of our witness and our efforts to evangelize our nation will be greatly enhanced.

These five barriers to reconciliation were selected by the 170 Convocation attendees for priority action. Each barrier was discussed at length in small group sessions and action items were suggested to address each barrier. The written drafts of each barrier have been edited by the Convocation Planning Committee for the sake of clarity, consistency and accuracy. For further information about the NAE/NBEA Convocation on Reconciliation, send your inquiry to: P.O. Box 28, Wheaton, IL 60189. If you prefer, you may call 708-665-0500 or 503-288-8550.

VII. Unity Creed For Church Development

Richard DeRidder grieves that no creeds exist to help the church reconcile the various cultures that exist in America.

*The heathen, the pagan, the "not-my-people" are no longer oceans away, but all around the disciples today. They are neighbors to each other. Their children play together. They meet at work, in shopping centers, on the beaches. And unfortunately, at this crucial point where the Church of Christ is dispersed in the world confessional statements are silent where they ought to be most articulate.*⁹⁸

Harvie Conn argues that creeds need to go beyond mere affirmation of orthodoxy and catechism instruction. To keep creeds from drifting into abstraction they need to *utter its words to the world... Their richest service lies in their function of translating the gospel to address the needs of their own day and cultural context.* In this way creeds become "evangelistic declarations" and invitations to faith for "those who are without."⁹⁹

⁹⁸DeRidder, *Discipling The Nation*, 213.

⁹⁹Conn, *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds*, 241-246.

He quotes Donald McGavran, who affirms this need:
*A missionary confession of faith for today will in every doctrine similarly spell out at great length the will of God as revealed in the scriptures, that all men of every economic stratum, every tongue, every tribe, every religion, and every ideology be given the opportunity to say "yes" to Jesus Christ.*¹⁰⁰

At the same time, creeds can help nurture a context for the spiritual transformation of believers and their world views. As Biblical principles are elevated and translated to address specific cultural issues, they become a redemptive grid to help people process the information and values they receive from the world. In this regard, they help create a theological foundation to nurture emerging leaders. Cornell West states that *"quality leadership is neither the product of one great individual nor the result of odd historical accidents. Rather, it comes from deeply bred traditions and communities that shape and mold talented and gifted persons"*.¹⁰¹ Good creeds can help us nurture leaders in community where spiritual truth is applied to all of life and where a vibrant resistance to injustice and evil is normative.

The following Unity Declaration for Faith Christian Fellowship, in Baltimore city is an expression of a PCA congregation's serious effort to *keep the unity* and apply principles of unity throughout the church's ministry. It clarifies and expresses a commitment to celebrate diversity while maintaining unity. At the same time, it speaks to the world concerning the urgent matters of racial justice and reconciliation. In this it invites outsiders to become part of a universal fellowship whose identity is in Jesus and His Kingdom. It reflects a 3 years of devoted labor and prayer by a multicultural group of PCA church members who participated in the congregation's ongoing Reconciliation Task Force.

IV. UNITY DECLARATION

(Adopted by Faith Christian Fellowship, PCA, May 20, 2000)

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 1: Our Fundamental Identity

We declare that God our Father, in His great love, has redeemed us by sending His Son Jesus Christ and united us as people from diverse cultures into one family through the Holy Spirit committing to us the message of reconciliation.

John 17:20-24; 20:17; Eph 2:19-22; Col 3:11; Gal 3:26-29; Eph 4:4,5; Acts 2:5-12, 2Cor.5:19

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 2: Cultural Affirmation

We declare that God's truth transcends culture and speaks to all cultures. We affirm the Biblical value, dignity and distinctions of our varying cultures because God uses culture to communicate His truth and grace and receives glory from our cultural expressions. Yet we acknowledge that God declares the fallen condition of all people and their cultures. We claim a personal and corporate responsibility to evaluate and bring Christ-centered reformation to our cultures and society by the Word of God in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Gen.1:26,28; 2:15,19; Rom. 8:18-25; Rom. 1:18-32; Rom 3:9-20; Rev 21:24; 1Cor 9:19-23; Acts 17:16, 22-31; John 17:15-19; Matt. 5:27-43

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 3: Repentance & Forgiveness

We acknowledge that great transgressions based on race, gender, class and faith have tragically marked our life together as a human family throughout the history of the world and this nation. While the Church has pursued justice and reconciliation, regrettably it has often participated in this sin through active support or indifference. We join with those believers who confess that true reconciliation cannot be realized without a commitment to repentance, forgiveness and the pursuit of justice.

