

welcome, welcome

A guide to ministry with Asian church members
for English-speaking congregations

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Making your church a welcoming place with and for Asian people can be like teaching a new song to a choir—and learning to sing in new ways yourself! How do you develop yourself as a leader who really relates to Asians and Asian Americans? Do you think they feel at home enough to stay in your church? How can you increase the chances that they will?

As every choir singer knows, practice makes perfect! And having some good training is even better. This guidebook is for English-speaking congregations who want to strengthen and retain Asian membership in areas where Asian populations are not large.

Welcome, Welcome is a concise and practical guide to building relationships with this growing population of God's people in the United States.

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○ sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.
—Psalm 96: 1-3

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welcome, welcome

introduction

Three billion Asian people make up 50 percent of the world's population; of these, about 10 percent are Christian.

There are about 12 million Asian Americans in the United States. However, just 23,000 of these are members in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (which has a total of 5.2 million members from White, African American, African, Latino, American Indian and Alaska Native, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander racial backgrounds.)

Visionary and mission-minded congregations are asking themselves: Why is that? How can we be very clearly welcoming, so that Asian persons who do visit, or join, decide to stay? How can we "sing God's songs" in new ways so that we can reach new populations? — and no longer feel we are reaching out to strangers but are engaging in mutual ministry with friends?

So if Asian people are starting to come to your church, an opportunity has come to you. You can be a voice of welcome for mutual ministry. Let us find meaningful ways to relate to each other, so that we can sing more of God's music together. After all, music isn't made up of single notes alone. Music grows out of the relationship that notes have with each other.

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How can we be very clearly welcoming, so that Asian persons,
who do visit or join, decide to stay?

1

warming up



Singing a new song starts with listening, seeking to understand and appreciate the music. At first we mostly hear a melody line. In terms of Asian culture, this might be the more visible gifts that Asian people bring to U.S. society. Can you name some of these?

Foods of many Asian nations, whether cuisine for fine dining or favorite snacks or fast foods are widely popular among Americans of many backgrounds. Fashion flair through designer Asian clothing including “China chic” is appearing on runways or for trendy everyday wear. Museum exhibits and programs offer exposure to Asian fine arts, history and culture.

Feng shui, an ancient art of interacting with natural forces to create a healthy and harmonious environment, is becoming popular in North America through gift books and television shows. Asian healing arts such as acupuncture, Asian exercise such as tai chi, chuan and Asian martial arts are achieving greater visibility as the years go on. And we haven't begun to mention Asian contributions to church and community life, industry and business, government and nonprofit organizations, education, media and communications, science and medicine, finance and law, sports and entertainment.

Considering the gifts of Asian Americans to society is like doing a warm up. And warming up is important for care and maintenance of vocal chords. Consider this list of strengths developed by the ELCA Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders:

- 1 diversity of culture and spirituality
- 2 value of family—communication
- 3 interdependency
- 4 people first; face saving versus fact finding
- 5 spiral logic versus linear logic
- 6 consensus: seeking both, not either-or
- 7 enduring values
- 8 ability to negotiate
- 9 contextualizing the Gospel
- 10 checks and balances within our structures
- 11 leading and contributing toward diversity of the church
- 12 paving the way for a better reception of the concept of suffering

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warming up *continued*

Jotting down questions for reflection and journaling is another good warm-up. For starters, reflect on these questions raised by pastors and lay people at a meeting convened by the Commission for Multicultural Ministries in Spring 2000. "How can we:

- listen, bridge cultural gaps and find partnership?
- take initiative to anticipate and meet needs rather than just react?
- build a sense of community and belonging across generations?
- achieve mutual transformation?
- bring out the universality of faith?"

Take heart, and be intentional

Learning the art of hospitality in a multicultural world is like being a singer who wants to improve his or her projection, resonance and overall musicality. As with all worthy goals, becoming known as a church that cares about Asian people takes focused effort.

Multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills may seem to come naturally to some people, much like the bell-like clarity of a lyric soprano's voice. However, even gifted people can enhance their capabilities by intentionally studying their art.

For example, singing requires paying attention and using creative tension (as opposed to tenseness). Similarly, developing an environment and spirit of hospitality within yourself and your church comes with intentionality.

Dealing with "stage fright"

An initial rule of thumb is to remember that first conversations or attempts need not be full blown. Start easy. Simplicity can be a beautiful thing. God will expand your range, using your brief conversations or pilot projects as building blocks for future expressions of welcome.



