

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

10-2-2017

Cultivating Cultural Competence among the Leadership of a Multi-Ethnic Congregation for Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida Wisconsin

Mark Schumm

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, schummm@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/dmin>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Schumm, Mark, "Cultivating Cultural Competence among the Leadership of a Multi-Ethnic Congregation for Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida Wisconsin" (2017). *Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project*. 110. <https://scholar.csl.edu/dmin/110>

This Major Applied Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Ministry Major Applied Project by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

© 2017 by Mark E. Schumm. All rights reserved.

This project is dedicated to my wife, Joan, whose support, sacrifice and encouragement have been essential to my ministry.

CONTENTS

TABLES	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
THE PROJECT INTRODUCED.....	1
BACKGROUND	1
PROBLEM.....	5
PURPOSE.....	6
PROCESS	6
PARAMETERS	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE	8
CHURCH AND MISSION.....	8
UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH.....	23
SUMMARY.....	31
CHAPTER THREE	32
LITERATURE REVIEW AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT	32
INTRODUCTION	32
HOW WORLDVIEWS CHANGE.....	32
A NATIVE EXPERIENCE WITH CHRISTIANITY.....	42
THE ONEIDA EXPERIENCE.....	47

Early Oneida Faith Practices	47
First Efforts at Christian Evangelism	48
Protestant Missions to the Oneidas in New York Before 1820	50
Move to Wisconsin: The Early Years (1820–1900)	54
Catholic Missions in Oneida	57
Lutheran Missions	58
The Status of Christianity since 1950	59
Contemporary Challenges for the Church	62
OBSERVATIONS	64
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROJECT	67
SUMMARY	68
CHAPTER FOUR	69
THE PROJECT DEVELOPED	69
INTRODUCTION	69
THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY	69
RESEARCH TOOLS AND METHODOLOGY	76
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	78
SUMMARY	79
CHAPTER FIVE	81
EVALUATION	81
DISCUSSION	84
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Emotional Resilience	86
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Flexibility and	

Openness.....	86
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Perceptual Acuity ...	87
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Personal Autonomy	87
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Emotional Resilience	87
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Flexibility and Openness.....	88
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Perceptual Acuity ..	88
More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Personal Autonomy	88
CONCLUSION.....	89
CHAPTER SIX.....	91
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	91
CONTRIBUTIONS TO MINISTRY.....	92
CONTRIBUTIONS TO PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH.....	95
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	96
APPENDIX ONE.....	98
THE ONEIDA CREATION STORY AS TOLD BY AMOS CHRISTJOHN.....	98
APPENDIX TWO.....	104
BIBLE STUDY- CULTURAL COMPETENCE	104
SYLLABUS- CULTIVATING CROSS CULTURAL COMPETENCE.....	108
APPENDIX THREE.....	109
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION	109
Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory: Suggestions for Improvement.....	109
APPENDIX FOUR.....	112

BIBLE STUDY: THE GOD OF MISSION	112
APPENDIX FIVE.....	115
BIBLE STUDY: CHRIST AND CULTURE	115
APPENDIX SIX	119
SEMINAR: HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND THE ONEIDA	119
APPENDIX SEVEN.....	125
BIBLE STUDY: LAW AND GOSPEL	125
APPENDIX EIGHT	128
SEMINAR: CURRENT ISSUES IN NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRY	128
APPENDIX NINE	132
BIBLE STUDY: THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS	132
APPENDIX TEN	135
EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES	135
APPENDIX ELEVEN	140
CROSS CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY INVENTORY RAW SCORES	140
APPENDIX TWELVE	149
SAMPLE MINISTRY CONNECTIONS	149
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	160

TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1. Zion Oneida Baptisms 1924–1950	59
Table 2. Zion Oneida Baptisms 1951–2010	61
Table 3. Demographic Data for Participants.....	79
Table 5. Participant’s Initial High and Low Categories	81
Table 6. Emotional Resilience Scores	82
Table 7. Flexibility and Openness Scores.....	82
Table 8. Perceptual Acuity Scores	83
Table 9. Personal Autonomy Scores	83
Table 10. Overall Category Summary	84
Table 11. Participant High and Low Categories and Response to Learning Community	89

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge the contributions and support of the members of the congregations that I have served in the past twenty years; Ascension, Tucson; Calvary, Madison; and Zion, Oneida. They have listened to me, learned with me, and shared and shaped my ministry in more ways than I can count.

I'm also thankful to my brothers in ministry from Lutheran Indian Ministries. Dr. Don Johnson, Rev. David Sternbeck, Tim Young Eagle, and Bob Prue have provided conversation, friendship, and multiple opportunities for theological reflection.

It is my prayer that this project will provide some blessing to others as we seek together to fulfill the mission of God (Rev. 7:9).

ABSTRACT

Schumm, Mark E., "Cultivating Cultural Competence Among the Leadership of a Multi-Ethnic Congregation for Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida, Wisconsin." Doctor of Ministry. Major Applied Project, Concordia Seminary, 2017. 164 pp.

Zion Lutheran Church is a congregation composed of Native American and Anglo members serving a multi-ethnic community. A group of leaders from Zion took part in a learning community designed to explore Biblical understanding of church, mission, culture, and the history of the community. The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory was administered at the beginning and conclusion of the project to assess growth in cultural competence.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROJECT INTRODUCED

Background

In his high priestly prayer, Jesus prays that God’s people “may be one.” This unity comes from faith in Christ and is for the sake of the mission, “that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21). This is a unity that comes from the proclamation of the Gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit. Historically, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (hereafter LCMS) has placed a great value on doctrinal unity. We value *quia* confession to the Lutheran Confessions and faithfulness to scripture. We subscribe to the confessions because the doctrine contained there is in accordance with the teachings of Holy Scripture. Despite our struggles, we have significant doctrinal unity in the church. But the LCMS today is not very ethnically diverse. The Pew Forum on Religious life indicated that the LCMS is 95% white and among the least racially diverse church bodies in the US.¹ At least part of that struggle may be our understanding of culture.

Jack Schultz describes his visit to a Navajo Lutheran church in New Mexico.

Some years ago, I served the Lutheran mission on the Navajo reservation near Window Rock, Arizona. There the Navajo Lutheran converts worshiped using the old red hymnal with its archaic formal English (particularly difficult of English-as-a-second language speakers), they gathered after services for potlucks which included casseroles and Jello salads, and they had frequent ice cream socials even while most

¹<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-denomination/lutheran-church-missouri-synod>, accessed December 15, 2013.

of them were lactose intolerant. I had to ask myself, what were we converting them to?²

The Lutheran Church that I grew up in was hardly multi-ethnic. In Indianapolis, Indiana, and Omaha, Nebraska, I was surrounded by people whose skin color the same as my own. My schools and my church contained mostly white, upper middle class, third or fourth (or more) generation immigrants from northern European countries. I can remember that in my graduating High School class numbering 750, there were two black students. I did not grow up with the expectation that the church or my community would be composed of anything other than white middle class US Citizens.

My experience in college was not really different. As an engineering student at a large Big 10 university, my classes were composed primarily of white, middle class students. Racial minority or immigrant students were not readily assimilated into the study groups I worked with. The extent of my cross-cultural college experience was my senior project where I collaborated with two Jewish students. The project required us to work together for most of the semester and we grew to be good friends, but I don't remember very many discussions of theology with either of them.

After graduation, I took a position with a chemical processing company in the suburbs of Chicago. After six months in research and development, I was dropped into the role of a shift supervisor and technical support engineer. Immediately I recognized that the group of operators that I was supervising was different than I was. Many were black men and women from inner city Chicago. Others were more blue collar first and second generation immigrants. I discovered that I had a lot to learn about culture and people who were different than me. I rejoiced at the

²Jack Schultz, "Properly Dividing: Distinguishing the Variables of Culture from the Constants of Theology," *Missio Apostolica* 22, no. 1 (May 2014): 69.

small victories of making a few friends and seeing people working together to achieve common goals.

After three years in the Chicago suburbs, I took a transfer with this company to a regional plant in North Carolina. There the cultural changes were more pronounced. Almost all of the management team was white. Black operators and white operators did not cooperate with each other unless specifically directed to. Even more distressing was the fact that segregation extended to the church. There were two LCMS congregations in the small town. One was black and the other was white. We were encouraged not to attend the black church; that was not our place. There was also a very distinct white subculture. As a northerner, I was not as well received as my colleague who grew up in Tennessee. I distinctly remember that when I announced after three years that we would be leaving the company and moving to be closer to family, one of my operators (who I had a good working relationship with) pulled me aside and told me that he would miss me. “You are a Yankee”, he told me, “but you aren’t a damn Yankee because you know you don’t belong here.”

When God called me to explore the potential for full time pastoral ministry, my seminary years at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, immersed me in theological reflection with classmates who were mostly white. My vicarage congregation in the mostly white, suburban Dallas, Texas, was not only mostly white, but mostly mid-western transplants. And after seminary, I received my first call to Tucson, Arizona.

Tucson had a considerable multi-ethnic component. Our son played on the high school basketball team and of the ten students on the team, only two had parents who were both white. The congregation I served had many families who were of blended ethnicity. Most of them found a spiritual home in a church that worshiped as a mainstream Midwestern church. The community

of Tucson has considerable racial segregation, largely because the large Hispanic community tends to live in close proximity.

My experience in campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin helped me to see a vision for a church that reflects the diversity of God's creation. We were blessed to participate in a thriving international student ministry. Every day provided an opportunity for conversations with Africans, Koreans, Asians, Central and South Americans, and Europeans. Some conversations were theological in nature; others dealt with cultural differences and their impressions of life in North America. Our congregation had the opportunity to welcome a number of these students into fellowship in the church. During the four years there, I baptized two Chinese students and one student from Thailand.

Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida, WI, is a small congregation located west of Green Bay. The congregation was chartered in 1924 as a mission to the Native American community, specifically through the creation of a mission school for the Oneida tribe of Indians, an Iroquois confederacy tribe relocated to the Green Bay area in 1822. Early in her history, Zion had a Stockbridge Indian pastor and served a mix of Native American and white families (primarily farm owners).

Over the years, the congregation has grown into a blend of small town, farm families and suburban (mostly white) Bay residents and Oneida Nation members. Currently our congregation is approximately 85% white and 15% Oneida. Our community demographics are 20% Oneida with the balance being white.

Over the years, the involvement of Oneidas in the congregation has declined. From roughly 2000–2010, no Oneidas served on the church council. The average age of the Oneidas in our congregation is significantly higher than the average age of the reservation community. How can

our congregation improve our outreach and evangelism efforts to the Oneida community?

Problem

In his book, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, Mark DeYmaz identifies one of the commitments of a growing multi-ethnic church to be the pursuit of cross-cultural competence. Cross-cultural competence may be defined as a “set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations.”³ DeYmaz describes a cultural continuum moving from destructiveness to blindness to awareness to sensitivity to competence. Our congregation, though approximately 15% Oneida, would be characterized as culturally blind. Both Oneida and Anglo’s would probably agree that “all people are basically alike, so what works with members of one culture should work within all other cultures.”⁴ This unintentionally creates a barrier to understanding the needs of the Oneida community in particular and sharing the Gospel with them.

In October 2010, I accepted the call to be the pastor at Zion Lutheran Church. One of the reasons that I was open to this new opportunity was the potential for involvement in cross-cultural sharing of the Gospel. The question that this project will address is this: Can cultural awareness and sensitivity among congregation members be improved by creating a learning community where participants develop an understanding of the mission of God and his desire to see all people come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved connected to an increasing awareness and sensitivity to the cultural differences of our community?

³ <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=11>, accessed December 15, 2013.

⁴ Mark DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2007), 103.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to develop a process for pursuing cultural competence for a select group of leaders among the Zion congregation. As a multiethnic congregation, I desire Zion to be competent in ministering and sharing the Gospel both among the Native and non-Native members of the community. To this end, developing understanding and appreciation of other cultures and an excellence in cultural competence is important.

The purpose of my research is to measure the effectiveness of a seminar designed to change the attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors of the leadership of our congregation as measured by the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (hereafter CCAI).

The following outcomes are anticipated from the project.

- Participants will become more aware of their own worldview and cultural preferences.
- Both the Oneida and Anglo leaders of Zion will grow in their knowledge and understanding of the history, culture, and needs of the minority and dominant cultures.
- The participants in the project will be grow in empathy for those who share a different culture and more confident in their ability to interact, converse, and make friendships with those of different ethnic backgrounds.
- The participants will be more comfortable recognizing opportunities and bridges to sharing the Gospel with those of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

Process

The project involved a selected group of members of Zion, chosen from among the council, elders, and influential members of the congregation. The members (both Oneida and non-Native)

will participate in a learning community consisting of teaching units considering the topics of culture, worldview, Oneida and Christian mission history, Biblical understanding of culture and mission, the church and mission, and Oneida culture and spirituality.

The CCAI will be administered at the beginning and conclusion of the learning community to assess growth in the desired areas. Exit interviews will also be conducted with the participants to assess growth and suggest further areas of focus.

Parameters

The project is developed to assist congregational leadership to more effectively provide gospel centered leadership to our congregation and community. Some of the presuppositions of the project include:

1. Zion Lutheran is a multi-ethnic congregation.⁵
2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ redeems people of all cultures.
3. Developing cultural competence among our leadership group will assist the congregation to more effectively evangelize our community.
4. Each culture has specific elements in its worldview that shape the way the Lord opens up cracks into which specific, culture-appropriate expressions of the gospel of Jesus Christ can come.

⁵ By multi-ethnic, I mean the church is composed of members of different ethnic groups. These ethnic groups often have different cultures. Multi-ethnic and multi-cultural are often used synonymously though they are technically different.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

As we seek to faithfully share the message of salvation with our community, it is important to understand and agree upon definitions for words that we often use in the church. We will explore the Biblical definitions of church, mission, unity, and diversity. These definitions will help us to understand more about God, our identity in him, and his plan for his people. As we grow in our understanding, we will hopefully grow in our awe of his great love and our motivation to faithfully serve him.

Church and Mission

Before Jesus ascends into heaven he charges his disciples to make more disciples (Matt. 28:20). Even in the Old Testament, God's desire is for his people to witness about their God (Isa. 49:6). The church exists for the purpose of God's mission.

The English word "church" can have a number of referents; when people refer to a church they are often speaking of a building, a worship service, or a denomination. The primary Biblical definition of church is the gathered people of God.

The Augsburg Confession reminds us that the church is created by God. Church is the "assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is purely preached and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word."¹ In the Smalcald Articles, Luther defines the

¹ Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 2000). 42.

church as “holy believers and the little sheep who hear the voice of their Shepherd.”² By God’s grace through faith (Eph. 2:9), they are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit they trust in Christ. They hear the voice of their shepherd, “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending *you*” (John 20:21).

Our word, “church” is a New Testament word based on the Old Testament word, *qahal*, often translated assembly. In the Old Testament, it describes any kind of assembly. The purpose of the assembly drives the meaning of the word. One may assemble for war (Num. 22:4) or civil affairs (Job 30:28). Nations assemble (Gen. 35:11) and exiles assemble (Jer. 31:8). Even the dead assemble (Pro. 21:16). When assembled for religious purposes, the *qahal* becomes church in the Old Testament.³ The Septuagint translates *qahal* as *ekklesia* or *sunagoge* depending on context.

Church (*ekklesia*) is found in the New Testament 114 times. By far, the most references are found in Acts (23 times) and 1 Corinthians (22 times).⁴

In Acts, the church is a local gathering in a specific place (Acts 5:11; 8:1, 3; 11:22, 26; 12:1, 5; 13:1; 14:23, 27; 15:3, 4, 22, 30, 41; 16:5; 18:22) and a general term for all believers in Christ (Acts 9:31; 20:17, 28).⁵ There is one church that is gathered together in many locations.

The Christian *ekklesia* was both new and old—new because of its relation to and witness to Jesus as Lord and to the epoch-making events of his death and exaltation and the sending of the Spirit; old, as the continuation of the “congregation of the Lord” which had formerly been confined within the limits of one nation but now,

² Kolb-Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 324–25.

³ R. Laird Harris, ed. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Volume 2* (Chicago: Moody, 1980), s.v. “*qahal*.”

⁴ Colin Brown, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), s.v. “Church.”

⁵ Luke uses *ekklesia* (usually translated as assembly) in Acts 19:32, 39 to describe the riots that occur in Ephesus.

having died and risen with Christ, was to be open to all believers without distinction.”⁶

Paul’s usage in 1 Corinthians reflects that the church is both universal and local: “To the church of God in Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:2). Fee suggests that two great images of the church in 1 Corinthians are the church as temple, and the church as body.⁷ As the temple of God, the church is to live as a sign to the community around them (1 Cor. 3:16–17). Like the Old Testament temple, they are a place where others can see that God is present in the world.

Like the temple of the Old Testament, constructed with gold, silver, and precious stones, they are a precious divine sanctuary. Just as the glory of God dwelt in the Old Testament tabernacle and temple, so for Paul the church is now the place where God’s glory dwells.⁸ They are the temple because God’s Spirit lives there. As the presence of the Spirit filled the temple at the time of Solomon, so the presence of the Spirit fills his church and his people. The people of God are called to live and act differently than those who worship other gods.

The church is also the body of Christ. For just as the body is one and has many parts, but all the parts of the body, although being many, are one body, so also is Christ (1 Cor. 12:12).

The unity of the body of Christ is grounded in its members’ Baptism into the body and their constant reception of Christ’s body and blood in the Lord’s Supper. “The sacramental body ‘bodies’ together the ecclesiastical ‘body.’”⁹

There is a unity. They have all received the Holy Spirit who binds them together. Whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, they are one in Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). God has designed the body so that all the parts work together. And in this body, like all bodies, not all parts have the same

⁶ Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, : Eerdmans, 1987), 108.

⁷ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 18.

⁸ Gregory Lockwood, *1 Corinthians* Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 121.

⁹ Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 444.

function. There is diversity.

Both of these images point to the fact that the church is not simply a social organization. Like the temple, she is called to show the presence of God in the world. Like a body, she is called to live and work in a particular place and time. God calls his church to share in his mission. Faithfulness in following Christ means that God's people are to be missionary agents in the community in which they reside. They are to witness to Christ with their words and with their actions.

When asked to define mission, many Christians often equate it with being sent somewhere (more the idea of *apostello*) or with service (*diakonea*). Generally, it is connected with a particular task, often the idea of sending people somewhere far away with the intent of sharing the Gospel or perhaps planting churches.

Christopher Wright defines mission in this way. Mission means “our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission, within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation.”¹⁰

Mission, most simply understood, is God working in our world to bring all people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. God works through means, Word and sacrament, and uses frail, sinful, human beings like us to connect people to Jesus. Since the Holy Spirit is the only one who can create faith, the church is simply the agent of mission—but we have the responsibility and the privilege of being used by God for eternal blessing.

Because the term mission is so often misunderstood, it is helpful to constantly remind each other of the Biblical definition of mission. This clarifies misunderstandings and ultimately helps

¹⁰ Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 22.

us to see that mission is not so much about us as it is about the God who made us, redeemed us, and empowers us for service.

Wright suggests that mission is the hermeneutic by which we may read the Bible and discover a compelling and coherent story of a God who loves his creation and desires all to worship him. This narrative begins with God's purpose in creation, moves to the conflict and problems that are generated by human rebellion against God and his purpose, and spends most of the narrative in the story of God's redemption worked out in human history. The narrative concludes with the promise of the creation of a new heaven and a new earth¹¹.

While God's redemptive story may be most clearly seen in the life and death of Jesus, mission doesn't begin with the New Testament. We see many examples of our sending God reflected in the pages of the Old Testament.

In the first chapters of Genesis, God creates the world through the power of his Word. In the beginning, there is no favored nation, no tribe, no religious denominations; simply humanity in the person of Adam and his wife, Eve. God puts man in the garden to subdue and have dominion over the earth (this might more positively be viewed as exercising stewardship over creation). In the Genesis 2 creation account, man is to work the ground and keep it (verse 15). We might also translate those words as to serve and guard carefully the garden. The man and woman are also created in the "image of God," they are to be reflections of their creator in the world; they are representatives of the creative, spiritual God who made them.

The fall into sin corrupts the image of God, introduces conflict and brokenness into the world, and sets humanity against its creator. Even in the midst of rebellion, God is a God of mission. He seeks those who are lost. "Where are you?" he asks the man and the woman (Gen.

¹¹ Wright, *The Mission of God*, 63–64.

3:9). The remainder of the Bible describes God's work to seek and save those who are lost.

The book of Genesis continues to describe a pattern of humans rebelling and God restoring. Ultimately in Genesis 11, humans are scattered under different languages (cultures) and we are introduced to Abra(ha)m, the "father of many nations." Abram is called out of his homeland, sent on a mission (though it's hard to understand at that point what the mission is), and given a blessing: "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:2–3).

God is specifically designating a family that will be blessed for a reason; namely, that they may be a blessing not just to themselves but to all the families of the earth. In spite of the sinfulness of Abram and his family members, the family is preserved and protected and the promise is extended. The promise is repeated to Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22:17–18:

"I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

God extends the promise to the son of Isaac, Jacob (later to be called Israel).

And behold, the LORD stood above it (the stairway) and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed (Gen. 28:13–14).

Walter Kaiser reminds us that "the election of Israel, far from meaning the rejection of other nations in the world, was the very means of salvation of the nations. Election was not a call to privilege, but a choosing for service."¹² In the exodus from Egypt, God rescues a people,

¹² Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 22.

purifies them in the wilderness and sets them apart for service.

You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to (or we may translate the lamed as for) me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod. 19:4–6).

While all the world belongs to God, Israel is called to be an example or a case study as to what it means to be a people of God. As a kingdom of priests, they are called to minister to God on behalf of the other nations of the world.

In the dedication of the temple in 1 Kings, Solomon in his prayer remembers the universality of the God of Israel (a God who is God over all, not just Israel).

Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name's sake (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name (1 Kgs. 8:41–43).

So in the significant forming events of God's Old Testament people—creation, the call of Abraham, the Exodus, and the dedication of the temple—the God of Israel reveals himself to be a God with a mission. While the Old Testament contains, by volume, more material that speaks to the uniqueness and ethnocentricity of the nation of Israel, there are a number of significant individuals who enter the story to remind us that God is God not only of Israel, but of all nations and people groups.

A believing gentile, Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God, greets Abraham, blesses him and accepts Abraham's tithe (Gen. 14:18). Jethro was a priest of Midian who served as an advisor to Moses and offered sacrifices and a hymn of praise to Yahweh (Exod. 18:9–12). The inclusion of Rahab and Ruth in the story of Old Testament salvation also remind us that God

has always been a God for all the nations (Josh. 2:1–13; Ruth 4:17).¹³

In the Psalms, we see Israel at worship. It is here that we see all the peoples of the earth invited to praise the God of Israel, the God of heaven and earth. Psalm 22 concludes with the statement that “all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For kingship belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations” (Ps. 22:27–28). In Psalm 67 invites God to be gracious so that his ways might be known on earth and his salvation among the nations. It concludes with all the ends of the earth fearing (or worshipping) God. Psalm 148 calls on all created things to praise God. From the heavens and angels to the earth and all stars to lightning and hail, wild animals and all cattle, kings of the earth and all nations, old men and children are invited to raise their hallelujah to Yahweh.

Israel was not always very good at remembering that they were blessed to be a blessing to all the nations. The prophets of Israel were summoned to lead the children of Israel to repent of their self-centered worldview and to recapture their ministry of service to a world that need to be blessed by the God of all the nations.

In the darkest hours of captivity in Babylon, Jeremiah encourages the people to pray for *shalom* and the welfare of the city to which they had been exiled, to carry out their ministry as priests, to look to the interests of others. Thus, in the welfare of the city, they will find their peace as well (Jer. 29:7). In Jeremiah 33:1–9, the Word of the Lord comes to the prophet to promise that God will restore his people, they will be healed, brought back from captivity, and forgiven. All this will happen so that the city “will be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them.” Israel’s role is to be a case study for what it means to be God’s people.

¹³ Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, 40–41.

The prophet, Jonah, serves a negative example of mission. Called to be a “cross-cultural” missionary, he chooses to flee from the presence of the Lord and go down to Joppa and to head to Tarshish. God appoints a storm and a great fish to bring Jonah back to his senses. In the belly of the fish, Jonah at least acknowledges that salvation comes from the Lord, alone. Jonah goes to Nineveh and proclaims God’s Word. To his despair, the people actually listen and repent! Jonah sulks but God again searches him out, this time appointing a vine and worm to teach Jonah that the God of Israel is a God who is Lord over every nation and is concerned about the great city and even their cattle! God is a God with mercy and compassion that extends even beyond where his prophets think that it should.