Neh 1:4-11; Dan 9:4-19; Eph 4:1-6, 32; Phil 2:1-11; Acts 6:1-7

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 4: Necessity Of Grace & Dependency on the Holy Spirit

We seek to apply God's grace to our lives. His grace enables us to love God with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves. God's grace provides the only means to conquer our fears, remove our guilt, resolve our anger and give us the strength to persevere as one family where Jesus Christ is Lord. We declare that the Holy Spirit is our only source of power for true unity in the Body, and that He strengthens us through daily repentance, prayer and the cleansing power of the Word.

Matt. 22:37-40; Eph 3:14-19; 4:1-5; 5:1,2,15-21; 6:10,11; Heb 2:14,15; 1Peter 4:19

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 244.

¹⁰¹West, Race Matters, 37.

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 5: Cultural Awareness

We commit ourselves to acquiring greater cultural awareness and sensitivity, starting first with our own cultural bias and prejudices, recognizing that we live in a multicultural city and world. We believe that cultural awareness is foundational to the way in which we develop leaders, conduct worship, equip the body for evangelism and discipleship, and promote justice and community development.

1Cor 9:19-23; Acts 15:19-21; Acts 17:16-34;
Acts 26:28,29; Rom 15:1-4

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 6: Leadership

We commit ourselves to modeling the reconciliation of culturally diverse believers before the world in our church and ministry leadership. We promote reconciled leadership which understands and values church membership, the unity of the Church, spiritual accountability, the benefit of cultural diversity, shared servant leadership, cross cultural skills, strategic service, sound theology, godly character, spiritual renewal, and discipling emerging leaders.

Luke 6:12-16; Acts 6:1-7; 13:1-3; Gal 2:2; Isa 56:1-8;
Rev 21:24

UNITY DECLARATION STATEMENT 7: Worship

We declare that as a reconciled community in Christ we work in our worship services to represent God's Kingdom in our local context. We work to offer God our most precious and valuable expressions of devotion from our varying cultures. Such worship requires the pursuit of excellence as we glorify God in a Christ-centered, believer edifying and seeker welcoming service.

Rom 15:5-11; Isa 19:23; Zeph 3:9; Ps 22:27; Rev 7:9,10; Rev 21:24

Unity Declaration Statement 8: Evangelism

We commit ourselves to work together as a multicultural body to proclaim Good News that communicates Christ to people in their particular cultures with Biblical integrity through culturally sensitive means.

1Cor 9:19-23; 10:33; Matt 20:26-28; Rom 1:14; 2Cor 4:5; Prov 11:30; Rom 11:14;
1Pet 3:1

Unity Declaration Statement 9: Discipleship

We declare that as we disciple one another towards Christian maturity, we must obey Christ's command to love our neighbors as ourselves. We do this by keeping the unity of the Spirit, who indwells believers of diverse and historically separated cultures, in the bond of peace.

Eph 2:11-22; Eph 4:1-4; 11-16; Phil 2:1-5; Col 3:5-14;
John 17:23; Rom 14:17-19; 1Cor 1:10; 2Cor 13:11

Unity Declaration Statement 10: Justice & Community Development

We declare that the church is called to be the redemptive presence of Christ by proclaiming Good News which is demonstrated through concrete deeds of mercy and justice. This Good News affirms dignity, cultivates an environment of hope, and restores people to God through Christ and to service in God's kingdom.