Journaling

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Don't deny any feelings of discomfort that you may have. Pray instead. Build your strong foundation so that it can withstand first impressions and initial challenges, to reach the next level of experience. Remember, we all start out "not knowing how." Those who improve are those who realize that we don't have to remain not knowing.

As a Christian businessman in Iowa says, "You don't have to have all the answers. You are there to help create an environment in which the Holy Spirit can work."

Let us pray: God, as you have welcomed each of us into your family, show us the way to welcome sisters and brothers of every background. Help us to see each person with the spirit of your love. Help us to see each face, and not just their race. Amen.



2 welcome, welcome

creating an environment

Becoming a place where Asian Americans feel at home may involve creating an environment so that this can happen. Brainstorm with your education committee about what might work well at your church for discussion groups, forums or other programs. You might form a study group to learn and share information about Asian American news and culture.

Program Idea #1: Asian Book Club

Goal: To learn and share about Asian culture as a foundation for church outreach.

- 1** Find a book by or about Asian people in the U. S. context that you would enjoy reading. (Fiction/non-fiction; children/youth/adult)
- 2** Set up a group that meets monthly for three months in a row. Discuss: What in this book was new or surprising to you? What seemed different in the culture compared to yours? What similarities do you share with the Asian person(s) depicted? What message do you think God is sharing with you about Asian people?
- 3** List the names of the readers and books in your church newsletter. If readers donate their books to the church library, that could keep the educational process going too.

Program Idea #2: Surfing the Web

If the group has access to the Internet, divide up the websites from the list in the back of this book and look them over. Then meet to share facts and insights you have gleaned. Ask someone to take notes and write an article for the church newsletter about your meeting. That way your group can encourage your entire congregation.

Does your church prefer “overview” sessions (sharing a lot of information broadly) or more “in-depth” sessions (which will mean getting together more than once)? Consider while you are surfing:

- 1** What facts about Asian Americans were new to me? (Choose one or two to share with the group.)
- 2** What impressions am I gathering about the Asian American community?
- 3** What vignette, testimony or story touched me? (Share it with the group!)
- 4** What would I like our group to pray about or reflect on? (Let the Spirit lead you in this brainstorming time, to see what emerges as a realistic action step.)

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Other ideas

See www.nacca-usa.org for inspiration on how a group of young Asian Christians are using music to spread the Gospel in Southern California. Watch Public Broadcasting System (PBS) documentaries on an Asian American subject and discuss them. Rent a video such as "The Joy Luck Club." Learn about a local Asian American ministry or community group. Go to an Asian American festival, museum exhibit, theater, film or dance performance and tell others about it. Dream up other creative avenues for learning.



3 welcome, welcome posture



To begin with, a vocal music teacher will tell you that correct posture is essential for good singing. How surprising it is to discover that we may not already “know” how to stand, or how to breathe properly. However, without this basic awareness, we won’t get very far. Achieving correct posture and learning to breathe may take some time, guidance and practice.

The same is true for becoming a multiculturally sensitive person who can build good relationships across cultures. Just as a singer learns a fine balance between tension, self-control and flexibility, we need to become aware of ourselves and get a sense of what we need to learn.

Culture is like the air we breathe. Often we are unaware of the dynamics of power and race, and of how our societal and ethnic culture shapes us and affects others. Reading books and looking over websites to increase our awareness, attending multicultural and anti-racism presentations and trainings, asking more experienced friends to share their advice and perspectives are some basic ways to become aware.

What “stance” is correct in reaching out to Asian people? What perspective? Asian populations are so diverse that needs and interests will differ tremendously.

- Is the person a recent arrival from another country? (Visitor, international student, immigrant, refugee?) He or she may welcome the chance to practice English, talk about American customs or have practical advice related to dealing with the stresses of culture shock in an entirely new country and environment. “Tell me something about your country” might be a conversational starting point.
- Is the person an American of Asian heritage? (Second generation or higher, a citizen of the United States who is not a foreigner?) In this case the question “where are you from?” is inappropriate and may even be insulting. It is an unpleasant reminder to the person that Asians in the United States are often considered perpetual foreigners by many others, and that we are not considered true Americans who really belong.
- Or, perhaps your church has members who were born in Asia and grew up in the United States (also called the “1.5” generation)? You will have to take your cues from the individual, since experiences, needs and preferences vary.
- Or, are some of your members from “mixed heritage” backgrounds such as AmerAsian or AfroAsian? Or be Asians who married spouses of different racial background? Or are Asians who were adopted by and raised in a non-Asian environment?