In Micah 4:1–5, the prophet looks forward to a day when all nations will flow to Jerusalem so they might learn the Word of the Lord. Zion will be raised up, nations will beat swords into plowshares, and the nations will walk in the name of the Lord forever. It’s quite obvious that all this is the Lord’s work; Israel isn’t even mentioned.

Zechariah 8:20–23 promises a day when “ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.’” God’s design is that Israel be his holy nation, set apart from the world to witness to the world and to bring all nations to their God.

Among all the prophets, the mission heart of God is seen most clearly in Isaiah. In Isaiah 19, a day is foreseen when there will be an altar to the Lord in Egypt and a highway from Egypt to Assyria so that Egypt and Assyria may worship together. The Lord almighty will bless them saying, “Blessed be Egypt, my people, Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel, my inheritance” (Isa. 19:19–25). In Isaiah 25, in the great banquet of the Lord, the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Lord

will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth (Isa. 25:6–8). God’s work is for all nations, not just one. He is Lord over all.

In Isa. 56:1–8, foreigners are not excluded from the worship of God: “These I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all people.”

Significantly, Isaiah closes his prophecy with a Word of judgment and hope, giving us a picture of a day when the boundaries between nations are blurred. Foreigners will even be chosen as priests and Levites and all mankind will bow down before me declares the Lord (Isa. 66:18–23).

Isaiah also provides us with a clue as to how all this will happen. In the introduction to his commentary on Isaiah, John Oswalt writes,

The central theme of the book relates to the nature and destiny of the people of God. While this people is, on the one hand, destroyed and corrupted, it is called to be a manifestation of the glory of the only God in the world. This calling may be summed up in the word *servanthood*. The book then seeks to answer the question: How can a sinful, corrupt people become the servants of God?¹⁴

Isaiah’s book answers that question by inviting the people of God to trust in YHWH, a God with a mission, a God who appoints servants, and who will, himself, become a servant. In Isaiah 40–53, God refers to a servant (the predominant reference is Israel or Jacob, Isa. 41:8; 44:1, 2, 21, 26; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3; 65:8). The servant is one who is chosen and anointed with God’s spirit (Isa. 42:1) and whose mission is to bring back Israel and Jacob (Isa. 49:5). But bringing back only Jacob and Israel is too small a task. He is also to be a light to the gentiles and to bring the

¹⁴ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 21–22.

salvation of God to the ends of the earth. He will be a servant (slave) of rulers (Isa. 49:7), he will be raised and lifted up (Isa. 52:13 with echoes of Isa. 6:1), he will be crushed for other's iniquities and he will suffer and die (Isa. 53:10). In the knowledge of him, many will be justified and he will see the light of life and be satisfied (Isa. 53:11).

In the servant of Isaiah 40–53, we see a God who desires to appoint others to service. To be sure Israel is called to be a servant; they are God's holy nation. But Isaiah assures us that Israel is incapable of doing the work of mission. They cannot because they are sinful. So God will appoint himself. He will enter humanity and be God-with-us. The servant of God who is himself divine, will enter into human history to carry out God's mission in a personal, decisive manner.

Jesus of Nazareth described his mission as “seeking and saving the lost” (Luke 19:10). So Jesus of Nazareth, while focusing his initial ministry on the “lost sheep of Israel” (Matt. 15:24), also stretches the boundaries of ministry to include those on the margins and outside the limits of respectable Jewish society.

Mark 7:24–30, describes a Syrophenician woman who approaches Jesus, begging him to cast a demon out of her daughter. At first, he appears hostile to her (by calling her a dog). However, he engages her in dialogue and she demonstrates her faith in him to provide even leftovers for the gentiles. Jesus commends her faith and heals her daughter. In Luke 7:1–10, a Roman centurion, respected by the Jewish leaders of the city, asks Jesus through his friends not even to come under his roof, but to heal his servant from a distance. Jesus commends him, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.” His request is granted. John records Jesus' conversation with a Samaritan woman (John 4:1–33) where Jesus admits to being the messiah. Many Samaritans believed in Jesus because of the witness of the woman.

Jesus is sent into our world by God the Father. He is to live the perfect life for all

humanity. His death is the payment for human rebellion. The result of Jesus' redemptive mission is the inauguration of the new covenant with its promised forgiveness of sins.¹⁵

Shortly before Jesus concludes his ministry on earth by ascension into heaven, he commissions his disciples to make more disciples, going into the world, baptizing, and teaching all that he has commanded.

In Acts, the mission of God explodes to help us to realize that God has always desired his people to make disciples of all nations. The Pentecost experience (Acts 2) brings the Word of the Gospel to (presumably Jewish) residents of Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Rome, Crete, and Arabia.

Acts continues to record the work of disciples as they bring the good news to Gentiles. Philip is led by the Holy Spirit to explain the prophecy of Isaiah to an Ethiopian eunuch, a high-ranking official of the queen (Acts 8:26–40). Peter is given a vision of collection of unclean food and is repeatedly encouraged to “kill and eat”. Despite Peter’s protests, the Spirit working through the dream convinces him that “what God has clean cannot be called impure”. Armed with this knowledge he accepts the invitation of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, and shares the Gospel with a group gathered in the home. “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right” (Acts 10:34–35).

Saul of Tarsus becomes a powerful witness to the God of mission. A self-described Hebrew of Hebrews, Saul is wrenched from his job of persecuting Christians. Sidelined by an encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, Saul is blinded by his vision, and led to

¹⁵William J. Larkin and Joel F. Williams, eds., *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 128.

Damascus where after three days, he is greeted by a reluctant prophet of God, Ananias. God has appeared to Ananias and has revealed that Saul is his chosen instrument to carry his name before Gentiles and Kings, and before the people of Israel. Saul also will be shown how he is to suffer in the name of Jesus to bring others to Christ (Acts 9:15–16).

Saul, now called Paul, embraces his calling as apostle to the Gentiles. Serving as a true cross-cultural missionary, he journeyed throughout Europe and Asia, often preaching first in the synagogue, but always seeking to bring the message of salvation to those who were lost.

Paul took both long-term and short-term mission trips. Among his short-term journeys were trips to Cyprus, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13 and 14). Longer term trips to Corinth and Ephesus provided places for raising up leaders (Priscilla, Aquila, Apollos) and engaging a culture that was hostile to the Gospel (Acts 19:26–31)

Wright makes an interesting observation concerning Paul’s awareness of the work of God in his life and ministry. In Acts 13, Paul makes his witness before the Gentiles and synagogue leaders in Pisidian Antioch. He quotes Isaiah 49:6 with one important change. “This is what the Lord commanded *us*: I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

Paul has no problem applying the singular “you” which was spoken to the servant to the plural *us* (himself and his small band of church planters). So again, the mission of the church flows from the mission of God and fulfillment of God’s mandate.¹⁶

The task of the servant, fulfilled in Jesus, is now being carried by those who follow Jesus. They are privileged to share his mission and his message.

In the last book of the Bible, God is still sharing His mission. Louis Brighton observes

Christ reigns so as to enable the church to carry out and complete her mission. Among all the tribulations and sufferings on earth, the Lord Christ unveils his exalted

¹⁶ Wright, *The Mission of God*, 66.

glory for the comfort of the church and for the empowerment of her mission. From the time of Christ's victory and ascension up to the End, all history is controlled by the Lord Christ for the sake of his church and her mission of witness. And then that mission is completed the curtain will fall on this world's existence and the Lord will come to claim his bride.¹⁷

Brighton suggests that two sections of Revelation best illustrate the connection between the church and mission; the mighty angel of Revelation 10 and the woman with child in Revelation 12.

A giant angel descends from heaven towering over all creation. He brings a scroll that John eats. The scroll is bitter and sweet. John receives the message that he is to prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings (Rev. 10:1–11).

The way in which the colossal angel takes his stand, then, symbolizes the mission of the church, that is, in particular the power of God in that mission. Just as the gigantic angel astride the earth dominates everything, so now the church in mission will dominate all human life and events and history. As the exalted Lord Christ rules absolutely everything on behalf of God's people in order to protect them in their faith and in order to prosper the church in her godly mission on earth, so the angel demonstrates that nothing can stop the church in her mission. As little as any human being or force or any demonic opposition can overthrow this mighty angel, so it is impossible for the church on earth to be destroyed. And as the angel stand invincible, so the church will be triumphant in her mission. No matter what she suffers, even death, the church will carry out and complete the mission given to her by God.¹⁸

In Revelation 12, a woman with child (Mary, the mother of our Lord, who also represents the church) is pursued by a dragon. The dragon tries to devour the child as he is born. The child who is born to shepherd the nations is born and taken up to God. The woman flees into the wilderness where she is pursued by the dragon.

Though her spiritual warfare on earth against the dragon and the beasts is intense, God keeps his church in his watchful care and honors her as his bride for the sake of the victory of the holy Child, the Christ. The dragon is unable to destroy the church's holy Child because the dragon was utterly defeated by the Christ. Satan is thrown out of heaven so that he can no longer accuse the saints before God's heavenly throne.

¹⁷ Louis Brighton, *Revelation*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 312.

¹⁸ Brighton, *Revelation*, 272.

The dragon takes out his hatred of God and His Christ on the woman and her seed on earth, the church, in order to destroy her and her witness to the holy Child. In her earthly pilgrimage the church wanders in the wilderness, but she is cared for and protected by God because the church is to be Christ's bride.¹⁹

Until the day when Christ comes again, the church continues to carry out the mission that Christ has given her. There is spiritual warfare and suffering for God's people. Yet even suffering becomes witness. Peter writes to the scattered church,

But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame (1 Pet. 3:14–16).

Until the day when Christ comes again, God's church lives as missionary people, his representatives in the world.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy (1 Pet. 2:9–10).

Peter blends a number of Old Testament images to remind the New Testament people of their identity in Jesus. They have received mercy and adoption into God's family. Like Israel, they are chosen, elected for a particular purpose. They are a kingdom of priests, interceding for the people around them as they represent God to the community. They are a holy nation, called to be different than the unbelievers who live around them. As they follow Christ, their behavior marks them as those special people who belong to God. Remembering their identity, they are light to a darkened world. They serve, worship, and witness to the love and care of the God of mission who made this world and everything in it.

¹⁹ Brighton, *Revelation*, 315.

Unity and Diversity in the Church

While we often focus on how we are different from one another, a reflection on God's Word invites us to reflect on unity that all humans share.²⁰

We are all creatures. In the Small Catechism, Luther says that God has made me and all creatures, that he has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and senses and still takes care of them.²¹ As humans on this planet, all share the same space, we have common human needs for food, shelter, meaning and purpose in our lives.

All humans are sinful. The psalmist says, "there is no one who does good, not even one (Ps. 14:3). The fall has affected all of us. Each of us has personal sin and failure. We all live in the midst of a fallen creation so we experience pain, disease, despair, and death. All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23).

All are justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ has come so that all might have forgiveness. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). He is the only access to the Father. By grace, through faith, we have the hope of eternal fellowship with God.

For those who follow Christ, we share in a common calling as the people of God. We are members of the one holy church. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:4–6)

The Biblical record demonstrates that there is great cultural diversity in the church of Christ. Jesus in his ministry reaches out to Romans (Matt. 8:5), Samaritans (John 4), and

²⁰ The following observations are based on discussion in Paul Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 289.

²¹ *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986), 15.

Syrophoenicians (Mark 7:24–30). In Acts, the Gospel is shared with Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia among others (Acts 2). They hear about the mighty works of God in their own languages. Ethiopians (Acts 8), Romans (Acts 10), and Greeks (Acts 17) hear the Gospel. In Acts 15, the Jerusalem council is faced with a cultural issue which is resolved through the power of the Holy Spirit to emphasize the unity of the church while maintaining the distinctness of individual cultures. Jews are not told to be Gentiles and Gentiles do not need to be Jewish. There is a concern for faithfulness while allowing for fellowship.

This unity in Christ does not blend out individual or ignore cultural differences. In Galatians 3:28, Paul observes, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Roman society was quite hierarchical. The ancients celebrated and desired the honor associated with superior status, even though that status was set, in large measure, from birth.²² The new life in Christ, initiated by baptism, grants equal status to all. Distinctions of Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female were the product of the covenant of the circumcision in Genesis 17:9–15. Circumcision reinforced the boundary between Jew and Greek, the distinction between men and women, and the freedom to observe the law fully.²³ Those boundaries that keep people from enjoying being a full member of the body of Christ are removed.

But cultural, social, and created distinctions remain. Paul never ceases to be a Jew (Phil. 3:3–8). Paul indicates it is best that slaves if released should remain where they are (1 Cor. 7:17) and those born male and female remain male and female. All are one in Christ (present tense) even as they remain uniquely distinctive. There is an “already-not yet” tension that is expressed

²² A. Andrew Das, *Galatians* Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2014), 383.

²³ Das, *Galatians*, 383–84.

in the Paul's thought.²⁴ Christians will continue to experience the Gospel in their culture.

Lamin Sanneh observes that for every believer, the Gospel message is experienced through culture because the Gospel has already been translated for us.

Christianity is a translated religion because the Gospels themselves were a translated version of the preaching of Jesus, and that the missionary milieu of the early church necessitated further translations and, by implication, fresh adaptations of the faith. This is how, historically, Christianity spread across the world and penetrated cultures, a majority of which need an alphabet.²⁵

Accordingly, as Christians we live in a world with specific cultures which are a product of our environment. Jesus is the Lord of all creation and he rules over the worldly cultures of his creation. We are free to be human creatures living in a particular worldly culture and use the culture in appropriate ways. Every culture has aspects that are positive (with respect to Biblical moral values), neutral with respect to God, and idolatrous. Discerning Christians affirm the positive, utilize the neutral, and reject the negative.

A. Scott Moreau describes contextualization as

the process whereby Christians adapt the forms, content, and praxis of the Christians faith so as to communicate it to the minds and hearts of people with other cultural backgrounds. The goal is to make the Christian faith as a whole—not only the message but also the means of living out our faith in the local setting—understandable.²⁶

Contextualization would include not just the salvation story of the Bible but all the rites, practices, mission, and ministry of the faith.

Paul Hiebert summarizes some of the challenges of contextualization as Christians encounter old beliefs, rituals, stories, songs, etc. If all of these “old” aspects of culture are

²⁴ Das, *Galatians*, 384.

²⁵ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 129–30.

²⁶ A. Scott Moreau, *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012), 36.

discarded and ignored by Christians, the Gospel appears so foreign that it is rejected (and not rejected on its merits). Sometimes, the old “goes underground” and results in syncretism, the blending together of the two religions in a way that destroys the essential character of the new teachings.

Some have sought to respect old ways of a culture. They recognize and respect the high value people put on their own cultural heritage. However, if the old ways are accepted uncritically, the significant differences between the old religion and Christianity are simply ignored. It becomes difficult for the transformative power of the Gospel to work in the hearts and lives of new believers. And if old beliefs and practices are at odds with the Gospel, the result can be neo-paganism.

Hiebert suggests what he calls *critical contextualization*. Here the individual or church understands the need to place the Bible above their culture. They then gather information and analyze their culture as well as what the scriptures have to say about the question. Through teaching and reflection, the congregation critically evaluates their practices through the lens of scripture.²⁷

Paul’s visit to Athens in Acts 17 provides an example of the apostle’s approach as he evangelizes a different culture. The conversation begins in the synagogue and marketplace, where people are gathered. Paul was talking about Jesus and the resurrection and people had questions. He then engages the people on their level, complimenting them on their desire to know who god is and observing their statue to an unknown god. He proceeds to share the Gospel with them in a way they can understand, even quoting their own poets. He establishes points of contact, identifying the fact of common humanity. He confesses Jesus who has been appointed

²⁷ Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 183–91.

for the task and has been raised from the dead. When he speaks of Jesus, he encounters curiosity and rejection. We're told that a very few believed. It is helpful to note that this cross-cultural Gospel witness was not hugely successful. The point of our witness is not necessarily to convert huge numbers of people, but to plant seeds that other missionaries may later water, and to let God take care of the growth.

An example of how to deal with cultural differences can be found in the Augsburg Confession. The confessors were challenged by diversity in worship practices. The Roman church conducted the mass in Latin with little congregational singing. The Lutherans had translated worship and music texts into German. Roman Catholics observed some ceremonies that were eliminated by the Reformers. There was diversity in worship practices influenced (in part) by culture. The Augsburg Confession Article VII asserts,

For this is enough for the true unity of the Christian church that there the Gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word. It is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that uniform ceremonies instituted by human beings, be observed everywhere.²⁸

The Augsburg Confession Article XV also states that these cultural expressions (traditions) should be kept where they can be observed without sin and where they serve to maintain peace and good order in the church.²⁹

Charles Arand has suggested that adiaphora (which would include many [but not all] aspects of culture) might be evaluated on the basis of four principles:

- (1) Confession of the Gospel;
- (2) Continuity with catholic tradition;

²⁸ Kolb-Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 42.

²⁹ Kolb-Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 49.

- (3) Contextual sensitivity for mission;
- (4) Consensus of the church³⁰.

Arand concludes: “Fundamental to a confessional approach is the confession of the Gospel. All forms and practices should support the teaching of the Gospel. ... In particular, the Creeds center on the incarnation, death, resurrection, and exaltation of our Lord.”³¹ As Lutheran Christians who witness to Christ, the Gospel must always drive what we practice and what we say. We can never assume that others know what we mean by the Gospel. Arand compares this confession of the Gospel to the front tire of a bicycle. It is in the front, leading our witness.

The back tire of the bicycle is “continuity with the catholic tradition.” Over the centuries, how has the Christian church responded to the challenges of confession? “Besides showing that their teaching was congruent with the best teaching of the church down through the ages, our confessors also demonstrated that their practices were connected to and consistent with the best practices of the church from ancient times.”³² Sensitivity to context of history and tradition can help us as we share the Gospel in other cultures. Lutherans are part of the one, holy, Christian, apostolic church and we should help people to understand both our doctrine and our expressions of these teachings.

A third principle is that of contextual sensitivity for mission. It is necessary to understand the mission field and translate the Gospel into forms that are appropriate for the hearers. For this to happen effectively, the teacher who is doing the contextualization must be in conversation with the people. It is vital that the church clearly understand both the message of the Gospel and the culture of the hearers. We need to be constantly seeking feedback to make sure that the

³⁰ Charles Arand, “Not All Adiaphora are Created Equal,” *Concordia Journal* 30, no. 3 (July 2004): 156.

³¹ Arand, “Not All Adiaphora are Created Equal,” 157.

³² Arand, “Not All Adiaphora are Created Equal,” 158.

message is being heard in the manner that we think that it is being conveyed.

Arand's final principle (Consensus of the church) stresses our accountability and responsibility to one another. The consensus of the church suggests that during the process of contextualization, Christian leaders be in conversation with each other. Now, more than ever, there is a need for collaboration, conversation, and accountability. Christian leaders must be willing to engage in conversation, put the best construction on other's motives, and seek conversation and confession and absolution when we err. Arand suggests that these final two principles are similar to the training wheels on a bicycle that touch the pavement at different times as we try to balance the bicycle while moving forward into the world.

The model requires a high level of cooperation among Christian leaders. It calls us to put aside many of our agendas and have honest conversations about the differences that we are experiencing in our multi-cultural mission fields. This requires careful listening, constant grounding in God's Word and a continued understanding of the challenge of communicating the Gospel in cross-cultural contexts.

David Sternbeck is a Nu ch'al leth Native who came to faith in Christ and became an LCMS pastor. He served at Makah Lutheran Church in Washington among the Makah people. In his conversations with the elders of the village, Sternbeck identified a Native custom that seemed to open a dialogue on one's connection with God.

The ritual is called *oosimch*. Our people believed the distance between them and *Nas*, (the creator, first or true light of the morning) was so great that they somehow needed to be clean to communicate with him. So they would climb into the river in the morning, and call out, "*tissimch*" (have pity on us). They would then sing and pray for their families, community, and their environment. There was a liturgy, if you will. It would always begin with *tissimch*, *wikawika sheetla Nas*, have pity on us, we bow ourselves to you Creator of the morning light.³³

³³ David Sternbeck, interview by author, Fairbanks, AK, June 21, 2013.

Sternbeck pointed out to the Makah that their ritual assumes that human creatures are separated from God because of sin and their need for cleansing. He was able to share the story of Jesus and how Jesus had come to bridge this gap. He told them that baptism was that source of cleansing and that they had been waiting for the Gospel and the words, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” He reported that several of the elder women were in tears when they discovered this. Makah baptisms usually take place in the river. The words of the ritual have been adapted into a call to worship in the Makah Lutheran Church.

Life as a Christian is a pilgrimage. We can be at home in a culture because the whole world belongs to God, but we can never be truly at home in this creation. Conversion to Christ always involves a move of cultures; a transfer from the kingdom of the world to the kingdom of God. So Christians always live in (at least) two cultures; that of the world and that of the church.

As we encounter (worldly) cultures that are unfamiliar to us, we seek to understand and appreciate what makes their culture unique. Mission in a cross-cultural context involves learning the culture, introducing people to Christ and seeking to help Christians to critique and challenge the beliefs and practices of their culture. The missionary activity of the church reflects the desire that all people come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. In our individualistic, post-Christian North American culture there is a tremendous influence of individualism and personal preference. We can even see this expressed in the church. People are quite comfortable indicating their desire or preference for the church to change customs (or to leave them alone). We see opinions expressed concerning music style, preaching style, worship attire, etc. Christians are called to put aside their personal preferences for the good of the whole. It would be more helpful to be asking questions. Is this good for the body of Christ? How does this help us to build the body up? Does this help to reach people outside the church and to connect them to

the Gospel? What implications does this have for the mission of the church? It is this desire to put the Gospel ahead of cultural preferences that models that love that a sending God had for a world that was lost in sin. There is significant cultural diversity in the church while there is unity through faith in Christ.

In Revelation, John sees the community of heaven in worship composed of a “great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne” (Rev. 7:9). Our goal as God’s people should be to proclaim and live the Gospel with all so that Christ’s church on earth mirrors the worship of heaven, reflecting the diversity of all tribes, nations, peoples, and languages as they join together in the one song of triumph in praise of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Summary

Church and mission are often used in our congregational ministry without a clear understanding of what we are speaking about. In a similar way, unity and diversity are often referenced in our culture without understanding completely what unites and divides us. A theological perspective and understanding of church, mission, and the unity and diversity that God has created will help us to navigate challenges that come from interacting with other cultures and backgrounds. We will seek to explore how this has been experienced in the history of Native American evangelism and specifically in the context of Zion Lutheran in Oneida.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

Native peoples have a long history with Christianity. Yet while many churches have evangelized Native people groups, relatively few Natives are Christian.¹ As we seek to understand our Native friends and neighbors and we examine our own life in Christ, it is important to understand the concept of a worldview. It is also important to understand the history of interactions between European Christians and Native Americans. Understanding our shared history can help us to explore more effective means of sharing the story of Jesus.

How Worldviews Change.

Paul Hiebert, a Christian missionary and anthropologist, suggests that Christian missions have historically been less effective than desired because they have focused only on “changing” the belief system of individuals. Even though people make a confession of faith, there are other aspects of their lives that do not seem to be impacted. Hiebert in his book, *Transforming Worldviews*, suggests that we explore in more detail, the concept of changing an individual’s worldview.

A worldview is defined as “the fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, and which they use to order

¹ Lutheran Indian Ministries estimates that about 5% of Natives are Christian. www.lutheranindianministries.org/what-we-do (accessed 6/26/2017).

their lives.”² Worldviews then are the roadmaps that people in a given community perceive as the way of navigating through life. The important thing to recognize is that worldviews are not simply cognitive; they also contain an affective dimension and a moral (or evaluative) aspect.

In his book, Hiebert describes several worldviews. Of particular interest are the small-scale oral society, modern, and Biblical worldviews. The small scale oral society (tribal) worldview is an example of that held by the Oneidas and other Native peoples prior to their encounters with Christianity. The modern worldview would be that of most western Christian groups seeking to evangelize Native Americans.

Tribal worldviews are seen as organic and holistic. Life is comprised of beings and spirits, is centered on human activity and more organized more around groups (families, clans, tribes) than on individuals. Shame plays a more important role than guilt. Land is a source of identity, spirituality, history, and continuity. “For people in traditional small societies, the earth is the place where the living, the ancestors, and God meet.”³ Time is less important. People focus on events rather than on clock time. Stories are passed on orally rather than through written means. They tend toward more concrete thinking as opposed to logic.