Micah 6:8; Luke 4:18,19; Acts 6:1-7; Gal 2:10; James 2:1-9

V. Exegetical Distortions

1. Ham and Babel Controversy by Stan Long

We must address 2 key passages in the early pages of scripture which relate to the issue before. They are Gen 9:18-29 and Gen 11:1-9. Faulty interpretations have taught many of the inferiority of certain races and that there is danger in attempting ethnic unity.

The supposed curse upon Ham comes from faulty exegesis of the Gen 9 passage where the sons of Ham respond to drunken Noah's nakedness. According to v.24, Canaan is actually cursed not Ham. Popular OT commentators Keil and Deilich quote Zeigler by stating that in the sin of *Ham* "there lies the great stain of the whole Hamitic race, whose chief characteristic is sexual sin." Then Keil and Deilich add the following, "and the curse which Noah pronounced upon this sin still rests upon the race." (p.157)

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown state regarding the phrase "cursed be Caanan" in v.25 - "this doom has been fulfilled in the destruction of the Caananites- in the degradation of Egypt, and the slavery of the Africans, the descendents of Ham." (p. 22)

This type of exegesis down through the years has laid a foundation for racist attitudes and has led religious leaders to maintain the socially sanctioned philosophy of racial separation. For example, until changes occurred in the recent past, Bob Jones University, the

fundamentalist school in South Carolina, has through the years maintained a strong philosophy of racial separation. In 1960 Bob Jones, Jr. stated:

*The fact that we do not accept blacks as students here does not mean that we are against the Negro race, that we do not love the Negro, or that we are not concerned about his spiritual welfare. I wish there was an institution like Bob Jones University established exclusively for Negroes; however, with the present emphasis in this country, Negroes would not accept a school established solely for blacks because the whole emphasis today is on a breakdown of racial barriers **which God has set up.** (Shuler, p.100, fr. Bob Jones, Sr.1960 book Is Separation Scriptural?)*

Likewise Bob Jones III declared,

"A Negro is best when he serves at the table...when he does that, he's doing what he knows how to do best. And the Negroes who have ascended to positions in government, in education, in this sort of thing, I think you'll find, by and large, have a strong strain of white blood in them." (Shuler,p.99, fr. Bob Jones, Sr.1960 book "Is Separation Scriptural?")

However other scholars have sought to give a more sane and biblical explanation:

Columbus Salley and Behm state that ...

"Noah's curse upon his grandson Canaan to be a "slave of slaves" was applied to all Africans and was supported by fantastic exegesis and erroneous logic." (p.24)

William Dwight McKissic, Sr., declares that most scholars "believe that the curse was fulfilled when the Canaanites were conquered by Israel and became subservient to the Isrealites."

McKissic concludes his discussion of the curse by stating the following:

"I believe the curse of Canaan was fulfilled during one of the following experiences: (1) When certain Canaanite tribes were defeated by Abraham in Genesis 14:1-16. (2) In the days of Joshua, when Canaanites were defeated by the Isrealites, who belonged to the family of Shem, (Joshua 9:23; 1 Kings 9:20,21) (3) When the descendents of Canaan became servant of Japheth when Carthage, which had been settled by the Canaanites (Phoenicians), was conquered by Rome. At any rate, the black race has never been cursed-only the Canaanites."(p.24)

Also Wilmington's Guide to the Bible states:

...as the curse was specifically leveled at Canaan and not Phut (who may have founded the African nations) , there exist absolutely no racial implications whatsoever within the curse. In fact, the skin texture of Israelites and Canaanites at the time of Joshua's

invasion was probably similar. The problem concerning the Canaanites was not in the color of their skin but in the condition of their hearts. (p.33)

We must therefore emphatically state that this curse is upon Caanan, not Ham, the curse is fulfilled in OT scripture with nothing in the text hinting that this is a perpetual curse with implications beyond the era of OT revelation. Yet, sadly this faulty exegesis was used for many years to appease the consciences of individuals who, while proclaiming to love the God who they cannot see, were actually hating their brothers who they can see.