These categories offer a sense of the diversity among Asian persons. They're not meant to suggest "cut and dried" answers on how to make friends. What is it that people of any background need, after all? What brings music to their soul? Stay around long enough, ask, listen, and you'll find out.

"It doesn't seem to me that my Asian church friends are any different from my other friends," one white woman commented. "What if I don't think of them as people of color?"

This is a good question without a simple answer. Asian populations are so diverse that one answer will not fit all. Indeed if your Asian church friends are second, third or fourth generation, and have an economic and cultural lifestyle similar to yours, then perhaps being welcoming is not something that requires a special "ethnic" effort, but just a warm and caring approach in general.

On the other hand, even when you don't hear about problems doesn't mean they don't exist.

For example, a national survey by aMagazine revealed that nearly half of respondents said they "worked in a place where coworkers used language or engaged in behavior offensive to Asian Americans."¹

Sometimes it is other people of color who say that they consider Asian Americans to be white, and not people of color. In either case, it points out another issue Asian Americans face: that of invisibility. Although great strides are being made in some educational, media and church programs, other programs with diversity as their theme make no mention of Asian Americans at all.

The best posture/perspective realizes that people bring both simplicity and complexity to any situation. On the one hand, we may hope for something straightforward to happen, and that our needs will be met in some way. On the other hand, because of historical issues that carry on into the present day and personal experiences across cultures that have been hurtful or life-damaging, most of us have to believe that another person will be trustworthy and true before a friendship can develop.

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posture *continued*

That's why reaching out with good will is so important. But equally important is a willingness to listen, hear each other's stories, and be supportive. Sharing and hearing each other's perspectives, histories, and cultural beliefs are important ways to grow in mutual ministry. Creating a climate where people can be at their best will benefit both Asian persons and others.

Let us pray: Thank you, God, for being ever present to teach us the beauty and meaning of trust and friendship. Give us insight in learning how to share ourselves in ways that will help your Kingdom. Please create a bridge where my new friend _____ and I can meet and learn to sing songs of joy and praise to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

¹"The aMedia Survey of Asian Americans at Work," by Dina Gan and Vincent Law, New York: aMagazine, Oct/Nov 2000, p. 44.

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4

openness



As one choirmaster used to say, “Do you want to sing? Then open your mouth!” The choir laughed at hearing such “obvious” advice. But the truth is that many of us (like these choir members) are not opening our mouths enough. Often we are unsure about what sounds will come out.

Openness in Asian American ministry opens up space so that God can bring you and the other person together for new understandings.

This may be easier said than done. When we get nervous, we may forget and close ourselves up. Is there anything that makes you nervous about Asian persons or issues? Reflect and pray about that. So often in our lives, lack of information feeds our feelings of discomfort. But remember, singing is not a comfortable activity; it is an art form that involves using creative energy in a certain way. How might your church cultivate greater awareness and knowledge of Asian persons, culture and issues? Differences and unfamiliarity may make us nervous, as well as the thought of too much change coming too soon. That’s why good ministry and good singing both improve with training and practice.

At first, and depending on your personality, initiating a conversation may feel as awkward as singing off key or not being able to read music on sight. However, most likely the other person will appreciate your efforts, and come halfway or as far as they are able.

As time goes on, some differences are likely to emerge, simply because Asian and European American or other cultures can be different in significant ways. Here are a few examples of east-west differences:

Personality preferences. Clinical psychologist Elaine Aron points out that “not being the ideal for your culture...has to affect you – not only how others have treated you but how you have come to treat yourself.” She cites a research study of Chinese and Canadian elementary school children about what traits made children popular. “In China ‘shy’ and ‘sensitive’ children were among those most chosen by others to be friends and playmates...In Canada, shy and sensitive children were among the least chosen.”¹

What effect do you think this has on a young Asian immigrant trying to adjust to life in a new country? Ask your Asian church members if they’d like to meet for a discussion on living between two cultures and how the faith community can be supportive.

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openness *continued*

Religious tolerance (Buddhist). “Gold and amber do not harm each other. Silver and jade enhance each other.” This is how Buddhism was explained in Asia, such that it attracted wide acceptance. Buddhism is a very tolerant and accepting religion that fits into any country or setting. Its practitioners cultivate the quality of acceptance, which is a foundational mark of hospitality.