Hiebert points out that small scale societies are rich in aesthetic culture. Art, music, painting, drama, and folk art all can give expression to the feelings of the people.

When it comes to “right” and “wrong,” these societies are very relational. Sin in these types of societies involves a brokenness between humans, ancestors, spirits, and nature. The consequence of this brokenness is a loss of peace and community breakdown. Reconciliation is experienced as a restoration of peace and harmony.⁴ Myths and stories are often used to share

² Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 15.

³ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 112.

⁴ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 119.

information and define moral order.

Hiebert observes that when people from small-scale societies come to Christ, it is important that their conversion touches all levels of their culture and society, and that it be corporate as well as personal. If conversion takes place at the conscious level of culture but not at the worldview level as well, the result what he calls *Christo-paganism*, “a syncretism in which the forms of the Gospel are present, but the heart of it is missing.”⁵

Characterizing the worldview of modernity is a daunting task. It has dominated Western thought since the thirteenth century. Hiebert suggests that the modern worldview sees the world as rational, material, and empirical, a large clock wound up by its maker and allowed to run on its own. A modern world assumes that religion will focus on the supernatural while science governs the natural. The world around us is studied and examined using rational methods. Truth is viewed as empirical and logically demonstrable. Science becomes the preferred method of knowledge and the scientific revolution has led to a focus on the world of the present which emphasizes comfort and material abundance. The emphasis on that which is seen as opposed to that which is unseen replaces the centrality of a creator with centrality of creation, specifically humans. This worldview is increasingly comfortable with dichotomy. This is seen in the separations of natural and supernatural, materialistic secularism and heavenly spiritualism and public sphere and private sphere. The modern worldview is also distinguished by a more mechanistic understanding of the world. Complex social systems are seen as being reducible to simpler and more basic structures. These basic structures are examined and designed, and engineered to produce the maximum results with a minimum of input by focusing on efficiency and speed and reducing all that is spontaneous and irrational.

⁵ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 122.

Hiebert suggests that modernity's impact on Christianity and missions is seen in an emphasis on "law and order."⁶ The church will strive to order and direct the actions of her people.

Clock time is valued instead of relational time. Clock time would emphasize punctuality because it is seen as being the most efficient for a group of people to achieve a particular task. Relational time would focus on the personal, conversation, and circumstances. A modern pastor will observe this tension if a Sunday worship service regularly exceeds an hour in length or if the service begins fifteen minutes late.

Cleanliness in modernity involves keeping categories ordered and boundaries well defined. Hiebert sees this expressed in a church concerned about clean and proper sanctuaries, rituals, and dress. We might also observe that systematic theology has many aspects of a modern desire to categorize and define what the Bible teaches.

Hiebert sees modernity affecting the church's view of morality. Morality is viewed as living by impersonal moral codes, sin is a violation of these laws, justice is punishment for breaking the law. In contrast, less modern societies often see morality as defined by interpersonal relationships where sin is breaking the relationship and salvation is seeing the relationship restored.⁷

Christian missions often adopt modern values when they strive to teach people to be on time, construct straight walls and keep buildings clean. When missionaries focus on accomplishing tasks and building bureaucracies, Hiebert suggests that they are communicating that they don't value people. Modern missionaries have often tended to focus on individuals in

⁶ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 165.

⁷ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 165.

conversion rather than community. In so doing, they make the Christian faith a matter of personal “decision” rather than recognizing the impact and importance of the community.

One of the unfortunate results of reducing the Gospel to cognitive beliefs was that the Christian faith became primarily defined in terms of “abstract doctrinal truth not everyday living.”⁸ Hiebert suggests that recognizing the affective and moral dimensions of worldviews can help to remedy this problem.

Affective themes in modernity are seen even though the public focus of modernity is on the cognitive dimensions of culture. Affective dimensions are largely restrained to more private behaviors—to music, the arts, movies, television, computer games, and religion.⁹ In larger group settings, people are expected to control their emotions. With the exception of attendance at concerts and sporting events, we do not see modern people publicly demonstrating their emotions.

Moral themes of a worldview describe how a society defines what is positive and negative. Modernity argues that certain moral ideas are “self-evident” and obviously good. Among these moral ideas are impersonal laws and impartial justice, freedom, equality, personal achievement and unlimited good.¹⁰ Increasingly, as the myths created by these ideas (myths of progress, redemptive violence, romantic love) become harder for society to accept, the underpinnings of modernism become more unstable. Churches that have embraced modernism somewhat uncritically find themselves in increasingly unstable situations as the worldview of the society changes.

The Christian faith creates a worldview of its own. The Word of God and the Gospel have

⁸ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 195.

⁹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 196.

¹⁰ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 201.

the power to change lives. Hiebert makes some useful observations.

In seeking to understand the Biblical worldview we must begin with the person of Christ and the Scripture that points to him, which is our definitive authority on his nature and life. We must also see Christ in the context of the Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament teachings of the early church leaders. We must study the early church fathers. Although their works are not as authoritative as the Biblical texts, they wrestled with the paradigm shift created by the coming, death, and resurrection of Christ. We also must study the history of church theology and of our own denominational theologies as these have sought to understand the Gospel in its context. Finally, the dialogue must include our sisters and brothers in young churches around the world today, who read the Scriptures in very different ways.¹¹

It is also important to examine not only cognitive themes but affective and moral themes.

Hiebert suggests three important cognitive themes: creation, Scripture, and the kingdom of God.

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and Earth.”¹² The Biblical worldview acknowledges God as creator and everything else as his creation. Hiebert writes: “The Biblical worldview calls us to reject the dualisms of natural and supernatural, natural and miracle, body and soul, sacred and secular, evangelism and social concern. It calls us to see everything as God’s activity.”¹³

God is a God of love who made this world and all that it is in it. The perfect world was damaged by the rebellion of humans. This original sin creates a broken relationship between creator and creation. To repair the brokenness of this world, God sends His Son, Jesus. Jesus is God incarnate. He stands at the center of all human history. He gives His life in exchange for our sin and brokenness and restores God’s peace with us and all creation. Jesus is coming again to bring a new heaven and a new earth, a place of perfect harmony between God and all his

¹¹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 267-68.

¹² Kolb-Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 354.

¹³ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 269.

creation.

“All Scripture is God-breathed” (1 Tim. 3:16). Human knowledge is insufficient to know God the way that he desires to be known. We require special, divine revelation, namely the Holy Scriptures. Hiebert suggests that it is important to recognize the difference between divine revelation and human understanding of divine revelation. He points out two dangers, the first of equating our theology with divine revelation. Our understandings are partial and shaped by our context. This was the error of modernism, and over-valuing of human reason’s ability to synthesize and communicate God’s revelation.

There is a second danger to the appropriate understanding of divine revelation. This is found in the idea that God is, at his core, unknowable. Despairing of finding a singular, universal, rational truth, some theologians have abandoned revelation in favor of the creation of “personal theologies” based on feelings and values. This leads to moral relativism and the idea of personal “truth.”¹⁴ This error ultimately leads to universalism and hopelessness. Lutherans acknowledge that there is more to God than we can know as sinful creatures. There is a goodness that is beyond our ability to understand. But God does clearly reveal himself in Scripture as Jesus is proclaimed.¹⁵ Christians affirm the gift of God’s revelation to us in the pages of Scripture. We acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit to call, gather, and enlighten his people. We see Christ as the final revelation of God. We acknowledge the mystery of God’s revelation and purpose and we subordinate our human reason to God’s self-revelation. Finally, we acknowledge the importance of the community of faith in interpreting the Scriptures.¹⁶

“Thy kingdom come.” The central message of the Bible is the coming of Christ, the king.

¹⁴ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 273

¹⁵ Gerhard Forde, *Theology is for Proclamation*, (Minneapolis,: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 106.

¹⁶ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 276.

He is Lord over all creation. He comes to reign over his kingdom, a kingdom that is present and active in the Christian church. “Those who follow him are in the sphere of the kingdom; they are a colony of resident aliens on earth. They are pilgrim people, people on the way, exiles from their true home.”¹⁷ God’s kingdom comes as he speaks through the pages of Scripture. “God’s kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, so that by his grace we believe his holy Word and lead Godly lives.”¹⁸ The heart of this kingdom is mission. The church is a community called by Christ to invite people to participate in the kingdom of God.

The church and believers are called to worship God, to have fellowship with one another, and to bear witness to the Gospel in a lost world. Of these three—worship, fellowship, and mission—the church and believer will do the first two better in heaven. It is only the last that they can do best here on earth. Worship and fellowship that do not lead us to mission are not true worship and fellowship. God has left the church and his children on earth to be his witnesses and representatives in a fallen world.¹⁹

Cognitive, affective, and moral components are central to the Gospel message. Among affective themes, Hiebert suggests holy awe and the fruits of the Spirit. Holy awe is the recognition and rejoicing in the presence of a God who is totally holy and completely loving. This God who has immense power and creativity has chosen to demonstrate his love for us in the sacrificial gift of His Son. This gift of His grace humbles us and causes us to worship. Our lives reflect the love of Christ. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). These fruits are reflected in the life of a believer in such attributes as compassion, peace-making, and living under the guidance and timing of the Spirit.

Biblical moral themes come from the heart of God. Christians are called to be holy as God

¹⁷ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 279.

¹⁸ *Luther’s Small Catechism* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986), 20.

¹⁹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 284.

is holy. They are saints (while at the same time sinners) who seek to live in harmony with God and his creation and in harmony with others under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They order their lives and make daily choices as they seek to follow Christ.

How do we make these daily decisions? Christ has promised us his wisdom and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We need to see God's guidance through Scripture and the Spirit, but in doing so we must first commit ourselves to doing his will when he makes it known to us. God does not make known his will as one option among others. The deeper question is not whether our decisions are right or wrong, but whether in making them we are seeking to be obedient to Christ as Lord of our lives. God has also given us the church and elders to help guide us in our lives. We are accountable to one another as well as to Christ.²⁰

We are invited to be part of a community working together to bring peace, salvation, and hope to a world that is dark and perishing.

Hiebert makes the point that conversion is actually a conversion of worldviews and this conversion involves cognitive, affective, and evaluative (moral, decision making) aspects. Our desire as followers of God is to reflect and live a Biblical worldview. In order to make this happen in our lives and in the lives of others, we want to understand how one's worldview can change.

One way to transform worldviews is to critique your own assumptions.

Examining our worldviews in schools and churches, particularly when we are part of the dominant culture, often leads to denial, then anger and hostility. Minority groups are aware of their own worldviews because they stand in contrast to the dominant worldview. Dominant communities deny that they have a constructed worldview. They accept without question the established ways in which they live.²¹

Through understanding the concept of a worldview, we may begin to explore our own worldview and the assumptions, beliefs and behaviors that the worldview produces. This can be contrasted to the worldview of Bible and consistencies and inconsistencies can be identified.

²⁰ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 297.

²¹ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 320.

A second way to transform worldviews is to examine our worldview through the eyes of others. This is often done as missionaries immerse themselves in a particular culture and then return to their homeland, more able to see the changes that are necessary in the worldview of their home culture. This is best done in conversations. Christians from different cultures can work together.

Together we need to develop credible Biblical alternatives to the specific worldviews in which we find ourselves. In the process, we become a transcultural community made up of transcultural people—people who can live in different cultures but whose real identity is increasingly that of an outsider-insider in all of them.²²

A third way to transform worldviews is through the creation of “living rituals”. Hiebert contrasts these living rituals with ritualism. Dead ritualism is the rote performance out of a sense of duty or obligation. It is a ritual performed without understanding, feeling, or faith. For this reason, Hiebert suggests that Protestants of his tribe have often been anti-ritual to the detriment of the faith. He suggests that these “living rituals point to mystery, root myths and metaphors, and fundamental allegiances, and express our deepest emotions and moral order.”²³ For Christians seeking to strengthen a Christian worldview, understanding the background, history, and theology of church rituals becomes a vital aspect of forming faith, belief, and lifestyle.

As we learn more about our worldview and as we study the scriptures the Holy Spirit works in our hearts and in our lives to transform us into His people. To understand the challenges and struggles of one who has experienced this transformation of a Native worldview to a Biblical worldview, it is helpful to have a conversation with a Native American active in the Christian community.

²² Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 321–22.

²³ Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 322.

A Native Experience with Christianity

Richard Twiss (1954–2013) was a Sicangu Lakota. He was cofounder of North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies as well as cofounder of Evangelicals for Justice. In his book, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way*, he describes his struggles with harmonizing a Biblical worldview and a Native worldview. While he interacts with American (Western) theological scholarship, much of his book is in the form of narrative, attempting to engage the reader in understanding how his Native experience fits into the Jesus story.

Twiss observes that for many in the Native community, the Gospel is not good news. Because Christianity came to North America in the company of white, European settlers, many Native people do not view Christianity in a positive light because of how they have been treated by “missionaries” in the past.

In 2012, I sat with some friends and acquaintances for their weekly luncheon discussion. They were all white Christian businessmen. We had been discussing white privilege for a few weeks, and I had been sharing a bit about bad missions theology, genocide, boarding schools, and the devastating effect of colonization in our communities. A gentleman I have known for several years, a highly successful businessman and supporter of missionary work in Mexico, said, “Well Richard, don’t you think that it’s better for your people that we, a Christian democracy, conquered your people? After all, it could have been the Nazis, Russians or Japanese. Somebody was going to eventually conquer you, so don’t you think your people are better off that it was us rather than someone else?”

Pure shock rattled my whole being. I and several others couldn’t believe he actually said that. It took a few seconds for what he had just said to fully register. Then I was angry and these words came like a flood. I clearly, carefully and precisely said, “So let me get this straight. Are you saying we should be grateful that your people came here and brutally sodomized us? Are you saying we are better off for being sodomized by you and we should be glad that you used the Bible as a lubricant to brutally sodomize us? Is this what you are saying to me? After a few minutes of dead

silence in the room, I then said, “The vulgarity of my words pales in comparison to the vulgarity of your words.”²⁴

While Twiss is trying to be provocative, his point is made. Native people are often hostile to Christianity and even Native Christians still bear scars from how they were treated. Christianity accompanied white Europeans and that came with a high price to Native people. Thomas Berger suggests that in North America, the population of Natives decreased by 95% in the 130 years following 1492.²⁵ Often, the colonists (usually Christians) came seeking to take land and resources.²⁶ Some missionaries of most eras and denominations often seemed more concerned with civilizing (Westernizing) Natives than sharing the Gospel with them.

Twiss introduces the concept of *liminality*, a condition of transition, among Indigenous peoples. Native Americans often have a strong identity with their land. As land has been taken away from them, they struggle with a sense of who they are. Rather than being a temporary experience (as the term would suggest), Twiss suggests that Natives are caught in a perpetual middle.

As Native people, we are in between the worlds of yesterday and where we will be; between traditional worldviews and Western rationalism; between community and individuality; between spirituality and religion. We are not what we used to be and we are still becoming what we are not yet. In this in-between time we experience confusion, deep loss, fear, the unknown, searching, and despair. In native terms, “our circle is broken.”²⁷

²⁴ Richard Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native Expression of the Jesus Way* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 61–62.

²⁵ Thomas Berger, *A Long and Terrible Shadow* (Seattle: University of Washington Press), 33. The actual number of Native lives lost in colonization is under considerable dispute. There are a wide range of estimates of the number of Native people present in the Americas at the beginning of colonization and how many of the diseases which ravaged the Native population were imported by Europeans.

²⁶ A well-known Native saying goes something like this: “The Christians came to our villages and taught us to pray. When we closed our eye, bowed our heads, and began to pray, they stole our land.”

²⁷ Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 65–66.

This question of this broken circle²⁸ is where one fits in. It produces a crisis of identity. As Natives have struggled to live in a world where much of the way that they identify themselves has been taken away. They seek answers. Some have attempted to fully integrate into the dominant culture. Others have tried to retreat to the life of their ancestors. Others have tried to find a home in both cultures. Ironically, Biblical Christians can probably identify with this feeling as they observe the recent path of North American culture. Christians aren't quite sure where we fit into this world either. Only the identity that we receive from Christ helps us to organize and make sense out of this fallen world and gives hope for the future. Twiss seems to appreciate the need for the Gospel but seems to place more hope in maintaining and developing traditional Native communities.²⁹

Recovering the Christian use of Native ceremony was a major focus during Twiss' ministry. He describes the early part of his Christian journey when he asked a (white) pastoral leader how he should relate to his Native culture as a Christian.

I distinctly remember him opening the Bible he was carrying. He read from Galatians 3:28 where Paul said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". After reading it he commented how cultures should all blend together for us as Christians and then concluded by saying, "So, Richard, don't worry about being Indian anymore—just be like us." Though he was unaware of it, essentially what he was saying was, "Forget your Indian-ness and embrace our white culture as the only Christian culture."³⁰

Instead Twiss argues that

the creator also loves Native culture. Jesus came to make our cultures better, not take them away from us. The creator is pleased when people from different tribes and nations worship him. He delights when he hears many languages and sees many

²⁸ Native people often speak of life as a circle with interconnectedness between ancestors, land, tribe, and family.

²⁹ Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 68.

³⁰ Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 104.

customs and ways to praise him. With our songs, dances and languages, we can be fully Christian and fully Native.³¹

Twiss suggests as an example of repurposing a Native tradition, the use of the sweat lodge.

“The sweat lodge ritual is a sacred place of divine encounter where a Holy Creator helps us face the frailty of our humanity, and pours grace, forgiveness, healing and love on a willing recipient in the name of Jesus.”³² He describes it in this way:

The sweat lodge was used for a variety of reasons but always for the purpose of prayer. It was done before performing other ceremonies such as the vision quest and the Sun Dance and most other sacred ceremonies. It was and is still used today to pray for healing from sickness; to petition the Creator for favor and blessings, for success in endeavors; to communicate with spirits through the leader in order to learn the outcome of future events; to achieve ritual purity; for personal health and well-being; to counsel, console and purify mourners; and traditionally to ready yourself for war and sanctify your weapons.³³

During his lifetime, Twiss was often accused of syncretism by his Evangelical brethren.

While he rejects the position that he is encouraging syncretism, he leaves himself open to those who would question his choices of blending religious rites without including critical theological reflection. The inclusion of communicating with spirits in a sweat lodge for the purpose of learning the outcome of future events would give many Christians a Biblical reason for being concerned with this aspect of the tradition. However, Native Christians might profitably use a sweat lodge ceremony for communicating with the Lord through prayer and Scripture reading.

Twiss enthusiastically promotes the use of Native culture by Christians including Native dances, music, sweat lodges, and pow-wows. Native culture places a high value on the wisdom and tradition of elders.³⁴ There is little awareness or concern that Native ceremonies may have

³¹ Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 186.

³² Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 148.

³³ Twiss, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys*, 147.

³⁴ In Native society, “elders” are the older members of the community who are respected for their wisdom and life experience.

been contaminated over time with false meanings that lead people to depend on themselves rather than on God. There is an implicit assumption that the traditions of the elders have been accurately passed on. But there are many examples, even of ceremonies among Biblical cultures that have been corrupted over time, leading people to focus on themselves rather than on the true God.

Old Testament Israel's worship was intended to help people come into the presence of the true God. Yet the religion of Israel was corrupted and called to reformation and reform many times by the prophets and by Jesus himself. (Isa. 29:13; Amos 5:21–24; Mal. 1:6–10; Mark 7:6–9). Twiss doesn't express any concern that some Native ceremonies may have been similarly corrupted. This doesn't mean that they cannot be incorporated into Christian practice but it does mean that theological discernment is necessary. He is also quite dismissive of the historic traditions of the church. Though white Christians were the bearers of the traditions not all Christian traditions are white European. Many have developed over centuries as a variety of cultures have interacted with the Gospel.

In some ways, we might be reminded that while the Gospel does need to be rescued from the “cowboys”, it may also need to be rescued from the Indians. Sharing the Gospel in new cultures requires honest conversation, thoughtful questioning, and trust and reliance on the Holy Spirit working through His Word.

Richard Twiss and his experience provide a unique and helpful perspective. He highlights for those of us who are not Native, the importance of respecting ritual and taking seriously the affective aspects of faith. However, at times, Twiss seems unwilling or unable to critique his own worldview. He appears to be viewing the Bible through the lens of Native culture rather than the Native culture through the lens of the Bible. In a way, he demonstrates uncritical

contextualization in assuming that what is Native is always best.

The Oneida Experience

The Oneida people have a long history with Christians. Understanding the story of their interaction with Christianity helps us to more effectively share Christ and grow a Biblical, Oneida worldview.

The Oneida are members of the Iroquois Nation (with the Mohawk, Onondaga, Cayunaga, Seneca, and Tuscacora). The Oneida homeland is in the western part of what is now the state of New York, around Oneida Creek, a stream that flows into Oneida Lake where the Oneidas had fishing stations. The Oneidas also controlled the Wood Creek and upper Mohawk Valleys and established hunting areas from the Saint Lawrence south to the Susquehanna.³⁵ They have always been recognized as fierce warriors and even today are particularly proud that they have fought on the side of the United States in every major conflict (including the Revolutionary War). In 1822, the Oneidas were relocated to an area outside of Green Bay, Wisconsin. Even before that time, the tribe has struggled with keeping the tribal land, maintaining a unique identity, and enculturation to the American “way of life.” Through these struggles, the tribe’s relationship with Christianity has been in tension as well.

Early Oneida Faith Practices

The religion of the Oneidas in early days appears to reflect elements of dualism and pantheism. A dualistic system is clearly seen in the Oneida creation story. Sky Woman gives birth to twin brothers: one being good, the other bad. The good brother was believed responsible

³⁵ Jack Campisi, “Oneida,” in *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 15, Northeast*, ed. Bruce Trigger (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 481.

for the creation of all good, while the other brother had created the bad things such as snakes, diseases, and crop blights.³⁶ The pantheism consisted of a number of spirits dwelling in nature: wind, fire, lakes, and trees. Each spirit was endowed with *orenda*, or magic power which must be appeased. Prayer requests and thanks were offered through the use of tobacco, the smoke of which carried their message to the spirits. Six festivals were observed throughout the year: Maple festival, Planting festival, Strawberry festival, Green Corn festival, Harvest, and the Sacrifice of the White Dog (New Year).³⁷ The New Year's Festival for some period of time included the sacrifice of a white dog, a ritual that showed some similarity to the Levitical Day of Atonement. Historians are uncertain as to the origin of the ceremony.

First Efforts at Christian Evangelism

Earliest mention of the Oneidas appears to be given by a Dutch journalist who visited the Oneidas in 1634. In 1647, British Parliament passed an ordinance authorizing a Society for the Advancement of Civilization and Christianity among the Indians of New York. John Eliot of Massachusetts translated the Bible into an Indian dialect that was published in 1661.³⁸

In 1667, Jesuit missionaries visited the tribe with mixed results.

Father Bruyas set out in September with one Boquet, a Frenchman, as hunter and interpreter, and soon arrived at the castle of the Oneidas, feeblest but proudest of the cantons. They too, welcomed the envoy of faith, raised a chapel, and came to listen to his sermons. They were not mere idle hearers; they took heed of what was said, and recounted it to the absent. Thus a woman related to her dying mother the glorious doctrines she had heard, the exhortations to a nobler life, and she believed. Bruyas, summoned to her couch, instructed and soon baptized her. Shortly after as he raised the crucifix before her glassy eyes, he asked – “Do you love Him who died for you?”

³⁶ Refer to Appendix One for text of the Oneida Creation Story

³⁷ Robert Ritzenthaler, “The Oneida Indians of Wisconsin.” *Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee* 19. (November 1950): 31.

³⁸ J.K. Bloomfield, *The Oneidas*, (New York,: James Steward, 1909), 67–68.

“Yes,” she exclaimed; “yes, I love Him, and will never offend Him.” Thus had God rewarded her for a conjugal fidelity which had made her honored in her tribe.³⁹

Not all were receptive to the message. Another account of the mission is less glowing.

The Oneida mission, founded by Father Bruyas, never repaid the toil of the apostolic men employed upon it. This clan was ever noted for its intractable, ungovernable spirit, evidenced even in the concerns of the league. To the faith, they were always opposed. When Bruyas began his mission, the Mohegans and Conestogues both pressed the Oneidas so hard that famine desolated the canton. Still no change was operated in their hearts; even some Christians apostatized; and the missionary, living on dried frogs and herbs, had no consolation but the baptism of some dying children, and the piety of a few old Christians.⁴⁰

In 1671, Bruyas was promoted and Father Milet took over the mission. Milet received the name of Teharonhiagannra, or “The Looker-up to Heaven.” He was at Oneida until 1684.