The other passage in Genesis 11:1-9 describes the building of the tower of Babel. This occurs in the Genesis narrative between the Noatian Flood and the Table of Nations. As the civilization re-develops in the post-diluvian world, humanity unites to build a great tower as a monument to mankind's greatness. This was to be a glorious tower, glorifying what man can do with his skill and knowledge. Yet in actual fact it pictured man's growing desire to be independent from his Creator and it violated the cultural mandate. (Gen 1:28) Mankind is to rule the earth as lord, little kings. But he is to recognize and submit all he does to the LORD, the Big King. The city and tower represented rebellion against God's order. It was an attempt to declare the ability, authority and even the sovereignty of man.

John Sailhamer states

"the story ...has been carefully constructed around key terms and ideas. The people of the land are at first united as one people sharing one language and living in the land. They move eastward and build a city to make a name for themselves so as not to be scattered over the land. When God saw their plan, he initiated a counterplan, one that resulted in the very thing the city builders were attempting to prevent: the Lord scattered them over the whole face of the earth." (EBC, Genesis, p.105)

This was both an act of judgement and an act of grace. God was judging man's declaration of independence against divine authority. Yet knowing that international unity apart from His plan and power would be destructive, God graciously protected mankind from himself by scattering him.

As he discusses this Babel passage, Dr. Francis Schaeffer comments that *"the basic confusion among people is expressly stated to be language-not the color of skin, not race, not nation. Language is the key to the divisions of the peoples of the earth."*

But Schaefer doesn't stop there. He continues,

"another division has emerged-not just one between man and God, man and himself, man and man, man

and nature and nature and nature, but also between the men of the earth in their nations with implications that reach out into racial and cultural divisions, linked to linguistic differences." (p.153)

Thus God intervenes by bringing confusion as a judgement upon mankind. There are at least 6 conclusions that we can learn from this Babel passage:

1. Man without God cannot produce a perfect society.
2. God graciously divides mankind linguistically so that man in his rebellious state cannot easily unite against Him. (Ps 2).
3. This linguistic barrier has racial and cultural implications which though secondary are still significant.
4. The Table of Nations shows us the big picture of mankind scattered. In Chapter 12 God zooms in on Abraham. The passage tells us why. As the history of redemption unfolds, from Gen 12 to Acts 2 God's saving activity is centered upon a single family/people group/culture. He covenants with a family and promises to bless the world through that family. The selection of Abram, Terah's son, is a statement that now there is a new strategy. The people of Abram were to ultimately be a blessing to all the nations. This strategic shift was only temporary. The Pentecost Revival in Acts 2 brought it to an end. Jesus' ministry to Jews and Gentiles in Galilee and the Decapolis had foreshadowed the end and the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. ended the era decisively and completely.
5. The children of Abraham are a people who are called to keep a spiritual covenant and remain spiritually pure. Racial purity in the Old Testament was never the ultimate issue. The fact that interracial marriages were discouraged was primarily due to spiritual factors, not to any inherent racial superiority/inferiority code. Notice that the attitude of God towards Moses dark-skinned wife in Numbers 12:1-15 serves as evidence that the separation issues were spiritual. Likewise the condemnation of Solomon in 1 Kings 11:1-13 was not simply that these women he loved were foreign but that these foreign women turned his heart away from God and towards idolatry. 1 Kings 11:2 and 8 make this absolutely clear.
6. The New Testament gift of tongues serves as a symbol of the reversal of the Babel curse. The spirit-filled church successfully displays the unity that humanity as a whole could not and never can display. In Acts the primary theological function of

tongues is to demonstrate the unity of God's people. (Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:1-11:18)

So all people share a common blood, dignity and depravity. We are all under the Adamic curse. There is no other perpetual curse upon people of color. God's original purpose before the fall was for all people to live in harmony and the redeemed church of Christ, consistent with our calling to be a kingdom-oriented community, must proclaim and demonstrate this God-given vision. The New Testament church is a cross-cultural, multi-ethnic body in contrast to the mono-cultural, (Hebrew) Old Testament church.

VI. Letter initiating study committee

June 2, 1998

"I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

John 10:16

Dear Brothers;

I want to thank and commend you for entertaining and engaging in a most important discussion in our recent Presbytery concerning how the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ should be presented within the culturally diverse region of our Potomac Presbytery. I felt the blessing of truth being spoken in love. I also want to encourage us to continue through some appropriate forum to address and respond to these issues in order to make sure that our thoughts and practices are taken captive to the Word of God, that Christ be exalted and His Kingdom aggressively promoted in our midst. (2Thess 3:1)

Some thoughts I heard expressed that we did not have time to respond to were:

- There continues to be an exodus of people out of our troubled city of Washington DC (as well as Baltimore, I might add) and people don't want to come into the city.
- The multiethnic church model is not producing strong African American leadership.
- Anglos are uncomfortable sitting under African-American leadership or other minority leadership.
- Anglos don't take the time to understand African-Americans and other ethnic groups.
- The homogenous unit principle of church growth is a fact that we just have to acknowledge and live with.
- There is concern about a church planting policy that targets one particular ethnic group.

- The PCA is a white middle-class denomination.
- We long for a Presbytery that would reflect more of the ethnic diversity of our region.

Some of these matters were hard for us to hear. Yet they were important for us to hear and are important for us to address because the churches of our Presbytery are more and more existing within communities of growing ethnic diversity and racial transition. We are regularly being challenged with how to respond, reach out and incorporate people who are culturally different from us and those who have historically filled our membership.

At the same time we are convinced that the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of **everyone** who believes (Rom. 1:16). We know that we are moving toward a celestial city of worshippers from every nation, tribe, people, and language who will stand united before the throne of God (Rev.7:9). Jesus taught His disciples to pray "Your kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Paul tells us that a mark of the church is its unity across racial, class and gender divides (Gal. 3:28). Jesus spent significant time in his priestly prayer appealing to the Father that his disciples may be one as He was one with the Father so that the world would know that Christ has come (Jn. 17).

The wonderful thing about the gospel of grace and the Reformed theology we so ardently affirm and celebrate is that it is big enough to deal with sin and alienation not only between God and man but between people groups who have been historically alienated. (Eph. 2:14) No area of life is beyond the scope of the redemptive work of our Savior. The challenge before us is how do we faithfully apply this gospel of grace within our culturally diverse Presbytery and within our churches?

At the next Presbytery I would like to propose that a study committee be formed comprised of leadership from the major ethnic groups represented in our Potomac Presbytery (African-American, Anglo-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American) and meet to explore and clarify the cultural issues within our region from a Biblical perspective that impact the growth and health of our churches, church planting and the witness of Christ. I propose that the study committee report their findings and offer recommendations to the 1999 November Presbytery that we and our churches might be further equipped for every good work.

I believe John Frame in his work on **The Doctrine Of The Knowledge Of God**, encourages this kind of fruitful endeavor.

*The ideal thing (a pre-fall situation) would be for the whole human race to work as a team, seeking out all the mysteries of the creation together, trusting one another, collaborating peacefully on a great edifice of learning, each contributing his bit to a body of knowledge far larger than any individual could comprehend. Something like that is what God intends for His church. He wants us to grow together toward a knowledge of Him that is broader than any of us, which marvelously, somehow matches that of its Head, Jesus Christ (cf. Eph 4:15f). Frame, **The Doctrine Of The Knowledge Of God**, 159.*

The ultimate purpose of this proposal is to seek the mind of Christ together and faithfully apply His vision to our culturally diverse Presbytery. I believe that what we do here could also be a great blessing to the denomination and church at large.

Grace and peace to you brothers from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Craig Garriott
With the support of T.E.'s
Stan Long
Wy Plummer
Steve Smallman
Paul Warren.