Appointed chaplain of Fort Frontenac in 1685, he served as interpreter in 1687–1688. In 1689, while seeking to minister to a dying Indian he was captured the by another clan. His life was saved only because he was adopted by one of the women. Father Milet continued in captivity until the fall of 1694, when he returned to Quebec.

Milet wrote about his experiences while captured. While he finds nothing kind to say about the British, he shows great respect for the Oneida Nation.

I had seen nothing substantial, not even a single word upon which I might rely, or by means of which they gave me any sort of satisfaction for all that they had made me lose unjustly at Onnontague; this place being a sort of a privileged and consecrated place to negotiate peace, especially in questions that concern the Iroquois Nation. I could never resolve to leave the Oneidas, to whom I was under so many obligations; I could never repay them, except by sacrificing myself in imitation of Jesus Christ for their welfare, temporal and eternal.⁴¹

Early missionary attempts were complicated by wars between the French and English and

³⁹ John Gilman Shea, *Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes of the United States*, (New York,: Arno Press and New York Times, 1969), 259.

⁴⁰ Shea, *Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes of the United States*, 275.

⁴¹ J.M. Shea, Ed. *Captivity among the Oneidas in 1690-91 of Father Pierre Milet*, (Chicago: Blakely, 1897) 55.

also by the behavior of whites who cheated the Indians and gave them liquor. A missionary reported to his society “It is from the bad behavior of the Christians here, that the Indians have had and still have their notions of Christianity which God knows, hath been generally such that it hath made the Indians to hate our religion.”⁴² The Oneida village was apparently burned by the French in 1696.⁴³

Protestant Missions to the Oneidas in New York Before 1820

In 1767, a Presbyterian minister sponsored by the Missionary Society of Scotland, Samuel Kirkland, established a church among the Oneidas. Kirkland’s message was heavily influenced by the Great Awakening in the 1740’s and New England preacher Jonathon Edwards. The Christian faith he taught emphasized determinism, stern self-discipline, repentance, regeneration, and baptism and encouraged the Natives to renounce traditional Oneida beliefs. He identified with those who called themselves the “new lights”.

The new lights emphasized the notion of the solitary believer standing naked before an all-powerful, all-knowing God. Family and community meant little because the sovereign God tried and tested each sinner. The new lights had a deep concern for personal, inner faith. Lost souls had to shuck off evil ways, confess faults, and stand alone to accept God’s judgment. New light theology demanded a constant round of rituals to repent, confess, and be reborn. Only then could there be personal regeneration and salvation. Kirkland’s theology of the solitary sinner and the angry God stood in stark contrast to the more communal Oneida ways.⁴⁴

Many of his converts came from the warriors who found in Christianity an opportunity to reject the historic tribal chieftains. The teaching and community that the missionary provided gave stability and religious validation to the political realities of the day.

⁴² Bloomfield, *The Oneidas*, 70.

⁴³ *Handbook of North American Indians*, s.v. “Oneida.”

⁴⁴ Jack Campisi and Laurence Hauptman Ed., *The Oneida Indian Experience: Two Perspectives*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988), 25.

It must have seemed to the Oneidas in the 1760's that they were a forsaken people. In spite of their proclaimed neutrality, they had been drawn into another corrosive war—French/Indian—with all its attendant dislocation. After considerable pressure from both sides the Oneidas reluctantly supported the British cause. In addition, pressure from Whites for land was mounting, and to make matters worse the decade of the 1760's was marked by repeated famines. Internally there was an increase in alcoholism, factional disputes, and crime. From Kirkland's point of view, his arrival could not have been better timed.⁴⁵

Native Americans suspected missionaries of having ulterior motives (obtaining Indian land), but Kirkland refused to accept land from the Oneida and spent much of his salary to help meet their physical needs. His goal was to have the Natives adopt the ways of the whites. Under his guidance, the Oneidas built a meetinghouse, a sawmill, a gristmill, and a blacksmith shop. He provided farm tools, seeds, oxen for heavy work and gradually modernized their village.

Farming, prohibition, and education were important aspects of Kirkland's program for the Oneidas. He believed that education would erase the Indian past and prepare the people for a Christian world. Conversion, while still a goal, seemed almost secondary to a program to assimilate the Natives into a more European culture. Those who opposed these programs became known as the "Pagan party."⁴⁶

In the Revolutionary War, the Oneidas, largely under the influence of their warriors, fought for the Americans, even to the point of attacking the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca villages and breaking the Iroquois confederacy. In return, Oneida villages were also burned by the British and the Iroquois. At the end of the war, the Oneida nation was spread from Niagara to Schenectady, where they lived in poverty. Alcoholism, murder, suicide, and factions were part of post-war life.⁴⁷

Kirkland reported a widespread spiritual revival after the war. Perhaps turning to Christianity for relief from the social pressures, by 1786 the Oneidas had accepted Kirkland's

⁴⁵ *Handbook of North American Indians*, s.v. "Oneida."

⁴⁶ Henry Werner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural conflict*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 148.

⁴⁷ *Handbook of North American Indians*, s.v. "Oneida."

teachings more widely than at any previous time.⁴⁸ In this post-war period, Kirkland also began to acquire land (possibly to protect the interests of the Oneidas) and began the Oneida Academy, a school which later became Hamilton College in 1810. The school educated both the Native and white children.

Syncretism was a concern. The Oneidas harmonized many of the Christian beliefs with their Native understanding of spirituality. Although they were baptized, many were not communicant members and they were able to harmonize listening to sermons while seeking out Native healers when they thought they were troubled by witchcraft.⁴⁹

Some rejected Christianity altogether. A young Boston missionary and a Seneca chief (Red Jacket) had a dialogue transcribed in 1805. The missionary insisted that the Great Spirit had sent him to proclaim his son, Jesus Christ, and that there was but one way to serve and worship God. To this, Red Jacket gave the following response: The Indians were better off before the white men arrived; if the teachings of Christianity are written in a book, why did the Great Spirit not give that book to the Indians? If there is but one way to worship God, why do the white people not agree on that way? Finally, Red Jacket asserted:

We have been told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We also have a religion, which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and to be united...The Great Spirit has made us all, but has made a great difference between his white and red children...Since he has made such a great difference between us in other things; why may we not conclude that He has given us a different religion according to our understanding? He knows what is best for his children; we are satisfied.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions*, 148.

⁴⁹ Karim Tiro, *The People of the Standing Stone: The Oneida Nation from the Revolution Through the Era of Removal* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 72.

⁵⁰ Wilcomb Washburn, Ed., *The Indian and the White Man* (New York: New York University Press, 1964), 204-5.

A brief Quaker mission to the Oneidas in 1796 does not appear to have borne much fruit. The Quakers focused their attention on the “Pagans” who were open to the Quakers because both opposed Kirkland. The Quakers’ relatively non-dogmatic approach to Christianization squared well with the Pagans’ desire to engage Christianity selectively and on their own terms.⁵¹ The Quakers approached civilizing and reforming the Oneidas with the plan to make them see their need and then to show them kindness. Unfortunately, the needs that they suggested (plough agriculture and private land ownership) were not perceived as real needs by the Oneidas. By 1801, the mission had closed. Karim Tiro observes,

An examination of the Quakers failed mission among the Oneida remind us that the fate of missionary efforts was determined by much more than the superior strategy or training often attributed to Quakers or Jesuits. As William McLoughlin, Clara Sue Kidwell, Rebecca Kugel, Mark Nicholas, and others have demonstrated, missions were always deeply implicated in Native community politics, and were more successful when Natives perceived the missionaries helped them meet political objectives either internal or external.⁵²

Religious divisions among the Oneidas created opportunities for those desiring Oneida lands to divide and conquer. Because of their religious differences, the Oneidas were more willing to separate, resolving political and religious differences by moving apart. Two groups fought for control of the tribe. On the one side were the warriors, pro-American in the Revolution, Christian, and more favorably inclined to white society. They were led by Chief Shenandoah. The other side consisted of the followers of Chief Cornelius who supported the hereditary political and Oneida religious systems, and were more opposed to white contact. They were pro-British in the Revolution. In 1805, the two groups signed articles dividing their territory around the Oneida Lake into two separate reservations. The state of New York later bought two

⁵¹ Karim Tiro, “We Wish to Do You Good: The Quaker Mission to the Oneida Nation, 1790-1840,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 26 (Fall 2006): 360.

⁵² Tiro, “We Wish to Do You Good,” 364–65.

separate tracts from the Christians.⁵³ Population counts of both groups suggest that the Oneida tribe was relatively small, numbering around 1,000 in 1763 to 1136 in 1827.⁵⁴

Throughout the eighteenth century, the Oneida tribe was open to refugees from other tribes. Tuscacoras joined them after 1713 and the Stockbridge tribe moved near them in 1785.⁵⁵

Originally from Massachusetts, the Stockbridge tribe had been evangelized by a Presbyterian minister John Sergeant. In 1785, the tribe was almost extinct because of their participation in the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War. Under the leadership of Samson Occam, a Mohican Christian minister, they accepted an invitation from the Oneidas and settled near them in New York. Still, a small tribe, in 1796, they numbered three hundred.⁵⁶ In 1833, they moved to Wisconsin, finally settling on a reservation west of Shawano in 1856.

Move to Wisconsin: The Early Years (1820–1900)

Eleazor Williams was an Episcopal missionary who was part Mohican and spoke several Iroquois languages. He visited the Oneidas in 1816–1817, became the leader of the First Christian Party and eventually converted a number of the Pagan Party (This became the nucleus for what was called the Second Christian or Orchard Party). Because he was able to speak fluently in both English and Mohican, he was able to serve as interpreter between the two groups. Increasingly, it was becoming apparent that the New York government desired to relocate the Oneidas as far away as possible. Moving beyond serving as spokesman, Williams began to campaign for relocation among the Oneidas. He received stronger support from the

⁵³ Campisi and Hauptman, *The Oneida Indian Experience*, 60.

⁵⁴ Tiro. *The People of the Standing Stone*. 193. In 1836, there were 722 in New York and 388 in Wisconsin. In 1853, there were 978 in Wisconsin.

⁵⁵ *Handbook of North American Indians*, s.v. "Oneida."

⁵⁶ Albert Keiser, *Lutheran Mission Work among the American Indians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1922), 152.

First Christian Party and was vigorously opposed by the other groups. With the support of leaders in the U.S. Congress and New York state, he received permission to negotiate with the Menominee and Winnebago tribes in Wisconsin. After difficult negotiations, the Oneida purchased land in Wisconsin. Members of the First Christian Party joined Williams in Wisconsin in 1822.

Recent historians have questioned the influence of Williams and his leadership in the Oneida migration: “The image of Williams leading hundreds of Oneidas to Wisconsin is simply inaccurate. It was not William’s pull that brought the Oneidas to Wisconsin so much as the push provided by large-scale Canal Era immigration of non-Natives to the Oneida homeland.”⁵⁷

Williams received significant financial payment from the government and the Ogden Land Company for his participation. While Williams initially was heralded for his service to the Oneida,⁵⁸ this has become a source of conflict for modern Oneidas. To this day, many Oneida believe that his motives to relocate the Oneida tribe were entirely self-serving.⁵⁹ The involvement of organized religion in their relocation has led some to question the motives of the church.

The forces impacting the removal of the Oneida people were complex issues including governmental policies, land companies and church policy. Each of these entities has one goal in mind – to get Oneida land by removing the Oneidas to the West. Obtaining Oneida land was disguised under the umbrella of Christianity and civilization, but the objective was clearly to get Oneida land.⁶⁰

Williams had a colorful life. He later married a young Oneida (he was 36, she was 14); in 1832, after a series of disputes with the tribal leadership, he was removed as an Episcopal

⁵⁷ Laurence Hauptman and L.Gordon McLester III, *Chief Daniel Bread and the Oneida Nation of Indians of Wisconsin* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 33–34.

⁵⁸ Bloomfield, *The Oneidas*, 152–60.

⁵⁹ Campisi and Hauptman, *The Oneida Indian Experience*, 131.

⁶⁰ Carol Cornelius, “Forces That Impacted Oneida’s Move to Wisconsin,” paper presented at Oneida History conference, June 1998.

missionary to the Oneidas and later in his life claimed to be an heir to the throne of France, the so-called “Lost Dauphin.”

The First Christian party were Episcopal and settled on the north side of what became the Oneida reservation. A second migration in 1827 brought a group baptized Methodist and organized into the Orchard party.

In 1830 there came to the Territory of Wisconsin from New York State, a group of Oneida Indians known as the Orchard Party. They made their first settlement at what is now Kimberly and called it Smithfield. Having been taught in the ways of law and order while in the Iroquois Confederacy and also in the teachings of Christianity by early missionaries, one of their first plans was to build a church and school, so they built a place to serve both purposes. This was the first Methodist Church between Lake Michigan and the Pacific Ocean. To their aid, missionaries came and went and according to the records, they were very strict in their rulings.⁶¹

A Methodist church was built closer to the reservation and a church, parsonage, school and cemetery were established. In 1891, a larger church was built (This burned down in 1943 after being struck by lightning). In 1895, a parish hall was built which still stands today. The school was closed sometime after 1910 with students being sent to public school or the government Indian School.⁶²

The differences in Christian denomination were a source of division within the tribe.

A quid pro quo soon developed between the groups; each managed the affairs of its sector, and each was represented in tribal councils in rough proportion to its membership. The Episcopalians generally controlled two-thirds of the political positions. ... Marriage between the two groups was frowned upon, and social contacts were few. Each had a number of voluntary associations, such as the altar, singing, and mutual aid societies. The leaders of each group were concerned that their members act “properly” lest the church be subject to ridicule from the other group.⁶³

⁶¹ Frank W. Merrill, *Oneida: The People of the Standing Stone: The Church's Mission to the Oneidas* (Oneida Indian Reservation, WI, 1899), 52.

⁶² *Oneida Methodist Mission: History, Organization, Activities* (Green Bay, WI: Reliance), 3.

⁶³ Laurence Hauptman and L. Gordon McLester III, *The Oneida Indian Journey: From New York to Wisconsin, 1784–1860* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 75. Division appears to be common among the Oneidas. The author of this chapter lists 8 other geographical or cultural divisions that are present among the Oneidas in addition to religion.

The Episcopal Church had several missionaries who were well respected by the community, sometimes interceding with the Government Indian agents on their behalf. An Oneida chief, Cornelius Hill, was ordained a deacon and later a priest in 1903.⁶⁴ The church had significant status in the community, serving as the center for education and advising the tribal council. They also served as spokesmen for contact with the wider white community and assisted in distributing financial aid.⁶⁵ In 1897, the Episcopal Church reported 1200 baptized members.⁶⁶ By 1910, the Oneida tribe in Wisconsin numbered 2301 people (692 children).⁶⁷

Catholic Missions in Oneida

The Roman Catholic Church is the dominant Christian denomination in the state of Wisconsin. It seems odd that the Catholics were not involved in Oneida outreach until 1899.

The real beginnings of this parish (Immaculate Conception) was made in 1889 by Msgr. Lockman, then the pastor of St. Nicholas, Freedom. He wondered why there was no Catholic church for the Oneidas, and he was told by Bishop Katzer that several attempts had been made to start a church but with no success. Father Lockman decided to try to gain converts for the Church and with the help of Gerald Van Susteren, a Freedom store-keeper, he began to meet members of the Oneida tribe⁶⁸

Services were held in a private home for a year with a local Oneida serving as interpreter.

In 1890, the Catholic Oneidas decided that they wanted their own church. They went to the government for an allotment of land but their request was refused. Eli Skenandore then offered 5 acres of his land for a church and cemetery. Permission to build the church was then given by the Indian Agent but this too was revoked. The Bishop obtained permission a second time, but because of the work of the enemies of the Church his was also revoked.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Bloomfield, *The Oneidas*, 345.

⁶⁵ Hauptman and McLester III. *The Oneida Indian Journey*, 81.

⁶⁶ Bloomfield, *The Oneidas*, 325.

⁶⁷ Laurence Hauptman and L. Gordon McLester III. *The Oneida Indians in the Age of Allotment, 1860-1920* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 68.

⁶⁸ *History of the Catholic Church on the Oneida Reservation* (Green Bay WI: Immaculate Conception Church, 1961), 15.

⁶⁹ *History of the Catholic Church on the Oneida Reservation*, 17.

The struggling church was aided by Norbertine Fathers and the Knights of Columbus. Only after fundraising by the Knights of Columbus did a full-time priest join the mission at Oneida in 1906. A second parish was quickly established closer to the center of town (St. Joseph's). Schools were completed at both locations in 1910 and 1913. The St. Joseph's location burned and was rebuilt shortly after initial construction.

Lutheran Missions

In 1898, Indians from the Stockbridge Reservation, outside Shawano, Wisconsin, approached a Lutheran pastor, Rev. Theodor Nickel, and invited him to do ministry among them. Since they understood English there was no language barrier and several showed a willingness to be catechized and baptized. The following year, the Indian Mission Board of the LCMS took responsibility for the project, sending a missionary, J. Larsen, from the Springfield Seminary. Larsen was replaced (due to health reasons) after a year with another student. In 1901, a church was built at what was then known as Red Springs and a school was also started.⁷⁰

In 1923, a Stockbridge Indian, Cornelius Aaron, was ordained as a pastor and sent by the Board of Indian Mission to Oneida to begin a mission and school. The reason for this choice was that the number of students attending the mission school at Red Springs had increased to 42 in the past year. During 1924, Aaron used the Government Indian School but after it was purchased by the Catholic Church, a new chapel and parsonage were built. Zion congregation was started in 1924 with ten members.⁷¹

In 1932, Rev. Aaron reported that the congregation numbered 175 with 21 voting members (ten white and eleven Oneida). The school enrollment was 41 (8 whites) and church attendance

⁷⁰ Keiser, *Lutheran Mission Work among the American Indians*, 157.

⁷¹ *Lutheran Witness*, date unknown, copy at North Wisconsin District Archives.

averaged 65.⁷² The first Oneida to join church leadership was N.J. Cornelius who was elected to the church council as an elder in 1931. Rev. Aaron resigned the ministry in 1935 to join the U.S. Government Indian Services. Aaron was the last Native American to serve as a pastor at Zion.

Responsibility for the mission was transferred from the Mission Society to the North Wisconsin District in 1937. A survey of Zion congregational baptismal records from 1924–1950 indicates that the congregation has a small but consistent Oneida minority.

Table 1. Zion Oneida Baptisms 1924–1950

Years	Number of Total Baptisms	Number of Oneida Baptisms ⁷³
1924–30	26	5 (19%)
1931–40	100	18 (18%)
1941–50	127	30 (24%)

A brief survey of Zion Voter Meetings shows that property, maintenance, and finances were a large concern. A new church building was built in 1937. The school was closed in 1948. Additionally, in 1948, the congregation minutes reported that Zion was paying 25% of the pastor’s salary with the North Wisconsin District paying the rest. District subsidy did not end until 1988.

The Status of Christianity since 1950

In the post-World War II era, the Oneida community was influenced by the suburban

⁷² Personal letter, Rev. Aaron to Rev. Fierke, Wittenberg, WI, March 29, 1932, copy at North Wisconsin District Archives.

⁷³ Oneida baptisms are determined by checking parents surnames with a list of known Oneida surnames compiled from a summary of Oneida student names from *The Oneida Indians in the Age of Allotment: 1860-1920*.

growth of the Green Bay area. The Oneida community continued to maintain much of its rural, small-town culture. The churches continued to serve as social centers. Rizenthaler reported that in the 1950's the largest church was the Episcopal with the Methodist being second largest.

Catholic and Lutheran churches exist but without many Indian members. Services are conducted in English with hymns sung in Oneida. The people take their religion seriously, in fact more so than many of the whites in the community. The Christian church is the strongest social and ethical force in the community today.

After one hundred years of Christianity no one even remembers what the old Iroquois faith and festivals were like. In fact, the idea is fairly current that the Oneidas have always been Christians.⁷⁴

In the 1970's, another researcher reports:

In addition to extended family ties, there were a number of Oneida organizations that brought community members together. Paramount among these were the churches: Episcopal, Methodist, Mormon, Catholic, Assembly of God, Church of Christ, and Lutheran. Among these, the Episcopal and Methodist were the largest. These two faiths had accompanied the Oneidas in their movement to Wisconsin from New York in the 1820s and remained the dominant religious institutions throughout the centuries.⁷⁵

In 1941, Melissa Cornelius gives one Oneida's view of Christianity;

The Indians before the white man had worshipped the Great Spirit and the white people called that paganism, and I believe the white people were mistaken. ...

My mother heard a story of how some great learned Christian came to the Six Nations in New York and tried to convert the Indians. At that time they had a leader called Za-go-yeh-wa't. He officiated at these ceremonies to the Great Spirit. He answered the white man and said, we worship the Great Spirit in the open space. We don't have to build a church. The spacious sky is the temple of the Great Spirit, and we fast and pray to develop strong characters. The white men went away, and later, after the Revolutionary War, the white men said we have to ruin the Indians morally before we can ruin him physically, so they brought whiskey and practically gave it to the Indian. An Oneida gave a speech here one time during a centennial celebration. There were some prominent white men who spoke, including Bishop Weller. The speakers said nice things about the Oneidas, of their achievements, and that their drawback was intoxicating liquor. If they would only leave that alone, they would make a better advancement. The Oneida man said, "Before the white man stepped on

⁷⁴ Rizenthaler, "The Oneida Indians of Wisconsin," 32.

⁷⁵ Gordon McLester III and Laurence M. Hauptman, *A Nation within a Nation: Voices of Oneidas in Wisconsin*, (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010), 17.

the American soil, the Indians did not have any bad habits; they did not know how to steal or to say bad words, so if there is a devil, the white people brought him here and it is up to them to take him away.”⁷⁶

Rev. Earl Smith, an Oneida who served as the pastor of the Oneida Methodist church from 2005–2015, recalls his high school years (at Green Bay East) being full of discrimination and recalls being discouraged from attending college by his guidance counselor. He believes poverty and hardship was a large part of the reservation until the opening of the casinos.⁷⁷

Zion Lutheran Church’s involvement with the Oneida peaks at the beginning of this period (from 1951–1960) and enters a slow decline. While overall church membership grows, the number of Oneida baptisms shows a decrease throughout this period. Over these years, there is a corresponding decline in Native leadership. No Oneidas were on the church council from 2001 (Bill Stevens) to 2010 (Charlene Smith)

Table 2. Zion Oneida Baptisms 1951–2010

Years	Number of Total Baptisms	Number of Oneida Baptisms (percentage)
1951–60	69	31 (45%)
1961–70	79	31 (39%)
1971–80	56	17 (30%)
1981–90	71	14 (20%)
1991–2000	64	6 (9%)
2001–10	59	8 (13%)

⁷⁶ Herbert S. Lewis, ed., *Oneida Lives: Long-Lost Voices of the Wisconsin Oneidas*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 188.

⁷⁷ Earl Smith, interview by author, Oneida, WI, September 11, 2012.

Contemporary Challenges for the Church

While the Oneida nation has a significant history as a Christian people, dating back hundreds of years, outreach to Native Americans is challenging. There are three significant issues; the memories of Christianity as a white man's religion, the increasing pluralism and universalism of North American culture, and the significant financial impacts of reliance on casino gambling.

Because Christianity was brought to the continent by white Europeans intent on settling on Native American land, there is always some suspicion about the motives of white Christians. Oneida Evelyn Smith-Elm makes these observations.

As I reflect on the effect of the Methodist missionaries who brought the message of the Christian religion to our people, I feel that, had they come with only the message of Jesus Christ, the outcome may have been better than it is today. Because the church and the federal government worked as one unit at the time, the goal became to change the "heathen Indians" into a white European culture.⁷⁸

The authentic message of Christianity among the Oneidas has not always been appreciated on its merits apart from the political and cultural realities of land and loss.

In 1986, the first "Longhouse" ceremony was reported on the Oneida Reservation.⁷⁹ It is difficult to assess what is taught in the Longhouse as their gatherings are closed to outsiders. Many (especially younger) Oneidas see this as a more authentic expression of what true "Indian religion" should be. The Oneida Nation has sought to emphasize this through the efforts of their Cultural Heritage Department.

The Midwinter ceremony is celebrated five days after our new year moon (January). This is a time of renewing our responsibilities for the coming year.

⁷⁸ McLester and Hauptman, *A Nation within a Nation*, 34.

⁷⁹ Rev. Earl Smith indicated that the Federal Government outlawed the teaching of "Indian religion" until the late 1960's.