VII. Annotated Bibliography

Gayraud S. Wilmore, **Black and Presbyterian, revised** (Witherspoon Press, Louisville, Kentucky 1983, 1998)

The author takes a hard look at the questions and concerns of the African American community. This book tries to answer the question: "What does it mean to be African American and Presbyterian? Is it possible for the African American Presbyterian community to fully reclaim its culture, historically, and spiritual heritage while still remaining in the church? Believe it or not there were and are African American Presbyterians primarily in the south; about 3% of the PCUSA is African American.

The author argues that since the early nineteenth century, many African American's have made a conscious moral decision to be both black and Presbyterian. The meaning of this "double consciousness" of ethnic identity and affiliation with a

predominately White church has been significant for the black community, the church and the nation.

What does it mean to be black and Presbyterian? This book gives no easy answers, but it does help the reader think about inclusiveness, ethnic heritage, and where the Christian walk leads. The reader will learn how Afrocentricity might impact the Presbyterian Church and how it offers the black person a sense of hope. Each chapter ends with scripture reading and questions for discussion.

Clarence Shuler, **Winning the Race to Unity-Is Racial Reconciliation Really Working?** (Moody Press 1998)

If you have ever said or thought the following: "Why don't African American believers simply come to our reformed worship service?" or... "I would love to hire a qualified African American as long as he has the right view of theology, ministerial integrity and is a good, patriotic American..." If those attitudes are yours then this book is a must read.

Clarence Shuler brings many years of experience as an African American working within predominately white evangelical denominations, institutions and para-church ministries. Each chapter is informative but personal, practical yet prayerful. Clarence Shuler has a way of speaking honestly to the core issues that both whites and blacks face as they pursue biblical unity. He clearly writes as one personally involved in intentional cross-cultural relationships in ministry rather than from an ivory tower. He graciously challenges the usage of the term "reconciliation" because though acknowledging that it is a biblical term, many AA believers question whether unity can be restored if there never really existed true biblical unity.

In *Winning the Race*, Shuler provides in 2 succinct chapters a very fresh view of American history through the eyes of an evangelical African American scholar, challenging whites and blacks to look deeper at our nations past. Reflective, confrontational, biblical, pastoral...Shuler has addressed this crucial subject with the proper mood of realism and hope.

Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz **Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, The City and The People of God** (Downers Grove IV Press 2001)

This is a one volume comprehensive work of two noted scholars and proven practitioners of urban ministry that address the vital work of the church in the city. Their goal: to understand the city and God's work in it. This is the essential test for bringing God's kingdom to the city through the people of God.

Despite the tremendous explosion of urban growth, the work of the church has generally lagged

behind. The city presents serious challenges of poverty, racism, human exploitation and government corruption that cry out for answers. How can the church move ahead in the midst of these demands with the gospel of hope?

After reviewing the history of the city from the ancient world to the present the authors consider Old and New Testament perspectives on the city and what it means to God's people. Recognizing the urban centers are not monoliths but complex amalgamations, they delve into the divergent dynamics of city life. They also unpack the resources that sociology, ethnography and demographic studies have to offer the church as it seeks to fulfill its mission. Finally, the often neglected topic of urban leadership is given full development.

Rodney L. Cooper, **We Stand Together: Reconciling Men Of Different Color** (Chicago, Moody, 1995)

Cooper, African American, served as a national director for education for Promise Keeper. In this book he interacts with representatives from 4 other ethnic communities with their particular perspectives: Asian American, Hispanic, Indian-American, White American. It is very practical with each chapter ending with reflection questions and questions that challenge the reader to take practical action .

Richard R. DeRidder, **Discipling The Nations** (Grand Rapids, Baker Books 1971)

In this volume DeRidder, marshalls considerable evidence to support that the Jewish concepts of dispersion and covenant, not to mention the Old Testament itself, have a lot to do with the Church's mission. In this he succeeds in illuminating the task of the church. The great commission becomes the New Covenant itself, and the Church becomes just as much a dispersed people living among and evangelizing unbelievers, as a "called-out" people, gathering together to preserve purity of doctrine, sacraments, and life. Four chapters discuss: the Old Testament background, Jewish Proselytism, The Apostle—Jesus Christ, and the Commissioned Church.

Carl F. Ellis, **Free At Last: The Gospel in the African American Experience** (Downers Grove, IV Press, 1996)

This is a must read for any man in the PCA who wants to look at black culture from a reformed and covenantal perspective. The author, a PCA teaching elder, addresses issues from an assumption that God is the Sovereign One who has a purpose for all

people. He brings a unique, creative understanding of the African American church, African American theology, African American history and African American worship

Michael Emerson and Christian Smith **Divided By Faith Evangelical Religion and the problem of Race in America** (Oxford Press 2000)

In *Divided By Faith*, Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith probe the grassroots of white evangelical America, through a nation wide telephone survey of 2,000 people, along with 200 face-to-face interviews. The results of their research are surprising. They learned that most white evangelicals see no systematic discrimination against blacks; indeed, they deny the existence of any ongoing racial problem in the United States. Emerson and Smith write that evangelicals are not so much actively racist as committed to a theological view of the world with an emphasis on individualism, free will, and personal relationships which makes invisible the pervasive injustice that perpetuates inequality between the races. Evangelicals claimed that most racial problems can be solved by the repentance and conversion of the sinful individuals at fault. Combining a substantial body of evidence with sophisticated analysis and interpretation, Emerson and Smith throw sharp light on the oldest American dilemma.

Manuel Ortiz, **The Hispanic Challenge-Opportunities Confronting The Church** (Downers Grove, IV Press 1993)

"The Sleeping Giant" is the fastest –growing minority group in the U.S. Hispanics are changing society and the church. As a second generation Puerto Rican, born and reared in El Barrio of New York City, Manuel Ortiz knows firsthand what it is like to be Hispanic in the U.S.

Ortiz explores the unique needs and concerns of Hispanics in the U.S. Then he turns to key missiological issues, including Protestant-Catholic relationships, justice, racial reconciliation and ecclesiastical structures. Ortiz includes the resources of numerous Hispanic leaders working in a variety of contexts and describes their models for ministry. The book concludes with a focus on leadership training and education, with a particular emphasis on developing second-generation leadership.

Manuel Ortiz, **One New People: Models for Developing A Multiethnic Church** (Downers Grove, IV Press 1996)

In neighborhoods in New York and Los Angeles the multiethnic church reechoes New Testament themes as diverse cultures and social classes share ministry and leadership in local congregations. Otiz opens the treasure chest of multi-ethnicity with case studies that provide an honest chronicle of the multiethnic journey. Multiculturalism in the church is not a quick fix marked by simple tolerance for one another or by some idealistic retreat into politically correct language. Repentance for racism or ethnocentrism requires intolerance for sin; changed language is the reflection of transforming grace. It is the struggle to live out truth and justice and compassion as fellow members of the body of Christ. One New People will give you ideas and principles for improving communication, developing new leadership and manage conflict from someone who had been there.

John M. Perkins **Restoring At Risk Communities** (Grand Rapids, Baker 1995)

This book is the handbook for the Christian Community Development Association. John Perkins, urban ministry pioneer and founder of this growing movement. Perkins edits this work where he 14 other urban workers articulate a theology of the vision and methods of community development and also share a wealth of knowledge and practical experience about developing at risk urban areas through reconciled communities.

Mark Shaw, **The Kingdom of God in Africa: A Short History Of African Christianity** (Grand Rapids, Baker Books 1996)

A Westminster Seminary grad, Shaw is lecturer at Nairobi Evangelical School of Theology. This book surveys kingdom activity in Africa and the health of the African church prior to Islam, during the medieval centuries of Islamic domination, during the colonial and missions eras and during the remarkable 20th century growth of the church in the continent. It is organized around Augustine's vision of the City of God and Niebuhr's conception of the kingdom of God in history.