The first day, there are three Great Feather Dances that are done. The first one is in honor of all of the title holders: the chiefs, the clanmothers, and the faithkeepers. The second is in honor of all the people who hold no title from the youngest newborn to the eldest. The last one is in honor of our Creator.

The second day is “Stirring the Ashes.” The ashes from the wood stoves are used to symbolize our Mother Earth. Wooden paddles are used to turn the ashes over and replenish our Mother Earth so that she can renew herself.

The third day starts out with “The Tobacco Burning Thanksgiving Ceremony.” Tobacco is collected from all the people. Through the burning of the tobacco, an acknowledgement, a thanksgiving, and an encouragement are conveyed to all of creation for the renewal and continuation of their responsibilities.⁸⁰

In contemporary culture, people pick and choose elements of spirituality that they find attractive. A desire for “authentic” spirituality by the Oneidas and an emphasis on cultural heritage has encouraged Oneidas to adapt some of the “Longhouse” traditions. In a reversal of the ancient practice of baptismal candidates taking a Christian name, some baptized Christian Oneidas have chosen to take Oneida names in Longhouse ceremonies. In many instances, Biblical Christianity is perceived as outdated or culturally inauthentic for Oneidas.

In 1993, the first Oneida Casino was opened on tribal land. While no figures are publicized as to the revenue generated by the Oneida casino, the state of Wisconsin, in 2006, reported that all Indian gaming in the state generated 1.3 billion dollars in revenues. The Oneidas appear to be using their financial resources wisely, seeking to serve the people of their community. As a result, there are not many social needs that churches might provide. A child care center is located less than a mile from our church, as well as a medical clinic, a new assisted living home, a senior citizen’s center, and several schools. The Oneidas even provide grants for organizations in their community.⁸¹ The net effect of the financial windfall generated by the casinos is that many of the

⁸⁰ Judi Jourdan, Ed. *Iroquois Traditional Ceremonies*, Oneida Cultural Heritage Department, Bulletin 16.

⁸¹ Our congregation was the recipient of a grant in 2008 to upgrade and install audio visual equipment in our sanctuary.

opportunities that churches have used in the past to open doors to the community (education, caring and social ministries) appear to be less open than in the past. However, pastoral conversations with our Oneida members indicate that many in our community are struggling with issues that trouble other Natives in our society; identity, poverty, substance abuse, sexual abuse, and broken families. There is great need for the healing and transformative power of the Gospel.

Christianity among the Oneidas has a long history. It has much cultural baggage as well. Many missionaries and their families and faithful Oneidas have labored to share the Gospel. For good or bad, Christianity among Oneidas has often intentionally and unintentionally been connected to land, money, politics, and power instead of the Gospel. The Oneida people have struggled to understand their identity in a dominant culture and Christian Oneidas continue to navigate the challenges of integrating Native culture into the faith. As the culture and circumstances around us change, an understanding of our history can help us to appreciate how and why we are here and help us to appreciate and effectively confront the new challenges of proclaiming the unchanging good news of Jesus Christ.

Observations

Given the stress of westward expansion, the clash of cultures, and the violence between Natives and Europeans, even under the best of circumstances, the sharing of the Gospel could have been expected to have been a challenge. After interacting with Hiebert's understanding of worldviews, it is easy to see some obvious errors in the approach of the church toward evangelism of Native peoples.

There is a consistent theme of lack of respect for Native culture. Almost all of the elements that Hiebert identifies as containing affective themes have been minimized or ignored or even

labeled as pagan or satanic. Language, music, ceremony, dance, and artistry were discarded as incompatible with the Christian message even though the message was often more about Western modern civilization than Christ. Additionally, the attempts of the United States government to civilize and enculturate the Native peoples by outlawing expressions of Native religion and culture inadvertently made the church and state seem identical to Native peoples.

While efforts were made to learn language and translate texts, other aspects of culture often seem ignored. Missionaries were often young men and often single. This makes sense given the danger and the difficulties of early frontier society. However, in an elder based society, sending young missionaries is not likely to generate a positive hearing. Like many Native cultures, Oneida society is matriarchal. Clan affiliation is passed through the mother of the family and women are largely responsible for the operation of the home and community. (Historically, men had the responsibility of hunting, fishing, and going to war). Sending missionary teams composed of both men and women rather than individual men may have been a more culturally sensitive.

Closely associated with the cultural disrespect is a consistent ignoring or misunderstanding of the importance of land in the life of Native people. Native Americans derive a great deal of their identity from their connection with the land. In some sense, the land becomes a kind of god. The western expectation that property can be sold (or even owned) is completely foreign to native understanding. For missionaries or the church to be involved in dispossessing native people from their land creates a huge barrier to the credibility of the message of the Gospel. While some of the missionaries seemed to understand this, more Christians should have understood and been very sensitive to this concern. It would have been helpful to have developed a “theology of land” with Native peoples.

There appears to be a consistent theme of promoting western ideals of individualism to a culture that was largely communal. Perhaps more effort could have been made to work with group leaders. The process of reducing nomadic hunter/gatherers to farming and Christian evangelism through schools had the collateral damage of destroying the family and tribal systems that provided order and structure in life. A more wholistic approach toward community and working through tribal structures with respected leaders, many have proved to be more effective.

When we survey the landscape of evangelism among Native Americans in general and in particular Oneidas, we can make the following suggestions for working to transform individuals toward a Biblical worldview.

First, we can recognize that conversion of worldviews is a process. Christian discipleship is more than a profession of faith, it is growing toward loving the Lord with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and loving your neighbor as yourself. Leading people to grow as disciples requires patience, continued instruction, modeling behaviors, coaching, and intentional investment in the lives of God's people. The church has always recognized the importance of catechesis and faith formation; however, it is even more important when the prevailing worldview of the community has very little Biblical basis.

Second, we understand that it is tremendously important for us to understand our own beliefs, assumptions, feelings, and morality. We need to be self-aware of our own worldview and know what we believe. We should be immersed in the Scriptures. We need to be humble and repent when our attitudes, beliefs and actions do not conform to the worldview of the Bible. As we grow in our understanding of our own worldview, we may explore the worldview of others seeking to find points of common ground as well as identifying points of disagreement.

Third, we can recognize and affirm the importance of ritual. Christianity has many important rituals in corporate, public worship and in family life and society. There is much to be gained from emphasizing rituals like confession and absolution, baptism, confirmation, and communion. There is a need for congregations to understand their ministry context and develop new rituals. There are rituals and patterns present in the Christian church that support faith life and growth. The cycle of the church year connects well with Native peoples and can assist in growing and understanding faith. Lutherans also have much to share in our understanding of sacramental theology. When working with a community that has a strong connection with creation, there is common ground in recognizing that God is working through tangible created things. While the use of ritual is important, the teaching of the meaning behind these rituals is essential as well.

Fourth, we affirm the importance of community. Becoming a disciple of Christ is not a personal adventure as much as a connection to a new family. We can emphasize learning and growing in community. Social structures are created and enhanced by accountability to one another. For a culture that places a high value on family and clan structures, the church can be positively perceived as a new and better tribe, a place of connection, identity, and common mission.

Implications for the Project

The participants in the learning community are engaged in an exercise to change their worldview. We will be trying to dig down and understand our own assumptions and our own worldview. We'll also be exploring the worldview of the traditional Native American and seek to understand their perspective. We'll also be trying to discover some of the affective dimensions of worldviews. We'll look at music and art and try to understand how others feel in different

situations. We'll be looking at why people make the decisions that they make.

The participants will be exploring the worldview of the Bible as well as the "traditional" Oneida worldview. Hopefully, they will learn to critique their own worldview and that of others and in so doing grow close to a Biblical worldview. As they grow in understanding of other cultures and understanding God's love for all people, I hope to improve their cultural competence. In doing so, I hope that they will also become more effective witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus.

Summary

Understanding the concept of a worldview helps us to recognize that evangelism is a holistic project, not simply a cognitive exercise. Worldviews contain cognitive, affective, and moral dimensions. For conversion to occur, all three aspects must be included. Our ministry should reflect this understanding.

History is extremely important in understanding how we arrived at our current setting. In working with Native peoples, we recognize that there is a significant historical context that we ignore at our peril. However, we can study and learn from the experiences of those who have gone before us and in understanding our history and the history of our community, we are better equipped to share the story of Christ.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

Introduction

This project is intended to assist key members of the congregation to grow in their ability to function in multi-ethnic setting and to be more effective witnesses of Christ. The format chosen was a learning community where participants would gather over two months to study the Scriptures, learn about the culture and history of their community, and explore the interactions between community and the Gospel.

The syllabus for the training was developed and the instruments measuring the attitudes and beliefs of the participants were obtained and described to the participants. The instrument was completed during the first meeting session. The learning seminar took place over the months of October and November in 2014. Topics included Biblical perspective on mission and culture, history of interaction with Christians and the Oneida Nation, understanding of worldview and culture, and sharing law and Gospel in different contexts. At the conclusion of the training modules, the instrument was completed and differences were tabulated.

The Design of the Study

The members of the learning community were recruited and identified. I began by inviting the membership of the church council, Sunday School teachers, Women's group leadership, and other active members of the congregation. Initially the Learning Community activities were structured around a series (approximately eight) of ninety-minute seminars. Topics were chosen to assist those participating to understand and appropriate Biblical understanding of mission,

culture, and the privilege of sharing the Gospel. Other topics included history and culture of the Oneidas. The intention was to assist the participants to grow in their understanding of culture, mission, and history and appreciate how that had impacted the sharing of the Gospel with Oneida and other Native people. It became apparent in conversation with congregation members that the length of the program would be a concern so the syllabus was rewritten to present the theological components during the Sunday morning Bible class with ninety-minute seminars scheduled on Monday or Tuesday evenings. Make-up classes were scheduled for participants who were unable to attend a scheduled event.

The schedule of topics was as follows:

The first study presented was Cultivating Cultural Competence on Sunday, October 12. This Sunday morning Bible class hour (from 9:15–10:15) was utilized to introduce the project to congregation members. Participants had been invited to attend this session to understand the overall process and what their participation would involve. Twenty-five individuals attended this Bible Class including all nine of the eventual project participants. The Sunday morning Bible class typically averages fifteen to twenty participants. Three visitors were present. The survey and the overall goals of the project were described. See Appendix Two for handouts. Each of the Bible Studies began with a devotion that was intended to ground the group in a Biblical concept for the balance of the discussion. In the introductory devotion, we looked at the apostle, Paul, and his personal desire to share the Gospel with all people expressed in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23.

In this session, the terms used in the rest of the project were defined and brief discussion ensued. Of particular importance was the defining and considering of culture. Biblical examples of cross-cultural leadership were shared and participants were invited to reflect on what makes our culture unique, as well as what makes other cultures different

The first weekday event took place on Monday, October 13. It introduced the project and the instrument that was being used (the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory). After a brief introduction of the syllabus for the learning community, the group took the inventory and scored it. Scores were tabulated, plotted, and discussed. A handout that gave suggestions for improving scores was distributed. Refer to Appendix Three. Twelve participants were present at this session.

The second Bible study was presented on Sunday, October 19, and was titled *The God of Mission*. A brief devotion introduced the idea that God was a God who cared about all his creation and people. A survey of significant mission themes in the Old Testament was presented. Of particular focus was the concept that at all of the significant times in the history of Old Testament Israel, God was working to bring all nations into His kingdom. (See Appendix Four). Because the congregation was reading through the Gospel of Matthew during the Sunday morning worship service, it was thought that the New Testament mission emphasis could be adequately presented at that time. Seven of the nine participants were in attendance at this session. Total Bible study attendance was 16.

On Sunday, November 2, our third Bible study, *Christ and Culture*, was shared. The opening devotion directed our attention to Paul's interaction with the people of Athens in Acts 17:16–32 (See Appendix Five). We then focused on definitions of mission and culture.

As part of our discussion, I asked the participants to listen to four selections of music. As we were observing All Saints Sunday, all of the selections dealt with the church triumphant. I asked the group to make notes about their feelings and opinions but not to share their comments until after all four selections had played.

The four music clips that were presented were as follows (all selections were accessed on

October 28, 2014);

- Behold a Host Arrayed in White

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jzp9BR3_Hoc). This was a traditional European treatment of what I thought was a familiar hymn. I was expecting the group to respond well to it, however most of group didn't find it very interesting.

- Broken Walls, A River of Life

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6H4Qjp1m2cM>). The group is led by Jonathon Maracle, a Mohawk Native. It is representative of a Native Christian strain of worship music that has gained popularity in the last twenty years. I expected that most of the non-Native congregation members would find it strange, but many told me that they liked it.

- Mercy Me, I Can Only Imagine (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_lrrq_opng).

This is representative of top 40 contemporary Christian pop songs often used in worship settings. Because it sounds like a country song, I was expecting that most of our group would like it and they did.

- Soweto Gospel Choir, Mudimo (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6fXr4xDct0>).

I tried to make the last selection something that everyone would find different. This song is sung by a South African children's choir and has some traditional and African influences. Most of the people in the group didn't like it as well as the others.

We concluded by reflecting on the unique aspects of our church culture, community culture, and Biblical culture. We spend some time critiquing the aspects of our Green Bay culture that are less than Biblical. Twenty-two congregation members were present at this Bible

study (including all nine of the project participants).

Tuesday, November 4, we shared a seminar on Native Americans and Christianity. Refer to Appendix Six. A brief history of the Christian connection with the Oneida Nation was presented. Discussion indicated that many were unaware of the long history, as well as some of the negative experiences that Oneidas and Native peoples had with Christians. Considerable time was devoted to a discussion of a conversation between a missionary and Seneca leader, Red Jacket (See Appendix Six). Participants worked in small groups to clarify their understanding of the issues that were involved as well as how they might have responded. Eight of the nine project participants were present.

The fourth Bible study, *Law and Gospel*, was presented on Sunday, November 9 (See Appendix Seven). Understanding the division of law and Gospel is an important Lutheran contribution to reading and studying the Scriptures. The opening devotion reading from Psalm 32 provided an example of how the law exposed sin for the psalmist. We discussed the way that the psalmist experienced the law and the relief that the Gospel brings. The Bible study explored in more detail the fall of man into sin in Gen. 3 and the implications of the fall. One of the challenges of involvement in Native ministry is that the law is often experienced in different ways than the more traditional Christian understandings of sin and grace.

Unbelievers very often encounter evil without defining it, or its impact in their lives, in terms of what they do wrong. As believers begin Christian conversations, they must be aware that their hearers conceptualize what is wrong in the world in a variety of ways, all of which can provide the starting point for an examination and evaluation of the false gods of the hearer's life.¹

Native people often see evil expressed in shame, helplessness, brokenness, or addictions. In order to help the participants understand the deeper implications of both the law and the Gospel,

¹ Robert Kolb, *Speaking the Gospel Today* (St. Louis,: Concordia, 1995), 105.

we explored the table found on page 122 of *Speaking the Gospel Today*. We discussed examples of people who might be representative of these perspectives and how the Gospel had the power to change their lives. Six of the nine participants attended this study. Total attendance was 17.

Our final seminar met on Tuesday, November 11, and discussed Current Issues in Native Ministry. See Appendix Eight. We began by exploring the conversation with Red Jacket and identifying some of the possible errors that were made as the missionary presented the Biblical story to Red Jacket. The group raised the concern that the missionary appeared rude and dismissive. They also recognized that he did not show respect for the elders and the traditions of the Native people. We discussed Red Jacket's objections and noted that while we can take some responsibility for our actions in sharing the Gospel, one of Red Jacket's biggest objections is to the particularity of Jesus being necessary for salvation. We talked about the uniqueness of Jesus and how he is the one in whom we trust for our salvation.

We watched a video from Lutheran Indian Ministries. Titled Raising Native Leaders,² this video narrates the story of Lutheran Indian Ministries and the challenges that they face in seeking to develop Native people to share the Christian message with their own people. We discussed what aspects of these challenges we see in our community.

We also discussed some of the unique aspects of the Oneida creation story. Participants noted that the story explains from the Oneida perspective how good and evil came into the world. they also noted the close connection with nature and importance of women in the story. All nine of the participants attended this seminar.

Sunday, November 16, the Bible class explored the theology of the cross. See Appendix Nine. Because Native communities often struggle with the effects of brokenness in their family,

² <https://vimeo.com/105908971>, accessed November 11, 2014.

tribal, social, and personal lives, an understanding of the theology of the cross has become very useful to sharing a Biblical Gospel witness. We began this session with a reading from Richard Eyer about a pastoral care situation in a hospital.

Mr Wittl had asked for a visit from the hospital chaplain before surgery. Arriving at his room, I found him sitting in the chair beside his bed, trembling at the thought of cardiac bypass surgery the next morning. Hardened, not by temperament but by manual labor, he said little but asked me to pray with him. We prayed that all would go smoothly.

That was nearly two months ago, and Mr. Wittl is still a patient in our intensive care unit. He is alert, but he is respirator dependent and requires kidney dialysis several times a week. Seemingly our prayers for a smooth recover without complications had gone awry.

What is remarkable about Mr. Wittl, however, is his simple yet enduring faith in God. Although he has not been able to speak for nearly two months because of the respirator, he asks me each day (through hand signals) to pray with him. I do. We daily ask for faith to entrust to God all that comes that day. We also pray for the will of God to be done.

Each time we pray, Mr. Wittl struggles to raise his hand to make the sign of the cross on his head and heart. This sign of the cross is no superficial ritual for Mr. Wittl; he knows it is the cross that lies at the heart of one's confidence in the Lord.

Mr. Wittl has a daughter. As we frequently stand together at the bedside, I often feel weary, frustrated, and empathetic toward Mr. Wittl's sufferings; but his daughter is all smiles and lighthearted, reassuring her father that all will be well and that God will heal him. "There is nothing to worry about," she says. But somehow, her father doesn't seem comforted by this and turns to me to make the sign of the cross. Unlike her father, Mr. Wittl's daughter subscribes to a common misunderstanding of faith. She believes that her father will be healed, and she believes that faith is the way to health. There is no place for weakness and suffering in her understanding of the will of God. But Mr. Wittl has surrendered to the will of God in confidence that God is still on his side. Mr. Wittl's daughter, meanwhile, is still trying to get God to surrender to her will for her father.³

We discussed this story and then looked at some Bible passages and discussed them in the light of the theology of the cross. We then explored a contemporary example.

³ Richard C. Eyer, *Pastoral Care under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1994), 25–26.

The national news had been reporting on the story of Brittany Maynard, a young woman suffering from brain cancer, who had moved to Oregon to be allowed to die by assisted suicide. Maggie Karner, an LCMS member suffering with a similar brain tumor, gave an empathetic, Gospel-centered response to Brittany. We watched Maggie's video,⁴ and discussed her witness. Twenty-two attended the class that day including six of the learning community participants.

During the week of November 20, the participants were encouraged to visit the Oneida Cultural Center Museum which is about six miles from our church. The museum has a series of exhibits on Oneida history and culture including the Oneida creation story, the Great Law of Peace, Oneida contributions to United States history including help provided to American troops in the Revolutionary War and the similarities between the Iroquois confederacy and the development of the U.S. constitution. There are also examples of Oneida lacework, beadwork, pottery, and clothing and reflections on the Oneida experience of resettlement in Wisconsin. Participants were asked to reflect on what they were learning or discovering about the Oneidas and their history and culture. Six participants visited the museum.

At the conclusion of the learning community, participants met in small groups to discuss what they had learned. They completed the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory and gave feedback on the experience. Refer to Appendix Ten for a summary of their thoughts.

Research Tools and Methodology

The instrument used for the study was the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (hereafter CCAI). It is the result of collaboration between a human relations consultant specializing in cross-cultural training and a psychologist with a concentration in assessment and diagnosis. The

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZR-qB3HaQY>, accessed November 16, 2014.

assessment was developed in response to a need expressed by those working in cross-cultural environments for instrument that would assess the respondent's ability to adapt to and thrive in a different culture. Four skill sets were identified, questions were developed, and the inventory was tested. The current version of the CCAI was published in January 1992.⁵

The instrument was developed for individuals who had an interest in pursuing cross-cultural experiences. In other words, they had a desire to change. This may not have been the case for our subject group. The subject group that was surveyed to develop the instrument was considerably younger, more educated and had more multi-cultural experiences than our sample group. Despite these differences, the instrument provided some useful information.

The four scales of the CCAI are as follows: emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy.

Emotional resilience (hereafter ER) focuses on aspects of cross-cultural experiences that may produce negative feelings. It seeks to measure the degree to which an individual can overcome those feelings and react positively to new experiences

The ER score indicates the extent to which a person can regulate his or her emotions, maintain emotional equilibrium you are changing environment, and deal with the setbacks and difficult feelings that are a normal part of the cross-cultural experience.⁶

The *flexibility/openness* (hereafter F/O) scale measures the extent to which a person enjoys different ways of thinking and behaving. Open, flexible people have a positive attitude toward things that are new or unfamiliar.

People who are open and flexible tend to be nonjudgmental and tolerant of people who are different from them. Moreover, they expect to like these people. They enjoy interacting with, learning about, and conversing with a wide variety of people. They

⁵ Colleen Kelley and Judith Meyer, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual* (Arlington, VA: Vangent, 1995), 12.

⁶ Kelley and Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*, 15.

are inquisitive, and they enjoy diversity. Open, flexible people are comfortable with those who are different from them and do not feel lonely around such people.⁷

Perceptual acuity (hereafter PAC) is associated with confidence in one's ability to accurately perceive the feelings of others. It is also connected with valuing another culture and being willing to suspend judgment of others. It also seeks to measure people's sensitivity to verbal and nonverbal cues as they interpret those cues in the context of another culture.

People sometimes find it difficult to communicate with people from other cultures because of familiar or confusing language, values, assumptions, and customs. People who are perceptually acute are attentive to verbal and nonverbal behavior, to the context of communication, and interpersonal relations. These people are sensitive to the feelings of others and to the effect they have on others. They tend to be empathetic and highly accurate communicators.⁸

Personal autonomy (hereafter PA) seeks to measure a level of self-confidence, understanding of personal values, and self-empowerment.

People with high personal autonomy generally feel in control of their own environment and are the final judges of their own actions. They tend to set their own goals and make their own decisions. They are aware of their own personal power and use it in nonmanipulative ways.⁹

Participants in the study took the evaluation instrument at the beginning and conclusion of the learning community experience. Results were summarized and tabulated for the group and individually. Several participants' scores were selected to evaluate on an individual basis.

Project Implementation

Twelve people began the process and nine completed the learning community activities and the second administration of the CCAI (Subjects 10–12 did not complete both instruments). The demographics for the group are summarized in Table 3.

⁷ Kelley and Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*, 16.

⁸ Kelley and Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*, 17.

⁹ Kelley and Meyers, *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*, 18.

Table 3. Demographic Data for Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Years in Community	Years at Zion	Ethnicity	Highest Degree Completed
1	Female	57	4	4	White	PhD
2	Female	54	6	6	Oneida	High School
3	Female	75	75	75	White	High School
4	Male	75	70	35	White	Some College
5	Female	75	65	25	White	High School
6	Male	65	25	20	White	College
7	Female	35	30	11	White	Masters
8	Female	55	55	20	White	Some College
9	Male	68	60	8	White	High School
10	Male	60	20	8	White	High School
11	Female	55	20	8	Oneida	High School
12	Female	70	60	30	White	Some College

Participants 10 and 11 are married to each other. The other participants are not related. The CCAI was administered at the beginning of the learning community and at the conclusion. For the individuals who completed both testing, the scores from the instrument were compared for the total score and across the four components of the instrument.

Summary

Congregation members were invited to participate in Sunday morning Bible studies and weekday evening seminars during October and November of 2014. Nine members of the congregation completed the learning community exercises and the initial and final administration

of the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory. Their scores provide an opportunity to assess the effectiveness and growth of the members of the learning community.

CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION

The CCAI has fifty questions measuring responses concerning four scales. The four scales were summed on the initial instrument and the final instrument. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Total CCAI Scores

Participant	Starting Score	Final Score	Difference
1	273	285	+12
2	210	198	-12
3	210	239	+29
4	239	227	-12
5	261	229	-33
6	187	202	+15
7	237	264	+27
8	210	244	+34
9	202	212	+10

Each of the participants responses were summed across the four scales. The average increase in total score was 7.8.

Table 5. Participant's Initial High and Low Categories

Participant	High	Low
1	PA	PAC
2	ER	FO/PAC
3	PAC	FO
4	PA	PAC
5	ER/FO	PA
6	PA	PAC
7	PAC	PA
8	FO	ER/PAC
9	PA	FO

Based on their initial scores, each participant had a scale where they scored the highest and a scale where they scored the lowest. Table 5 shows these scales listed by participant. Where two scales were equally low or high, both are listed.

Table 6. Emotional Resilience Scores

Participant	Starting Score	Final Score	Difference
1	94	101	+7
2	83	70	-13
3	77	80	+3
4	91	84	-7
5	97	81	-16
6	64	69	+5
7	83	88	+5
8	65	86	+21
9	72	75	+3

The sum of the scores for the eighteen questions asked concerning emotional resilience were compiled at the beginning of the learning community and at the conclusion. The average increase was 0.9.

Table 7. Flexibility and Openness Scores

Participant	Starting Score	Final Score	Difference
1	81	84	+3
2	56	56	0
3	57	71	+14
4	69	64	-5
5	82	72	-10
6	57	63	+6
7	71	83	+12
8	71	76	+5
9	53	64	+11

The sum of the scores from the fifteen questions relating to flexibility and openness were compiled at the beginning of the learning community and at the conclusion. The average increase

was 4.

Table 8. Perceptual Acuity Scores

Participant	Starting Score	Final Score	Difference
1	56	59	+3
2	39	42	+3
3	46	54	+8
4	41	46	+5
5	52	48	-4
6	35	36	+1
7	50	54	+4
8	39	47	+8
9	40	39	-1

The sum of the scores from ten questions relating to perceptual acuity were compiled at the beginning of the learning community and at the conclusion. The average increase was 3.

Table 9. Personal Autonomy Scores

Participant	Starting Score	Final Score	Difference
1	42	41	-1
2	32	30	-2
3	30	34	+4
4	38	33	-5
5	30	28	-2
6	31	34	+3
7	33	39	+6
8	35	35	0
9	37	34	-3

The sum of the scores from seven questions relating to personal autonomy were compiled at the beginning of the learning community and at the conclusion. The average increase for the group was 0.

Table 10 shows the individual scales listed by participant and indicates whether the final

scale score increased, decreased, or remained the same as the initial score.

Table 10. Overall Category Summary

Participant	ER	FO	PAC	PA
1	+	+	+	-
2	-	0	+	-
3	+	+	+	+
4	-	-	+	-
5	-	-	-	-
6	+	+	+	+
7	+	+	+	+
8	+	+	+	0
9	+	+	-	-

Discussion

After the initial testing, the group discussed their scores and the explanation of the categories. Statistically, the total score is the most reliable of the CCAI scores as an indicator of cross-cultural adaptability.¹ The four component scores are of importance to understanding what composes the total scores. The participants summed their scoresheets and identified their high and low scores (because the same number of questions are not asked of each category, the high and low scores are not the numeric high and lows). After the initial scoring, a description of the CCAI scoring areas were distributed along with a guide for possible activities to improve one's score. Refer to Appendix Three. In three of the four categories, the scores of the majority of participants increased. In the fourth category (Personal Autonomy), most of the participants saw a decrease in scores. The top scoring participants as well as the lowest scoring participants will be examined in more detail.

Emotional resilience may be a function of how one experiences adversity. Having a better

¹ Kelley and Meyers, *Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*, 21.

understanding of the challenges of Christian discipleship and one's identity in Christ may improve one's emotional resilience. In the learning community, emphasis on Baptismal identity and the theology of the cross were included to help the participants improve their emotional resilience score. Emotional resilience scores increased on average by 0.9. Six participants increased their score and three participants decreased their scores.

Flexibility and openness in one's dealings with others may be improved by developing a greater empathy and understanding of shared values and experiences. Understanding differences and similarities in the human experience can lead to bridges to sharing what is important to both parties. The learning community included information and case studies involving Native American and Oneida experiences of Christianity to help participant to understand in greater degree the challenges of Native experience. The average score increase of the participants was 4. Six individuals increased their scores, one had no change, and two decreased.

Perceptual acuity is associated with understanding the feelings of others and valuing differences. The seminar encouraged participants to explore differences in culture and to recognize and critique their own culture as well as that of others. The history of Native Americans helped the participants to recognize both positive and negative aspects of Native culture. The group showed an average increase of 3. Three of the participants saw their scores go down while the other six had increased scores.

Personal autonomy is connected to a sense of self confidence and self-worth. The seminar units attempted to reinforce an understanding of the Gospel and the grace of God extending to ones' personal salvation as well as the salvation of all nations. On average, the group showed no change in this category. Three participants saw their scores increase, one saw no change and the remaining five saw a decrease.

The group showed the greatest increases in the areas of flexibility and openness and perceptual acuity and the least increase in the areas of emotional resilience and personal autonomy.

To understand the individual participants who showed high and low scores, the three individuals with the most increase in their scores were examined in greater detail.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Emotional Resilience

Participant 2 was 54-year-old Oneida female with high school education. She had a decrease in ER score from 83 to 70. Participant 4 was a 71-year-old white male with some college. He had a decrease in ER from 91 to 84. Participant 5 was a 75-year-old white female high school graduate. She had a decrease in ER from 97 to 81. It is possible that discussions about the difficulties and challenges of Christian discipleship helped them to be more honest about their own experiences with trauma. The participants had experienced such personal tragedy as the death of teenage son, the recent death of a spouse, and childhood sexual abuse. In the future, more emphasis on addressing personal emotional and spiritual challenges should be included.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Flexibility and Openness

Low scoring individuals for the flexibility and openness category were the same individuals as identified in the above section: Participant 2, (no change 56), Participant 4 (decrease from 69 to 64), and Participant 5 (decrease from 82 to 72).

These participants began the seminar with very little understanding of cultural differences at the beginning of the seminar. Participant 2 expressed that “understanding that there were so many worldviews and cultures out there” was the major takeaway from the learning community. One of the reasons that she gave for joining the learning community was that although she was

Oneida, she was not raised in the area and was interested in learning more about Oneida ways. This was a surprising result.

Participant 4 observed that learning Native American beliefs compared to Christianity led her to believe that “Native culture has some similar beliefs to my own Christian beliefs.” Subject five observed that “I’ve lived in this community all my life and never really knew or understood how the Oneida were different.” All these participants indicated that they had not done any exercises outside of the classes to improve their scores.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Perceptual Acuity

Decrease in scores for Perceptual Acuity were seen by Participant 5 and 9. Participant 5 (75-year-old white female) declined from 52 to 48 and Participant 9 (68-year-old white male) declined from 40 to 39. Personal conversations didn’t reveal any apparent reasons for these declines.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Negative Scores: Personal Autonomy

Decrease in scores was seen by Participant 4 (38 to 33), Participant 5 (30 to 28), and Participant 9 (37 to 34). Both participant 5 and 9 initially had personal autonomy as their highest category. Aside from the discussion about group personal autonomy decrease below, there were no other apparent reasons for this decline.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Emotional Resilience

The most increase in Emotional Resilience score was seen by Participant 1 (94 to 101) and Participant 8 (65 to 86). Participant 1 is a 57-year-old white female and Participant 8 is a 55-year-old white female. Participant 1 observed, “As I looked at the material, I recognized that it this was about having coping mechanisms. I realized that I have coping mechanisms. They don’t

always work well, but I do have them.”

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Flexibility and Openness

The most increase in the flexibility and openness score was seen by Participant 6 (57 to 63), Participant 7 (71 to 83), and Participant 9 (53 to 64). Participant 6 is a 65-year-old white male, Participant 7 is a 35-year-old white female, and Participant 9 is a 68-year-old white male. Personal conversations with these individuals didn't reveal any substantial reason for the increase. All these participants commented that they felt more open toward those whose background and experience were different from their own.

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Perceptual Acuity

The most increase in the Perceptual Acuity score was seen by Participant 3 (a 75-year-old white female) whose score increased from 46 to 54, Participant 4 (41 to 46), and Participant 8 (39 to 47).

Participant 8 said, she “had dinner and social time with people from a different culture. I identified things that I once felt were negative but understand and accept them now. I have more respect for others now.”

More Detailed Analysis of Participants with Increased Scores: Personal Autonomy

The greatest increase in Personal Autonomy score was seen by Participant 3 (30 to 34), Participant 6 (31 to 34) and Participant 7 (33 to 39). Participant 8 had no change and the rest of the group saw a drop in their scores. Participant 7 is a 35-year-old white female.

She observed that personal autonomy was her low score and said,

“Originally, I was very shocked by this until I read how to “improve.” Then I saw it had less to do with knowing myself but acting on my values and accepting the values of others.” She observed, “I spend so much of my time taking care of others and making others happy. It was a very valuable thing to clarify what is important to me

and act upon it. I know I am open to others, but I never realized how important having a strong sense of self would help me become even more empowered to reach others. Knowing myself and my values has helped me to think deeper about where others are coming from and understand just how difficult it is for them to accept new beliefs.”

It seems odd that most of the participants experienced a decrease in the Personal Autonomy score. Four of the nine participants had PA as their initial highest category. When final score was compared to initial score we see the following results.

Table 11. Participant High and Low Categories and Response to Learning Community

Subject	High	Change	Low	Change
1	PA	-	PAC	+
2	ER	-	FO/PAC	0/-
3	PAC	+	FO	+
4	PA	-	PAC	+
5	ER/FO	-/-	PA	-
6	PA	+	PAC	+
7	PAC	+	PA	+
8	FO	+	ER/PAC	+/+
9	PA	-	FO	+

While seven of nine participants increased the category that was identified as their lowest, only four of the nine increased the category identified as their highest. Of the four participants who began with a personal high score of PA, only one increased their score. Of the two participants who began with a personal low score of PA, one increased and one decreased. Perhaps, it is simply a matter of the learning community beginning with a relatively high sense of personal autonomy and not being able to improve on it very much. It certainly suggests that the topic needs to be addressed more in the learning community. Certainly, more study is needed.

Conclusion

Nine participants completed the learning community activities and the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory. The inventory provided a way to measure how the learning community

had changed the participants. The scores of the participants and their comments at the conclusion of the process helped to understand how their perspectives and cultural competence had changed as a result of the project.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Most of the participants improved in at least one aspect of the CCAI. The seminar appeared to be most successful in improving flexibility and openness and perceptual acuity. These qualities deal with how one interacts and views others. These are important qualities for one seeking to bridge a cultural divide with the Gospel. They are descriptive of how one interacts with others. Personal autonomy and emotional resilience are more internal, personal qualities. These are important for interactions with others particularly in Gospel conversations because one needs to be confident and comfortable with their own views in order to share with others. One also needs to be capable of dealing with rejection or conflict without taking the results too personally. As presented, the seminar was less effective in improving the aspects of emotional resilience and personal autonomy.

It is helpful to recognize that this seminar covered material of a very introductory nature. There is over 300 years of history between the Oneida Nation and Christians. The issue of culture and Biblical theology is deep. It is difficult to summarize one teaching unit or even in one-month seminar. In most cases, this requires a lifetime to apply. In some ways, this introductory exercise merely skimmed the surface of a complex and challenging topic. More exercises dealing with application would have helped the participants to understand the complexity of the issue of culture and theology.

The instrument provided some interesting ways to categorize the responses of people to culture. We shouldn't forget that it was developed for people who are different than our group.

The instrument was developed for people who are younger and more interested in change and culture.

Participants 3, 7, and 8 showed the most improvement. Interestingly, two of the three who saw the most positive change were among the youngest in the study. They also had specific reasons for their interest in the seminar (one is an elementary grade teacher at a tribal school and the other was currently dating a Native American.) In general, those with higher levels of education seemed to do better. This is probably because I presented the material in a more academic matter. Participant 3 showed improvement in three of four areas although she was neither young nor more educated. However, she is a long-time resident of the community as well as a member of Zion for her entire life. She had a considerable amount of history and experience with the topics that were presented. Her parents owned the only grocery store on tribal lands and she is well respected among the Oneida people. She observed that she knew much of the material that was presented on the Oneidas but appreciated the opportunity to put it together. Perhaps she demonstrates the usefulness of this kind of a learning community and the hope that all of us can continue to improve our cultural competence even as we grow in age.

Contributions to Ministry

I assumed that people had some familiarity with the Oneida and with the core teachings of Christianity. I should have challenged this assumption. For most, this was an introduction to culture. More than half of the group did not know very much about Oneida culture and history even though most were longtime residents of the community. Additionally, in our conversations it became clearer that people did not have a very good grasp of Biblical Christianity. Some of the Biblical discussions were not as effective as they could have been as I spent a lot of time going

over what I considered to be foundational material.¹ This experience reminded me first that I cannot take for granted that my audience knows the core teachings of the faith. It also led me to examine my preaching and teaching to ensure that our congregation is solidly grounded on the basics of the Christian faith. I was also overly optimistic in my understanding of how much material I could cover during the Bible study time.

It was surprising and disappointing to me that we had so much difficulty in recruiting volunteers. Many in our congregation told me they weren't interested in the project. Several of the volunteers did so, not because they cared about the subject material but because they wanted to support the pastor. My interest in the topic is certainly greater than the congregation. I have tried to spend more time exploring the lack of interest among our people. Three themes have emerged. There is a lack of urgency. People perceive that life has always gone on the way it has and they believe it always will. Perhaps because the area is highly churched, there is a prevailing sense of universalism. Most people believe that their friends and neighbors are Christians even if they don't go to church. They assume that they are going to heaven even if there isn't any tangible evidence of faith. People in our community also have small social circles. They spend a lot of time with family and friends, but less time meeting new neighbors and cultivating friendships. I'm in the process of developing strategies to address these issues.

Other congregation members told me they didn't have the time to participate in the project. This was especially true of the younger members of our congregation. Our congregation members seem to be increasingly busy and distracted by the many responsibilities of life in our society. We are seeing this in worship and Sunday School/Bible study attendance as well. There

¹ This was particularly challenging during the sessions on communicating Law and Gospel and the Theology of the Cross.

is a need to refocus our priority on Word and Sacrament ministry that equips our people to live out their calling in the world.

As a congregation, we continue to work through the aspects of reaching out to more Oneidas. We have been participating at local farmers markets and developed contacts in the local tribal elementary school. The congregation continues to explore how we might be more appreciating of Native culture. We have hosted the Oneida Singers, a group that sings old Christian hymns in Native language. We are discussing how to incorporate more Native culture in our worship services. There is much work to be done here and we have proceeded cautiously.

Through work on this project and other work with my Doctor of Ministry program, I have become more involved with leadership of Lutheran Indian Ministry. This group is focused on raising up Native leaders for service to Christ and the church. LIM has pastoral staff working with Natives in a variety of ministry contexts. The congregation is supportive of partnerships with LIM and we have begun a series of mission trips (most recently to South Dakota) to develop relationships with other ministries engaged in Native ministry. From 2015–2016, we were the host congregation for a young man who is training to be more involved in full-time ministry. I have become good friends with a number of the staff and enjoy fruitful conversations about ministry and service. We continue to grow opportunities for partnership in sharing the Gospel.

Since the learning community has concluded, we have had several Oneida families join our congregation. Most of these families have had some connection to a congregational member who invited them to attend our services. I believe as a congregation, we are becoming more aware of the needs of our community. All the members of the learning community have continued participation in worship and Bible study. My hope is that they will continue to grow in their

understanding of culture and grow toward establishing a Biblical worldview. This will require more time and intentionality. But the work of growing as a cross-cultural ambassador of Jesus is never completed.

Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth

The project reinforced my understanding of the need to focus on more affective components. Like many pastors, I'm much more comfortable working with cognitive issues. But the project helped me to recognize that feeling and emotion are important parts of developing and appropriating faith. I'm committed to improving my ministry to include and develop these additional components of learning.

I've gained a greater understanding of how differently people who are not dominant culture perceive life. Having lived as dominant culture all of my life and worshipping in a church where I am dominant culture, it was extremely helpful to research and have conversations with those who don't have my experience. I believe that I'm better equipped to work with people who have different backgrounds than me.

I believe that I've grown in developing empathy for those of different backgrounds. During one of the Bible study sessions, we were exploring culture using music as an example. I played several examples of Christian music representing traditional European hymnody, country music, African, and Native American songs. I am most uncomfortable with the drums and harmonies of Native music. When I asked how the music made people feel, one of our Oneida members said that the Native music made her "feel at home". Her response made me recognize that we were unconsciously communicating an atmosphere of exclusion for Oneida people. We have since experimented and tried to include more Native music in worship.

I have noticed that many of the things that I learned in this project were being expressed in

my preaching and teaching. Though these changes are sometimes subtle, I see examples expressed in ministry. There are good reasons to show respect for Native understanding of creation, community, and interrelatedness. I've been more likely to emphasize theology of creation, respect for elders, and seeking to find points of contact with Native traditions. Refer to Appendix Twelve for several examples.

Finally, I've grown in appreciation for the complexity of ministry in multi-ethnic sites. There is a lot of diversity in our understanding of the Christian faith and the Gospel. There is considerable diversity and difference of opinion as to what is best to fulfill the mission that God has given us here. There are many areas we can serve and many choices to make with the allocation of resources. The need is great and there is urgency. Our people need to understand and live the Gospel. What we're trying to develop is a spiritual maturity that sees all members of the body of Christ as valuable. We're not equal or the same, but we are all valuable to our Creator. Our worship, outreach, and ministry should reflect that. It's always easier to do things the way that they have been done before, but we can examine all of congregational activities and programs work to make them consistent with our desire to be a house of prayer for all nations.

Recommendations

The cross-cultural adaptability inventory is a useful instrument for evaluating an understanding of culture. In the future, I plan to include it in our leadership training and mission trip orientations. More effort is needed to help participants grow in the areas of emotional resilience and personal autonomy.

With respect to the learning community syllabus, more time should be spent laying a basic foundation of Christian theology. At least one unit should be a review of the core teachings of the Christian faith. There should have been more emphasis on the affective- on understanding

and discussion feeling and emotion. While I tried to facilitate discussion, more case studies may have helped the participants to learn more effectively. I had the final session be a field trip to the Oneida cultural museum. I had hoped that it would be an opportunity to synthesize some of the material that was presented. It may have worked better to have done the field trip first, giving the participants an opportunity to think about the museum displays while they were studying the new material.

Since more people attended the Sunday morning sessions, much of the material can be reworked and presented during Sunday Bible Class or in leadership training for church council meetings. This would also allow me to expand the time allotted to each topic and give a more reasonable treatment. There are new opportunities to invite some of the newer people in our congregation. Participants also expressed a desire to include more Oneidas in the discussions.

The mission field is getting more multicultural. All the demographic surveys of our nation show that our mission field is becoming more and more diverse. We have increasing opportunities for immigrant, ethnic, and international student ministries. Even among those who are not of a different ethnic background, younger generations appear to act and think differently than “we” do. Even if our congregations are not multi-ethnic, viewing the mission context of our congregations as multicultural and seeking to understand the worldviews of the people around us should enable us to more effectively understand their thoughts and fears. We can work to develop Gospel based conversations and friendships. The process used in this seminar has provided some useful material for study and engagement of our congregation members. My hope is that this model may provide some use for other congregations seeking to explore outreach to people who are different from them and may provide some useful templates and resources for making that happen for other congregational sites.

APPENDIX ONE

The Oneida Creation Story as Told by Amos Christjohn

Note: The Oneida Creation Story if told in whole could take multiple days from sun up to sun down. This version is considered a short telling of the story and leaves out many details.

Long Ago, before there was any land here there was water all over, the only things were the creatures that lived in the water and the birds that flew above the waters. Now, further above there was land which was called the Sky World and there were people living there, but these people had supernatural powers. In the middle of the land was a great tree which gave them their light. There were many different fruits on the tree, this is where their light came from, the fruits.

Now the rule was that no one could cut into the tree or a great punishment would be given to that person, whoever was caught harming the tree. Now there was this young couple and the young woman was to have a baby. This woman started to crave things and one of the things she craved was the roots and bark from the tree, so she asked her husband to go and gather this for her. He was afraid to get these because he would surely be punished. He waited for the people to go from the tree. As they all left he went over and started digging.

As he was digging, suddenly the ground caved in and it left a big hole in the ground by the tree. The man got very scared of what had happened, so he went back and told his wife what had happened and she asked if he got what she had wanted. He told her he did not because he got so scared. She got very mad and said she would get it herself.

As she got to the tree she saw the hole, she went over to get a closer look. As she was looking through she saw all the water down below. She did not know that her husband followed

her. As she was looking through, she fell through the hole. As she was falling she tried to grasp hold of something so she would not fall. All she could get was some of the ground and roots of the tree. But she could not hold on and she fell through. As she fell through the birds and water animals saw a light through the hold that was made and they could see something falling. So the birds went up to see what it was and they noticed that it was a woman from the Sky World.

So they sent one of the birds back down to tell the water animals to see which one of them was able to support her upon their back. So they talked amongst one another to see who was able to support her. So they turned to the great turtle and she agreed. All the birds went up to bring the woman down safely on the turtles back.

As the woman fell she got very frightened and fainted. She never woke until she was on the turtles back. All she saw was water, all the birds and the water animals. She asked where she was and they told her that they saw the light shining through the hold.

So, she asked if they knew where there would be any mud or dirt so she could mix it with what she had grabbed as she fell. Some of the animals said they were not sure but there might be some at the bottom of the water.

First, the otter said he would go down and see if there was any, then he went underwater and was gone. Everyone waited patiently for the otter. Soon he came floating up to the top, but didn't get any mud. So the loon said it would try and went underwater. Everyone waited patiently for the loon to come up and soon she came up she too did not have any. So the beaver said he would try and away he went. Soon he came up with none and felt very sad. The woman told him not to feel bad and that he had tried his best. So the muskrat said he would try and he went down. For a long time the muskrat was gone. They became worried and then the muskrat came floating to the top with a little bit of dirt in-between his claws. The woman took it and put

it with the dirt she had and placed it upon the back of the turtle. It began to grow and grow and different things began to grow too.

Then the woman began to gather things, for she was getting ready to give birth to the child she was to have. As the time came, she gave birth to a girl and she was very happy. The woman and her daughter walked about the earth and she taught her daughter the different things that grew and what they were used for. As the days and years went by, the young girl grew to womanhood and she looked very beautiful. As she was walking about for from her mother there was a man that before her appeared. She became very terrified at seeing this man and she fainted.

As she came to, she noticed that there were two arrows on her stomach. One had a sharp point on it and the other a dull point. She took them home with her. As time went on she felt funny inside her and she told her mother of this man that she had seen and of the two arrows he had left behind. So the mother told her of what had happened to her and how they got to where they are at now.

As the days went by the young woman did not feel too good because there was a great commotion within her body. When she finally gave birth to her twins, the one called the right handed twin was born the way all children are born and the left handed twin came from his mother's armpit. This is what killed their mother. Right away the left handed twin spoke up and said it was the right handed twin that killed their mother. Then the right handed twin spoke up and explained to their grandmother what had happened. He told her that he and his brother were arguing about who was going to be born the way all children are born and his brother said he was going any way he wanted to and so therefore he come out of their mothers armpit and that is what killed her. It was the left handed twin that killed their mother. But, the grandmother did not believe him and took the side of the left handed twin and got very angry with the right handed

twin. She told him to bury their mother. And so angrily he started to bury his mother. As he finished, there immediately grew corn, beans, squash and Indian tobacco. Then the twins went about their own ways.

The thing different about the two was that they had powers to create things and they would grow rapidly. As the right handed twin was walking about he was creating the grasses and different medicine plants and giving them names. The left handed twin would go around and give poison to some of the plants and also distort some others. Now as the right handed twin was going around he was creating different plants that could be used as food and also different kinds of trees. Some were tall and straight, some big and wide and he gave them different uses. And his brother would go around changing the edible plants by making them smell awful. He would give the tall trees rough bark and the big ones small and stout with sharp thorns. Then the right handed twin started to create different animals, small ones and big ones. These animals would eat the plants to help them grow.

Then the left handed twin came around and made the animals that would eat the other animals that his brother had created. Then the right handed twin made different areas where the waters would flow. He made streams, rivers, springs, lakes and the big oceans. Some of the rivers he made, the water currents flow in both directions and the springs with sweet tasting water. Then the left handed twin came by and made the rivers have rough and jagged rocks that caused the rivers to have very rough rapids. Some of the springs breathed poison and heat which made them smell very bad. As the right handed twin finished with the waters he went to the different birds and gave them beautiful colored feathers and songs that they could sing. Soon the left handed twin came and saw the birds, he changed some of the birds and the songs they sang. Later, the right handed twin went back to look at all the things that he had created. He noticed

the other different things in his creations and knew he didn't create those things. He looked at everything he made and saw the changes. This made him very angry. As soon as he finished checking the things out he set out to look for his brother. Soon he found him amusing himself by the ocean. The right handed twin spoke very sternly to his brother and told him that he had no right changing the things that he had created. Then the left handed twin replied to his brother and said that he wanted to create things too. He shouldn't be the only one to be creating things. So the right handed twin said that it was time that they decided who would be the creator of all things on Turtle Island. So they decided that they would challenge each other with a game of lacrosse. So the right handed twin made a big golden ball of sand and threw it in the east and said that this golden ball would be the one to start the game when it came up in the east and end the game when it went down in the west. So they agreed and went their own way to get ready for the game.

When the golden ball rose from the east they began the game and became rough with one another. When the ball set in the west the game stopped, but neither one won the game. So they said they would play the peach stone game when the golden ball came up from the east and end the game when the ball set in the west. When it rose from the east they began to play. It was going back and forth but when the ball set in the west, still no one had won. Then they said that they would think of something when the ball rose from the east. When it did rise the left handed twin said the only way that anyone was going to be creator of all things was that one of them would have to be killed. So they would have to fight with one another. They began to fight, but it was still even, no [one] was winning. They went to reach for something to kill the other with. The right handed twin reached for the deer antlers and the left handed twin reached for an old stick. As this happened, the right handed twin knocked his brother to the ground. He thought he

had killed his brother. He made him a raft and set him on it and put him out to sea. Then the right handed twin was considered the creator of all things. He was called the Holder of the Sky. The left handed twin was called Flint because of his rigidness. The left handed twin was not killed, he survived and established a new land across the ocean and created his own things, the things he liked. –

Shukwaya>t\$su is the name of the good twin in the Oneida language.

Shakohlew@tha> is the name of the contraire twin in the Oneida language.

http://www.oneidanation.org/uploadedFiles/Departments/Cultural_Heritage/Sub_Pages/09.05.18%20Oneida%20Creation%20Story.pdf, accessed September 11, 2014

APPENDIX TWO

Bible Study- Cultural Competence

Cultivating Cultural Competence: Introduction

October 12, 2014

Devotion

1 Corinthians 9:19–23

Though I am free and you want to know what I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. 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. To those not having the law I became like one not having to walk (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel that I may share in its blessings.

What groups does Paul specifically mention here?

What do you think it means to become "all things"?

What does Paul share as his goal?

What might “all things” be for us?

Christ, culture, and cultivating cultural competence

As part of the fulfillment of my work toward earning a Doctor of Ministry degree, I need to complete a project in my congregation that deals with the issues of leadership and mission. The reason that I have been involved in this program at seminary is because I want to continue to grow in my abilities as a disciple of Jesus, the pastor, and a leader.

There are three ways for you to partner with me and be involved in this project.

Attend Bible study at 9:15 AM for the next six weeks. We will be covering important theological issues around the subject of Christ and culture. You will find the sessions interesting and challenging.

Attend any of the seminars that you find of interest. Material will be presented more in depth.

Be part of the study group. You commit to attend all sessions (sessions will be recorded for those who are unable to attend). Take the evaluation instruments before and after the seminar. Weekly seminars will be scheduled at the convenience of those who want to be involved. In

order to make the study work, I need at least 10 people to commit to this track.

Opportunity for independent study of issues that you would find challenging will be available. I have compiled a fairly extensive reading list and would be happy to debrief the material with you at any time.

Definition of terms

What is a worldview? A worldview includes beliefs about God

a worldview includes beliefs about the world

a worldview includes beliefs about truth and ethics

a worldview includes beliefs about humankind

What is culture?

According to Robert Kolb, culture is an organic, dynamic whole of human activities and relationships which define the meaning and significance of life for a specific group of people who are linked by these elements – both in a common identity and purpose and in common endeavors

What is included in culture? Concepts of art, beauty, value, identity. Things like music, food, the “stuff of life”

What is cultural competence? Cross – cultural competence may be defined as a set of congruent behaviors attitudes and policies that come together in a system that enables effective work cross-cultural situations

Great cross-cultural leaders

Moses- Exodus 2

Paul- Philippians 3:1–11

Jesus- John 1:1–14

An assumption

Through study of God’s Word, the culture of our community, and our own experiences, we will grow in our ability to recognize and construct “bridges” to sharing the Gospel with our friends and neighbors.

Syllabus- Cultivating Cross Cultural Competence

October-November 2014

Date	Topic		
October 12	Bible Class Session 1- Christ, Culture, and Worldview		Introductions, what is culture, worldview, and why bother...
October 13	Seminar 1		Discussion of goals of project and utilization of instrument evaluations
October 19	Bible Class Session 2- The God of Mission		A brief survey of the mission of God in the Old and New Testament
November 2	Bible Class 3- Christ and Culture		How does Christianity shape our culture and intersect with our worldview? How do we find creative ways to share the Gospel in a pluralistic world?
November 4	Seminar 2- Native Americans and Christianity		A brief history of the intersection of Native Americans and Christian mission with special attention to the Oneida Nation
November 9	Bible Class 4- Law and Gospel		What is the law and how is it experienced? What is the Gospel and what does it do?
November 11	Seminar 3- Current Issues in Native American ministry		Special issues in Native American Spirituality today
November 16	Bible Class 5- Theology of the Cross		What opportunities does a Lutheran understanding of the Theology of the Cross give to our witness to our community?
Week of Nov 16, TBD	Seminar 4- Field Trip to Oneida Cultural Centers		Visit museum and discuss our findings
TBD	Seminar 5 Conclusion and Evaluation		

APPENDIX THREE

Introduction to the Project: Participant Information

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory: Suggestions for Improvement

The inventory measures four things; ER, FO, PAC, and PA. What is important is not your scores related to others but your own scores. In each of the four areas, your scores show your personal “strengths” and “weaknesses”. Here are some suggestions for improving your scores as we move forward in our seminar. (Adapted from Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Action Planning Guide)

Improving Emotional Resilience

Meet someone from a culture different from your own or do something new (food, dance, hobby, etc) relating to a culture different from your own.

When you experience difficult feelings- especially when you are with people different than you- pay attention to your underlying thoughts. What are you telling yourself in order to create those feelings? Remind yourself of your strengths and remind yourself of who you are in Christ. Consider keeping a collection of Bible verses near you that remind you of your identity as God’s beloved child.

Improving Flexibility and Openness

Interact with people who are different than yourself. Try to find someone who does not share your interests or who think differently than you. Find out more about them. Identify things

that you like about them. Appreciate them as a unique child of God. Remember that Jesus loves them as much as he loves you.

Spend time with a wide variety of people. Participate together in activities. Find appropriate ways to thank them. Concentrate on appreciation and showing respect for them.

Visit a cultural setting different than your own.

Improving Perceptual Acuity

Learn how people in other cultures usually communicate and how they perceive your culture. Identify things that you appreciate about their culture.

Practice active listening skills. Restate what is being said in your own words and listen for the speaker's reaction. Keep exploring until you understand.

Pay attention to other's body language. This includes gestures, tone of voice, facial expression, and posture. Ask question if you need to. Watch television with the sound turned down or a foreign language channel. See what you can learn.

Improving Personal Autonomy

Clarify your personal values. Make a list of things that are genuinely important to you. Identify why they are important to you.

Take appropriate actions based on your values. For example, if you value personal health, schedule a time to work out. if you value spiritual growth, set aside time to read the Bible. If you value family, take time to reach out to someone you haven't talked to in a while.

Learn to value people who are different from you. Find things to value or appreciate in others. Watch a movie about people who are different from you and find something that you admire or respect.

Letter of Consent

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the study on Cultivating Cross-Cultural Competency. The research that you are about to participate in is designed to investigate the effect of learning experiences to develop better understanding, attitudes, and behavior toward cross-cultural situations. This research is being conducted by Rev. Mark Schumm. Please be advised that any information you provide will be held in confidence by the researcher and at no time will your name be reported with your responses. Please understand that participation in this study group is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the group at any time.

I acknowledge that I have been informed of and understand the nature and purpose of this study and that I have freely consented to participate.

Name (please print) _____ Date _____

Signed _____

APPENDIX FOUR

Bible Study: The God of Mission

The God of Mission

October 19, 2014

The Church of God doesn't have a mission. The Mission of God has a church.

Devotion: Read John 3:16. How would you describe God's heart? How would you describe God's mission?

Significant Events in the history of God's Mission

Genesis 2

Genesis 11 and 12

The Exodus (Exodus 19:4–6)

The Temple (1 Kings 8:41–43)

The People of God at worship (Psalm 67)

The people of God don't always do very well at following. God calls prophets to call the people to repentance.

Jeremiah 33:1–9

Jonah 3:1–5, 4:1–2

Micah 4:1–5

Zechariah 8:20–23

Isaiah 56:1–8

For each of these sections

Summarize the passage. What is the role of the people of God? What is God's desired response for the "nations"? What is the takeaway for God's mission?

The Mission of Jesus

Luke 19:1–10

Who does Jesus hang around with? What does he say is His mission? Who falls into this category?

Some questions for reflection? How does our understanding of the heart of God shape our following of Christ? What people has God put in our way that we can share the heart of God with? How is God calling us to hear the Gospel, repent, and respond in faith?

APPENDIX FIVE

Bible Study: Christ and Culture

Christ and Culture

November 2, 2014

Devotion

Acts 17:16–32

What aspects of Athenian culture does Paul use to share the Gospel? What pieces of Hebrew culture does he specifically avoid?

Would you consider Paul's appeal to be faithful? Successful?

Mission

Mission is God claiming what belongs to him

Mission is God bringing people into a saving relationship with Him.

If we as a church no longer witnessed to this Gospel of salvation by grace, we would be no use in the world; no longer the salt of the world, we would be fit only for the dunghill. Martin

Luther

Culture

The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Oxford dictionary

An experiment

Listen to the following music selections and discuss. Which did you like? What emotions did you notice with each? Which made you comfortable? Which challenged you? How much of your response is cultural?

1.

2.

3.

4.

In what ways do we equate church culture and Christ? Is this ok? What are positives and dangers of this?

How much can Lutherans appropriate aspects of culture as first article gifts?

What are the boundaries? Are there aspects of culture that are opposed to the Gospel? Will we agree?

Thoughts on culture and Lutherans (heavily adapted from Robert Kolb)

Jesus is Lord over all

Even best gifts of God are permeated with sin

There are moral (and sometimes idolatrous) values that permeate culture

We can be at home in a culture (because the whole world belongs to God) but we can never be really at home

All cultural institutions are penultimate.

Lutherans are free to be human in culture and to use the culture in appropriate ways.

Conversion to Christ always involves a move of cultures. Christians always live in two cultures.

What are unique aspects of Green Bay culture? Oneida culture? Lutheran culture?

What is the significance of this for our congregation as God involves us in his mission?

How can we be bridge-builders into the culture of our community?

APPENDIX SIX

Seminar: History of Christian Missions and the Oneida

History of Christian Missions and the Oneida

November 4, 2014

What is the purpose of history? In what ways does it help us to understand life? In what ways does it not help us?

Notes:

Early efforts at Evangelism

Protestant Missions before 1820

Episcopal Missions and the move to Wisconsin

Other denominational work in Oneida

Are there common themes that you see?

What did our spiritual forefathers do well? What did they do poorly? What does our history suggest about our future?

A Conversation with Red Jacket

*Editorial note by T.C. McLuhan: **Sa-go-ye-wat-ha**, or **Red Jacket**, Seneca chief, and great orator of the Six Nations, was born near the present site of Geneva, New York, in 1750. In 1805, a young missionary named Cram was sent into the country of the Iroquois by the Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts to "spread the Word." A council was held at Buffalo, New York, and Red Jacket made the following reply telling Cram why he did not wish to have the missionary stay with them. N.B. Wood, in **Lives of Famous Indian Chiefs**, recounts that after making his statement Red Jacket moved to shake hands with the missionary; Cram refused saying, "There was no fellowship between the religion of God and the Devil." According to Wood, the Indians smiled and retired peacefully.*

Brothers, our seats were once large, and yours were small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but are not satisfied; you want to force your religion upon us.

Brother, continue to listen. You say that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeable to his mind; and if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost. How do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was intended for us as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given to us — and not only to us, but to our forefathers — the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people?

Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit. If there is but

one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the book?

Brother, we do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We also, have a religion which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us, their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all favors we receive; to love each other, and be united. We never quarrel about religion, because it is a matter which concerns each man and the Great Spirit.

Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion or take it from you; we only want to enjoy our own.

Brother, we have been told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors: We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will consider again of what you have said.

*Editorial note by T.C. McLuhan: Red Jacket's hostility toward Christianity erupted on every occasion. Referring to the unwise missionary Cram, he once said: "The White people were not content with the wrongs they had done his people, but wanted to **cram** their doctrines down their throats." When asked by a gentleman in 1824, why he was so opposed to missionaries, he replied:*

They do us no good. If they are not useful to the white people and do them no good, why do they send them among the Indians? If they are useful to the white people and do them good, why do they not keep them at home? They [the white men] are surely bad enough to need the labor of everyone who can make them better. These men [the missionaries] know we do not understand their religion. We cannot read their book—they tell us different stories about what it

contains, and we believe they make the book talk to suit themselves. If we had no money, no land and no country to be cheated out of these black coats would not trouble themselves about our good hereafter. The Great Spirit will not punish us for what we do not know. He will do justice to his red children. These black coats talk to the Great Spirit, and ask for light that we may see as they do, when they are blind themselves and quarrel about the light that guides them. These things we do not understand, and the light which they give us makes the straight and plain path trod by our fathers, dark and dreary. The black coats tell us to work and raise corn; they do nothing themselves and would starve to death if someone did not feed them. All they do is to pray to the Great Spirit; but that will not make corn and potatoes grow; if it will why do they beg from us and from the white people. The red men knew nothing of trouble until it came from the white men; as soon as they crossed the great waters they wanted our country, and in return have always been ready to teach us to quarrel about their religion. Red Jacket can never be the friend of such men. If they [the Indians] were raised among white people, and learned to work and read as they do, it would only make their situation worse. ... We are few and weak, but may for a long time be happy if we hold fast to our country, and the religion of our fathers.¹

What objections to Christianity does Red Jacket raise?

¹ <http://www.autodidactproject.org/quote/redjack.html>.

In your opinion, which are the most significant?

How would you respond to Red Jacket's objections?

APPENDIX SEVEN

Bible Study: Law and Gospel

Law and Gospel¹

November 9, 2014

Devotion: Read Psalm 32:1–5

What words does the psalmist use to describe the law?

Where is the Gospel to be found?

In what ways do we see the work of the law in our lives?

Genesis 3 describes the entrance of sin into our world?

Doubt

Denial/Defiance

¹ The outline of this Bible study follows the outline of chapter 2 in *Speaking the Gospel Today* by Robert Kolb.

Desiring to Be like God

Dread and Defensiveness produce Disobedience and Division

Damned

God's law is structure for life. It functions as a curb and a hammer.

Law and Gospel in Christian Witness (*Speaking the Gospel Today*, page 122)

The Impact of Evil produce	The Impact of the Law Reactions of the Secure	The Impact of the Law Reactions of the Broken	To be met by expressions of the Gospel
Evil outside self From natural or human sources	Rage Revenge (often misplaced)	Impotence	Redemption and liberation Resetting of priorities God's power and goodness
Estrangement or Alienation	Savagery against vocation	Withdrawal from vocation	Reconciliation
Meaninglessness	Apathy	Emptiness	Incarnation Service in Vocation
Weakness or Failure of self	False Pride, Bravado	Shame	Acceptance and Transformation
Bondage	Delight	Spiritual Claustrophobia	Liberation
Disobedience	Defiance Indifference to Criticism	Guilt	Acquittal Forgiveness
Death	Refusal to admit Rage Flight to quack cures	Terror	Resurrection

APPENDIX EIGHT

Seminar: Current Issues in Native American Ministry

November 16, 2014

Refer to the conversation with Red Jacket from last week. What did his comments suggest about the way that evangelism was conducted? What are some important issues that we should keep in mind? Watch the video by Lutheran Indian Ministries. What do they identify as challenges in Native ministry? What do they see as opportunities?

We can make the general observation that the later in time the first contact with Europeans, the more the tribe struggles with enculturation. In other words, the longer the Native people have had in interaction with Europeans, the more likely it is that Native culture has to a greater extent been replaced with assimilation. In general, Eastern tribes are more enculturated than those in the west.

What opportunities are there for us here at Zion to share the Gospel with our Oneida friends and neighbors?

Author Don Richardson makes the observation that common beliefs are found in many “folk” religions around the world. These beliefs often include

The fact that God exists

Creation

The rebellion and fall of man

The need for a sacrifice to appease God

A great flood

The sudden appearance of many languages and a dispersion of mankind

An acknowledgement of man’s need for further revelation to bring him back into a right relationship with God.

Based on your knowledge of the Oneida culture, which of these beliefs are present?

Read the Oneida creation story. What values do you think the story communicates to its hearers?

As we study and learn about cultures and traditions, we may observe “touchpoints” or bridges from one culture to another. What “touchpoints” can you observe between Christian and Oneida culture?

Assignment

Field trip to Oneida Museum

Between now and November 25th, take a field trip to visit the Oneida museum, W 892 CR EE, DePere.

The museum is open 9am to 5pm, Tuesday through Friday.

Plan on spending at least 45 minutes. Ask yourself the questions;

What pieces of Oneida culture and history do I find admirable?

Are there opportunities to make connections between Oneida culture and Christian culture?

What ideas or possibilities for future study or projects come to your mind?

We will meet on November 25th at 6:30 to discuss what we learned and what our next steps look like.

APPENDIX NINE

Bible Study: Theology of the Cross

Theology of the Cross¹

November 16, 2014

“A theologian of glory calls evil good and good evil.

A theologian of the cross calls the thing what it actually is.”

Martin Luther (Heidelberg Disputation, 1518)

Reflection

How does the pastor in the story express the difference between Mr. Wittl’s understanding of God and that of his daughter?

Marks of Theology of Glory

--Oriented toward our goodness, ability, and quality of our faith (often expressed as “are we sincere or faithful enough?”)

--You can overcome sin with greater faith. The Christian life is like a ladder, we can keep going up by our own effort, sincerity, and work

--God’s actions need defending and explaining away by believers because there is no room

¹ The outline of this study is based on discussions and material provided by Pastor Wesley Baumeister, Hope Lutheran Church, DePere, WI during the summer of 2014.

for suffering or defeat in God's kingdom

--You can live a victorious life once you discover the secrets of God's blessings

Other marks: Power of positive thinking, sins = "mistakes", "I'm ok, you're ok"

Marks of Theology of the Cross

--God reveals himself through suffering and service (the Son of Man did not come to be served...)

--The cross is central to the Christian faith (John 18:11, 36)

--God does what God does, he does not need our input (Isaiah 55:8-11)

--The "Glory" does not come this side of heaven, but after we are called home to heaven

Calling a thing what it is

--Psalm 89:46–52, just be honest.

Consider what the following passages say about a theology of the cross.

Matthew 16:21–28

Jeremiah 29:11

Romans 8:28

John 14:33

Watch the video. How does the woman in the video demonstrate her understanding of the theology of the cross?

What are some ways that you would suggest for having faith conversations with someone who is going through a difficult divorce?

Dealing with the death of a close friend?

Dealing with alcohol addiction?

APPENDIX TEN

Exit Interview Questions and Responses

Name____

Exit Interview questions

Thanks for your help and participation!

Please rate the sessions that you attended with 1–5 (one is lowest and five is highest). If you did not attend the session, please indicate with DNA

Bible Study, Christ, Culture, and Worldview

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Bible Study, The God of Mission

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Bible Study, Law and Gospel

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Bible Study, Theology of the Cross

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Seminar, Native Americans and Christianity

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Seminar, Current Issues in Native American Ministry

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

Field Trip, Oneida Museum and discussion

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

With respect to CCAI, what was your low quadrant?

Did you try any of the exercises to raise this score? If so, what did you do?

Did you have changes in your scores?

What sessions did you think were most helpful for you personally? why

Which were least helpful? Why?

What ideas do you have for this project if we were to expand it or offer it again?

Exit Interview Questions and Responses

Please rate the sessions that you attended with 1–5 (one is lowest and five is highest). If you did not attend the session, please indicate with DNA

Bible Study, Christ, Culture, and Worldview

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

4 (3) (4) (6) (9)

5 (1) (2) (5) (7) (8)

Average Score: 4.6

Bible Study, The God of Mission

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

4 (1) (3) (4) (5) (6)

5 (2) (9)

DNA (7) (8)

Average Score: 4.3

Bible Study, Law and Gospel

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

3 (6)

4 (1) (3) (4) (5)

5 (2) (7) (8) (9)

Average Score: 4.3

Bible Study, Theology of the Cross

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

3 (1)

4 (3) (6) (7) (4) (9)

DNA (2) (5) (8)

Average Score: 3.8

Seminar, Native Americans and Christianity

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

4 (1) (4) (7)

5 (3) (5) (6) (8) (9)

DNA (2)

Average Score: 4.6

Seminar, Current Issues in Native American Ministry

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

4 (1) (3) (4) (5) (7) (9)

5 (2) (6) (8)

Average Score: 4.3

Field Trip, Oneida Museum and discussion

1 2 3 4 5 DNA

4 (7)

5 (2) (3) (5) (8) (9)

DNA (1) (4) (6)

Average Score: 4.8

With respect to CCAI, what was your low quadrant?

ER (1)

FO (2)

PA (3) (9)

PAC (4) (6)

PA (5)

PA (7) Originally, I was very shocked by this until I read how to “improve.” Then I saw it had less to do with knowing myself but acting on my values and accepting the values of others.”

ER and PAC (8)

Did you try any of the exercises to raise this score? If so, what did you do?

(1) Big increase was due to understanding that I had coping mechanisms. They may not always work well but I do have them.

(2) (3) (4) (6) No

(5) I visited the Oneida museum to learn more about this culture. During Sunday services I tried to greet our Native members and remember their names.

(7) I spend so much of my time taking care of others and making others happy. It was a very valuable thing to clarify what is important to me and act upon it. I know I am open to others, but I never realized how important having a strong sense of self would help me become even more empowered to reach others. Knowing myself and my values has helped me to think deeper about where others are coming from and understand just how difficult it is for them to accept new beliefs.

(8) I had dinner and social time with people from a different culture. I identified things that I once felt were negative but understand. I have more respect for others now.

(9) Read more Bible passages

Did you have changes in your scores?

(1) (3) (7) (8) (9) yes

(2)(4) some went down

(5) no

(6) very slight

What sessions did you think were most helpful for you personally? Why?

(2) worldview, understand there are so many other cultures out there. I appreciated learning

about Oneida culture. I'm half Oneida and was raised white so I don't know very much about the Oneidas.

(3) Native American and Christianity / Current Issues also. Even though I've lived in the area most of my life you don't know it all about the Oneida history and beliefs.

(4) Appreciated history of the community. I got a better understanding of the Oneidas. I've lived in this community almost all my life and never really knew or understood how they were different.

(5) Learning Native American beliefs compared to Christianity. Native culture has some similar beliefs to my own Christian beliefs.

(6) The last two seminars were very interesting. It made me reconsider how we do evangelism.

(7) I really like the session on world view and law and Gospel. It gave me a global insight into how others react to situations in life. It also made me aware that how we approach different views is crucial to sharing the message effectively. Connect..find common ground... share the gaps... live by example... inspire others to want to know more about why you have the world view you have... and it won't be easy .. which goes back to my PA. being empowered by my values to inspire others.

(8) Native Americans and Christianity raised awareness. Current issues in Native American ministry raised awareness.

(9) Worldview helped open my eyes more to Oneida. I realized people look at things differently. How can we be ready to come alongside people and not force things, but help them to see different perspectives.

Which were least helpful? Why?

(2) (9) Everything was interesting

(3) none in particular

(5) have a few Native people in our class

(6) law and Gospel

(7) Nothing is not helpful.. although I did know a lot of background. I appreciated seeing the knowledge through other's eyes.

(8) I thought they all were enlightening

What ideas do you have for this project if we were to expand it or offer it again?

(1) We have a lot to learn about all the people around us. Utilize more of a case study approach.

(3) I think it would be great if some of the Oneida Native americans would attend and voice their opinion with us, in regard to what we know.

(5) continue to learn more of the Native culture and interact with our neighbors at different functions.

(6) I'm not sure if the CCAI results have anything to do with the seminar and Bible studies. I don't think the questions related to the topics.

(7) two sections- Native (or specific culture) and world cultures. I would have loved to dive into case scenarios. Like what would do if.... How would you handle this... more hands on.

(8) Have more discussion about the inventories and what they mean. do more of the exercises in a group setting

(9) Vist the Oneida museum earlier in my life. So I can help make myself understand this way of doing things their way.

APPENDIX ELEVEN

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 1

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	5	6		26	6	6
2	4	6		27	6	6
3	6	6		28	5	6
4	6	6		29	6	6
5	5	5		30	6	6
6	6	6		31	3	3
7	6	6		32	6	6
8	4	5		33	6	6
9	5	5		34	5	6
10	5	3		35	6	6
11	6	6		36	6	6
12	6	6		37	6	6
13	6	6		38	5	6
14	5	5		39	4	6
15	5	6		40	6	6
16	6	6		41	6	6
17	6	5		42	6	6
18	6	6		43	6	6
19	6	6		44	6	6
20	6	6		45	6	6
21	2	5		46	4	6
22	5	3		47	6	6
23	6	6		48	4	6
24	6	6		49	6	6
25	6	6		50	6	6

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 2

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	5	4		26	5	4
2	3	4		27	4	4
3	5	5		28	1	4
4	5	4		29	5	4
5	5	5		30	1	3
6	4	4		31	5	3
7	5	5		32	6	4
8	5	4		33	4	4
9	4	4		34	5	4
10	3	3		35	5	4
11	2	4		36	5	4
12	6	5		37	3	4
13	3	4		38	4	4
14	1	2		39	5	3
15	4	4		40	4	4
16	5	4		41	5	4
17	3	4		42	6	4
18	5	4		43	4	3
19	5	3		44	6	4
20	1	4		45	5	4
21	5	4		46	5	4
22	4	4		47	4	4
23	1	4		48	5	4
24	6	5		49	4	4
25	5	5		50	4	4

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 3

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	6	6		26	5	4
2	1	4		27	3	5
3	6	6		28	6	5
4	6	6		29	6	6
5	6	6		30	1	5
6	4	4		31	1	4
7	6	5		32	1	2
8	6	5		33	1	6
9	5	5		34	6	3
10	3	1		35	6	6
11	1	4		36	3	4
12	6	6		37	6	5
13	4	6		38	3	4
14	3	5		39	3	2
15	6	4		40	1	6
16	3	5		41	6	6
17	1	2		42	4	6
18	1	1		43	3	5
19	4	5		44	6	6
20	5	6		45	6	5
21	3	5		46	6	5
22	6	5		47	6	4
23	6	6		48	5	5
24	6	6		49	3	4
25	1	6		50	2	6

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	4	4		26	5	5
2	5	4		27	4	4
3	4	5		28	4	3
4	6	4		29	6	5
5	5	6		30	2	3
6	5	5		31	3	4
7	6	5		32	5	3
8	3	4		33	5	6
9	5	5		34	6	5
10	2	3		35	6	5
11	6	5		36	5	5
12	6	5		37	5	4
13	5	5		38	2	5
14	3	4		39	5	5
15	4	5		40	5	5
16	6	6		41	6	6
17	4	3		42	6	5
18	5	4		43	5	5
19	5	4		44	5	4
20	4	4		45	5	3
21	5	5		46	6	5
22	5	3		47	5	4
23	5	6		48	6	5
24	6	6		49	5	5
25	6	5		50	2	3

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 5

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	6	5		26	6	6
2	5	4		27	6	4
3	6	5		28	6	4
4	6	4		29	6	5
5	6	4		30	6	5
6	4	4		31	5	4
7	6	6		32	6	6
8	6	6		33	6	5
9	5	4		34	5	5
10	3	2		35	2	2
11	6	5		36	5	4
12	6	6		37	6	5
13	5	4		38	4	4
14	2	5		39	5	5
15	5	5		40	6	5
16	6	5		41	6	5
17	1	3		42	5	4
18	6	2		43	6	5
19	6	4		44	6	5
20	2	5		45	6	4
21	6	6		46	5	6
22	5	4		47	5	2
23	5	2		48	5	4
24	6	6		49	5	4
25	6	6		50	6	5

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 6

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	3	3		26	4	5
2	2	3		27	4	5
3	4	4		28	4	3
4	4	4		29	3	3
5	4	4		30	5	5
6	5	5		31	4	4
7	4	5		32	5	6
8	3	4		33	5	5
9	2	3		34	5	4
10	4	4		35	4	5
11	3	4		36	4	4
12	4	5		37	4	3
13	1	2		38	3	3
14	5	6		39	4	5
15	4	3		40	4	5
16	4	5		41	5	5
17	4	4		42	5	5
18	3	3		43	2	3
19	4	4		44	3	3
20	2	3		45	4	4
21	3	4		46	4	4
22	4	3		47	4	4
23	1	1		48	4	4
24	5	6		49	4	4
25	5	6		50	3	3

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 7

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	4	5		26	5	5
2	5	6		27	5	5
3	6	6		28	5	4
4	5	5		29	5	5
5	5	5		30	4	5
6	5	6		31	4	5
7	5	4		32	5	6
8	5	6		33	5	5
9	5	5		34	5	6
10	3	1		35	5	6
11	5	5		36	4	5
12	6	6		37	5	6
13	5	6		38	4	5
14	5	6		39	5	5
15	5	6		40	5	6
16	5	5		41	5	6
17	3	3		42	4	5
18	5	6		43	4	5
19	4	5		44	5	6
20	4	5		45	4	5
21	5	5		46	5	6
22	4	5		47	4	6
23	5	5		48	5	5
24	6	6		49	5	6
25	5	6		50	5	6

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 8

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	3	4		26	3	5
2	4	5		27	4	4
3	4	5		28	3	2
4	3	4		29	6	6
5	6	6		30	3	5
6	4	5		31	2	5
7	5	6		32	5	2
8	5	6		33	4	6
9	3	4		34	3	5
10	3	4		35	5	4
11	3	5		36	4	4
12	6	6		37	4	6
13	5	5		38	3	5
14	5	4		39	3	4
15	4	6		40	6	6
16	4	6		41	4	4
17	4	4		42	4	4
18	3	6		43	5	5
19	5	5		44	4	6
20	3	2		45	3	4
21	4	5		46	5	6
22	5	5		47	5	6
23	2	4		48	6	5
24	6	6		49	6	6
25	5	6		50	5	5

Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory Raw Scores

Participant 9

Question	Before	After		Question	Before	After
1	4	4		26	6	53
2	4	5		27	3	2
3	5	3		28	3	5
4	5	5		29	4	5
5	2	3		30	6	5
6	5	4		31	5	5
7	5	5		32	6	5
8	2	3		33	2	5
9	5	5		34	3	5
10	5	4		35	6	3
11	3	3		36	3	5
12	5	5		37	2	3
13	3	5		38	1	5
14	2	2		39	3	5
15	5	4		40	4	5
16	2	3		41	6	5
17	5	5		42	4	4
18	2	4		43	3	5
19	6	5		44	6	5
20	3	3		45	6	5
21	3	2		46	4	5
22	2	5		47	5	5
23	5	2		48	4	4
24	5	5		49	4	5
25	5	5		50	5	4

APPENDIX TWELVE

Sample Ministry Connections

Sermon for Native American Sunday

Proper 28 Epistle, 11/15/2015, Zion Lutheran Church, Oneida

Hebrews 10:11–25

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

“This is the covenant that I will make with them

after those days, declares the Lord:

I will put my laws on their hearts,

and write them on their minds,”

then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in

full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Draw Near With a True Heart, Hebrews 10:22

November is Native American Heritage month and today we are observing Native American Sunday

It was the first Sunday in January, 1924. Zion Lutheran Church and School met for the first time. The day had been a long time in coming.

Back in 1898, Native Americans from the Stockbridge Reservation, outside Shawano, Wisconsin, approached Pastor Nickel of Shawano and invited him to do ministry among them. Since they understood English there was no language barrier and several showed a willingness to be catechized and baptized. The following year, the Indian Mission Board of the LCMS took responsibility for the project, sending a missionary, J. Larsen, from the Springfield Seminary. Larsen was replaced (due to health reasons) after a year with another student. In 1901, a church was built at what was then known as Red Springs and a school was also started.

In 1923, a Stockbridge Native, Cornelius Aaron, was ordained as a pastor and sent by the Board of Indian Mission to Oneida to begin a mission and school. The reason for this choice was that the number of students attending the mission school at Red Springs had increased to 42 in the past year. During 1924, Aaron used the Government Indian School but after it was purchased by the Catholic Church, a new chapel and parsonage were built. Zion congregation was started in

1924 with ten members.

In 1932, Rev. Aaron reported that the congregation numbered 175 with 21 voting members (ten white and eleven Oneida. The school had an enrollment of 41 (which included 8 whites). Zion has a unique and amazing history. We are one of the first congregations in the Green Bay area, older than Redeemer, Pilgrim or Faith. Today, we want to focus on Native American ministry. In the last few years we have partnered with Lutheran Indian Ministries. Please watch this video by Lutheran Indian Ministry. You may see some familiar faces. As you do watch, please notice the challenges to ministry among Native Americans

Don Johnson video

Why can't "we" draw near.

The message of Jesus is often obscured by repression, poverty, and racism

Let me share a little history about Christianity and the Oneida nation.

Oneidas were first evangelized in 1667, by Jesuit missionaries

Father Bruyas and Milet. Milet was well loved by the Oneidas and was given the name

Teharonhiagannra, or "The Looker-up to Heaven." He learned the language. He was captured by a different group of Oneidas and saved only because one of the Oneida women adopted him.

Milet wrote about his experiences ... I could never resolve to leave the Oneidas, to whom I was under so many obligations; I could never repay them, except by sacrificing myself in imitation of Jesus Christ for their welfare, temporal and eternal.

In 1767, a Presbyterian minister sponsored by the Missionary Society of Scotland, Samuel Kirkland, established a church among the Oneidas. Kirkland's message was heavily influenced by the Great Awakening in the 1740's and New England preacher Jonathon Edwards. The

Christian faith he taught emphasized determinism, stern self-discipline, repentance, regeneration, and baptism and encouraged the Natives to renounce traditional Oneida beliefs.

Kirkland's theology of the solitary sinner and the angry God stood in stark contrast to the more communal Oneida ways.

Many of his converts came from the warriors who found in Christianity an opportunity to reject the historic tribal chieftains. The teaching and community that the missionary provided gave stability and religious validation to the political realities of the day.

Native American suspected missionaries of having ulterior motives (obtaining Indian land), but Kirkland refused to accept land from them and spent much of his salary to alleviate the needs of the Indians. He sought to have the Indians adopt the ways of the whites. He got the Oneidas to build a meetinghouse, a sawmill, a gristmill, and a blacksmith shop. He provided farm tools, seeds, oxen for heavy work and gradually modernized their village.

Farming, prohibition, and education were important aspects of Kirkland's program for the Oneidas. He believed that education would erase the Indian past and prepare the people for a Christian world. Conversion, while still a goal, seemed almost secondary to a program to assimilate the Natives into a more European culture. Those who opposed these programs became known as the "Pagan party".

A brief Quaker mission to the Oneidas in 1796 does not appear to have borne much fruit. The Quakers focused their attention on the "Pagans" who were open to the Quakers because both opposed Kirkland. The Quakers relatively non-dogmatic approach to Christianization squared well with the Pagan's desire to engage Christianity selectively and on their own terms. The Quakers approached civilizing and reforming the Indians with the plan to make them see their need and then to show them kindness. Unfortunately, the needs that they suggested (plough

agriculture and private land ownership) were not perceived as real needs by the Oneidas. By 1801, the mission had closed.

Eleazor Williams was an Episcopal missionary who was part Mohican and spoke several Iroquois languages. He visited the Oneidas in 1816–1817, and became the leader of what was called the First Christian Party. Williams was influential in moving many of the Oneidas to Wisconsin. Unfortunately, his motives have to be questioned as he received payment from the government and private companies for relocating the Oneidas.

This pattern is repeated among many other tribes. Historically the Christian church has evangelized our Native American communities by telling them that the Gospel requires them to speak our language, wear our clothing, play our music, and cut their hair our way (and by our) I mean western European.

As people of Christ, how do we respond?

Culture is a first article gift, part of the world around us. There are positive aspects of all cultures and there are aspects of culture that can become idols. Our call as Christians is to affirm the positive aspects of culture and point out the idolatrous aspects of culture.

We can affirm the many positive aspects of Native cultures

Care for creation

Respect for the wisdom of elders

Greater emphasis on community. These aspects of culture are much more Biblical than many of the patterns of our dominant culture.

Secondly whether you are Native or not recognize the gift of Jesus. God saves us by grace, not by what we do.

For those who are Native, recognize that the gift of Jesus is still a gift even when it is

wrapped in unpleasant and ugly wrapping paper

For those of us who are not Native, recognize the barriers that we have put in front of people by elevating our culture and preferences (egotism) to keep people from experiencing the gospel. We repent of these sinful attitudes.

The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that we have the full assurance of faith. Christ died for our sins. All our sins. The cross is multicolored- for all people groups. Red, yellow, black and white, they are precious in God's sight. It is Jesus who made one sacrifice for all humanity. All peoples, all nations.

Hearts that are sprinkled clean- in the Old Testament, the priest would sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the people gathered outside the place of meeting. This was a sign that they were included and forgiven

Bodies washed with water- in baptism, our sins are washed away. We are restored and made new.

We hold fast to the confession of faith. Not because the strength is in us but because Jesus is faithful to his promises.

The writer to the Hebrews encourages some actions:

Promote love and good works—it is important for Christians to seek justice in our society and care for all. Poverty and racism are evils that are not compatible with the Christian message. We can work together to make a difference.

Do not neglect to meet together. We can gather together, meeting on a weekly basis, reconnecting with one another and re connecting with God, his grace and his Word. These patterns are important.

Encourage one another- we need the support and the wisdom of all of us together as we

hear the Word of God and lift one another up in prayer. .

God has a plan for all people to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. His desire is that all nations worship him. The church is the instrument of his mission today. He calls us into a partnership with him that brings blessing to all people.

May God work among us to make that happen for the building of his kingdom now and into eternity.

The following devotions were written for use by Lutheran Indiana Ministries in their Advent and Lenten devotional booklets.

Isaiah 9:6

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called ... Prince of Peace.

A traditional greeting of the Oneida people is “Skenakoka”. Loosely translated, it means, “Are you at peace?” The greeting conveys the universal desire of all nations that one’s friends and acquaintances be “at peace”.

Peace is a quality that is missing across cultures. Nations are at war, neighbors feud, families fight, and many relationships are filled with conflict. Christians recognize that our biggest problem is that we are not “at peace” with our creator. Our sinfulness, inherited from our ancestors, and our thoughts and our actions have separated us from God. The conflict that we experience in this world is a painful reminder that we are not at peace.

In the season of Advent, we rejoice that God did something about this fact. His Son, born a child in Bethlehem came to bring us peace. This prince of peace who gave his life on the cross for our violence and inhospitality came specifically so that we could be healed, forgiven, and restored. In His death and resurrection, we have the forgiveness and the peace with God that we all need and desire.

As representatives of the Prince of Peace, we are called to share the good news of Jesus’ birth and his death and resurrection for each of us. This involves the sharing of Jesus’ peace with those in our family and even with our enemies. The Advent season provides an opportunity to share the story of our God who loves us so much that he sends us the gift of the Prince of Peace.

I challenge you today to identify someone with whom you are “not at peace”. Pray for them. Seek an opportunity to share the forgiveness and the abundant life that is given by our Prince of Peace.

Prayer: I praise and thank you heavenly Father for sending your Son as our Prince of Peace. Thank you that you have made us “at peace” with you and I pray that you would empower me to share that peace with others. Especially I pray for _____ and I ask that you would give me an opportunity to make peace with them. In Jesus’ name. Amen

Stirring the Ashes

We are brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground. Rise up and help us; rescue us because of your unfailing love. Psalm 44:25–26

The Oneida are part of the Iroquois confederacy. Traditional Oneida culture observes the practice of a midwinter festival which begins the New Year (in January or February). The opening of this festival is the “stirring of the ashes”, thought to represent giving thanks to the Creator for all of the blessings of the past year and asking for renewal upon the earth.

As Christians, we begin our observance of Lent with a “stirring of the ashes”. The ashes of last year’s palm fronds are stirred with a small amount of olive oil. The ashes are smudged upon the foreheads of worshippers. Our stirring of the ashes reminds us that we are frail and broken creatures. We are dust, and to dust we shall return (Genesis 3:19). With this sign of penitence, we acknowledge our dependence upon God for his restoration and renewal. We need his unfailing love.

The good news of our “stirring of the ashes” is that God has heard our prayer. Even before we asked, God has provided eternal blessings. He has rescued us from our sin and taken away the eternal consequences of our rebellion and failure. He has given us renewal, new life and a new start. As Jesus was lifted up on the cross, the faithful love of God was demonstrated. His death is our life. His unfailing mercy is our strength. The empty tomb is our hope.

Prayer: Creator God, we thank you for all the blessings that we have received from your gracious hand. Thank you for the rescue and renewal you provide in Jesus. Amen

People of the Standing Stone

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes” (Psalm 118:22–23).

The Oneida are called the “People of the Standing Stone.” According to tradition, a large boulder marked the entrance to their village.

I’m intrigued by how Christians are also “people of the Standing Stone.” The Old Testament promises that the “stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”. Jesus of Nazareth came to live and to teach among his people. But the religious and political leaders rejected his words. They failed to see his true witness of God. Ultimately, their rejection led to his betrayal, his suffering and his death on a cross.

The marvelous plan of God was to use this rejection for our ultimate good. We also have rejected God. We have sinned against him in our thoughts, words, and actions. But Jesus paid the price for our rejection and in his resurrection, we have the promise of a restored relationship, now and into eternity.

The apostle Peter, says this of us. “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:4–5 NIV).

As the household of God, the entrance to our fellowship is marked by the rock that is Jesus Christ! As believers in Jesus, it is our privilege to share the risen Christ with those in our world, whatever tribe, nationality, or race. Jesus is the “standing stone” for all!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you are the stone that we have rejected. It is amazingly good news that you gave your life for us! Help us to order our lives around your words and promises. Empower us to share your good news with others. Amen.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arand, Charles P. "Not All Adiaphora Are Created Equal." *Concordia Journal* 30 no. 3 (July 2004): 156–64.
- Berger, Thomas. *A Long and Terrible Shadow: White Values, Native Rights in the Americas since 1492*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1992.
- Berkhoffer, Robert Jr. *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and the American Indian Response, 1787–1862*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965.
- Bloomfield, J.K. *The Oneidas*. New York: James Stewart, 1909.
- Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991.
- Bowden, Henry Werner. *American Indians and Christian Missions; Studies in Cultural Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- Brighton, Louis. *Revelation*. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis: Concordia, 1999.
- Brown, Collin, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Volume 1*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Bruce, F.F. *The Book of the Acts*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Campisi, Jack and Laurence Hauptman, eds. *The Oneida Indian Experience: Two Perspectives*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988.
- Cornelius, Carol. "Forces That Impacted Oneida's Move to Wisconsin," paper presented at Oneida History conference, June 1998. Oneida Cultural Heritage Department. Bulletin 16.
- Das, A. Andrew. *Galatians*. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis: Concordia, 2014.
- DeYmaz, Mark. *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- Elmer, Duane. *Cross-Cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting In Around the World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Engel, James F. and William A. Dyrness. *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Eyer, Richard. *Pastoral Care under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1994.

- Fee, Gordon. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Forde, Gerhard O. *Theology is for Proclamation*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990.
- Foster, Charles R. *Embracing Diversity*. Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 1997.
- Garcia, Alberto, and Victor Raj, eds. *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a Multicultural Witness*. St. Louis: Concordia, 2002.
- Harris, R. Laird, Gleason Archer, Jr, and Bruce Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Volume 2*. Chicago: Moody, 1980.
- Hauerwas, Stanley and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1989.
- Hauptman, Laurence and L. Gordon McLester III. *Chief Daniel Bread and the Oneida Nation of Indians of Wisconsin*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002.
- , eds. *The Oneida Indians in the Age of Allotment, 1860–1920*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006.
- , eds. *The Oneida Indian Journey: From New York to Wisconsin, 1784–1860*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999.
- Hiebert, Paul G. *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985.
- . *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- History of the Catholic Church on the Oneida Reservation*. Immaculate Conception Church. 1967.
- Jacobs, Adrian. *Aboriginal Christianity: The Way It Was Meant to Be*. Rapid City, SD, self-published, 1998.
- Jourdan, Judi, ed. *Iroquois Traditional Ceremonies*. Oneida Cultural Heritage Department. Bulletin 16.
- Kaiser, James. “Wilhelm Loehe and the Chippewa Outreach at Frankenmuth.” *Missio Apostolica* 22, no. 1 (May 2014): 73–82.
- Kaiser, Walter. *Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.
- Keiser, Albert. *Lutheran Mission Work among the American Indians*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1922.
- Kelley, Colleen, and Judith Meyers. *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Action Planning Guide*. Chicago: General Dynamics, 1992.

- . *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory, Cultural Passport to Anywhere*. Chicago: General Dynamics, 1992.
- . *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory, Facilitators' Guide*. Arlington, VA: Vangent, 1992.
- . *Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory Manual*. Arlington, VA: Vangent, 1995.
- Kittel, Gerhard and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.
- Kolb, Robert. *Speaking the Gospel Today*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1995.
- Kolb, Robert and Timothy Wengert, eds. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000.
- Larkin, William J. and Joel F. Williams, eds. *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998.
- Lewis, Herbert S., ed. *Oneida Lives; Long-Lost Voices of the Wisconsin Oneidas*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Lingenfelter, Sherwood G. and Marvin K. Mayers. *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- Lockwood, Gregory. *1 Corinthians*. Concordia Commentary. St. Louis: Concordia, 2000.
- Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1991.
- McLester, L. Gordon III and Laurence M. Hauptman, eds. *A Nation within a Nation: Voices of the Oneidas in Wisconsin*. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010.
- Menuge, Angus. General Editor, *Christ and Culture in Dialogue*. St. Louis: Concordia Academic, 1999.
- Merrill, Frank W. *Oneida: The People of the Standing Stone: The Church's Mission to the Oneidas*. Oneida Indian Reservation, WI, 1899.
- Moreau, A. Scott. *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2012.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.
- O'Brien, Benton Craig. "Raising Cross-Cultural Competency in Leaders for the Urban Multicultural Church." D.Min diss, Golden Gate Theological Seminary, 2003.

- Oneida Methodist Mission: History, Organization, Activities*. Green Bay, WI: Reliance. Date unknown.
- Oswalt, John. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Parker, Arthur C. *Parker on the Iroquis: Iroquois Uses of Maize and other Food Plants, the Code of Handsome Lake, the Seneca Prophet, the Constitution of the Five Nations*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1968.
- Richards, E. Randolph, and Brandon J. O'Brien. *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understanding the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.
- Richardson, Don. *Eternity in Their Hearts*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1981.
- Ritzenthaler, Robert. "The Oneida Indians of Wisconsin." *Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee* 19, no.1 (November 1950): 1–52.
- Rodewald, Mike. "Barriers to the Gospel: Approaching Contextualization from a Confessional Lutheran Perspective." *Missio Apostolica* 22, no.1 (May 2014): 54–62.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Schultz, Jack. "Properly Dividing: Distinguishing the Variables of Culture from the Constants of Theology or It's Not How You Look, It's How You Think You Look." *Missio Apostolica* 22, no. 1 (May 2014): 63–71.
- Shea, John Gilman. *Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes of the United States*. New York: Arno Press and New York Times. 1969.
- Shea, J.M., ed. *Captivity among the Oneidas in 1690-91 of Father Pierre Millet*. Translated with notes by Mrs. Edward E. Ayer. Chicago: Blakely. 1897.
- Tickle, Phyllis. *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Tiro, Karim. *The People of the Standing Stone: The Oneida Nation from the Revolution through the Era of Removal*. Amherst and Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.
- . "We Wish to Do You Good: The Quaker Mission to the Oneida Nation, 1790–1840," *Journal of the Early Republic* 26 (Fall 2006): 353–76.
- Trigger, Bruce, ed. *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 15, Northeast*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978.

Twiss, Richard. *One Church Many Tribes: Following Jesus the Way God Made You*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 2000.

———. *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015.

Vicedom, Georg F. *The Mission of God*. St. Louis: Concordia, 1965.

Walls, Andrew F. *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002.

Washburn, Wilcomb, ed. *The Indian and the White Man*. New York: New York University Press, 1964.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Yount, William R. and Mike Barnett, *Called to Reach; Equipping Cross-Cultural Disciples*. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2007.