Consider how you would explain the concept of the one jealous God of the Christian faith. The Rev. Tom LoVan, a Lao-American ELCA pastor in Iowa, says, “Instead of telling people that what they have learned is wrong, I tell them that what they believe and do now is the way to Christianity... Buddha himself said that whoever follows the Trinity will see the face of God. In one tale, an old Hindu priest asks Buddha how he can see the face of God. Buddha tells him to look for a person whose forehead, hands, feet, and side will be scarred. ‘That person will be your golden boat and bring you to see the face of God.’²

The printed word. “In Western society, we are taught to take the printed word seriously,” says Confucian scholar The Rev. Dr. Edmond Yee, professor of Asian studies at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and director of the PLTS Center for Multicultural Ministry. “The Confucian tradition values the written word very much; but it insists that we should not follow any written word blindly, without first experiencing it to find out whether or not it is true. We must bodily experience the ‘truth’ of any word before we accept it and be on the path to self-realization. .

“On a whole the Confucian tradition looks at the written word (Scriptures) differently from the Christian tradition. The word is like a boat which we can use to ferry ourselves to the other shore. Once we get on shore, we can discard the boat. In the Christian tradition, people continue to carry the boat after they have crossed the river.

Cultural customs. An American businessman in a series of meetings with Japanese co-workers learned that he admired some of the different cultural traits of Asians. “They tend to listen until the other person’s thoughts were complete,” he said, “while our American tendency is to already be thinking about what our next statement will be.”

“I also like how they’d walk with a colleague to a taxi and wait with him until it comes,” he commented. “That’s hospitality.”

Daniel Peter, an anthropologist and ELCA mission developer ministering with South Asians in Floral Park, New York, points out the importance of being open beyond first impressions. Asian ways may differ from American ways so much that insults might be

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assumed, where none were intended. For example, in the United States joking about someone's graying hair can be insulting to men and especially devaluing to women. But an Asian doing this may be intending to show that you are friends and no longer strangers.

"Strangers should most certainly be treated with hospitality," Pastor Peter says. "But between friends, joking is a way of creating an atmosphere of friendliness and community...a way of saying 'we are one; don't draw a line between us.'" When Asian friends joke with him about his hair, he knows they are saying "You're not a kid anymore. You have experience, and maturity."

Cultural values. Consider effective evangelism as expressed by Iwa*, a transforming Christian ministry in the Japanese American community. "A traditional Western approach may be appropriate for an individualistic, confrontational, verbal and explicit people," but may not be effective for introducing Christ to an "omoiyari" (empathetic) people who are "relational, group-oriented, consensus-driven, non-confrontational, and non-verbal."

Effective omoi-yari evangelism," according to IWA, includes preparing, nurturing and encouraging, because "a fisherman who knows his fish can catch lots with a bamboo pole and simple gear," compared to one with high tech equipment who can't catch any because he doesn't understand his fish."³

Living in two worlds

We are being very general here. You may know Asian Americans who are very individual, direct, verbal and explicit. You may know non-Asian Americans who are relational, group oriented, love consensus and prefer non-confrontational solutions to problems.

However, this is to say that when you are from a culture that differs from mainstream American culture, it takes additional energy to develop skills and take care of responsibilities from both worlds. This becomes apparent even to Asian children, who might attend a community Asian language school after regular "American school." They already know that means going to school continuously and doing twice as much homework.



* 'Iwa' is the Japanese word for rock as in 'Christ the Rock of our salvation' and is pronounced 'E - wa' - 'E' like the 'E' in 'East,' explains Iwa's director, Cyril Nishamoto, "The Japanese American (or Anglicized) pronunciation emphasizes the first syllable (the 'I') while the Japanese pronunciation slightly emphasizes the second (the 'wa'). Most often, you'll hear it pronounced the first wa.y"

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openness *continued*

In the same way, being an Asian American adult means learning skills that can take you back and forth between the two worlds as needed. Like other “dual culture ethnic people,” you learn to draw out certain skills for one particular setting, and other skills as appropriate for your Asian community.

Sometimes the ability to know two cultures can be a real asset and a gift. At other times, all the traveling back and forth, whether literally or figuratively, is exhausting. It can be stressful and lonely, especially if you don't have friends who are doing this as well. A church that is welcoming can truly be a place for the heart, a home away from home. What a joy it is to find a church like that!

Growing up Asian American means realizing too that often these realities and abilities are not appreciated or understood by others. Many Asian persons have been viewed as indecisive or slow, when actually that person is conscientiously weighing the consequences of his/her actions, seeking to find a harmonious solution for the good of all concerned. However, more enlightened persons can see that there is giftedness in Asian traditions and values that can be spiritually uplifting in the American scene.

Just different

Sometimes differences are apparent. Sometimes it takes a while to even notice them. However, being different doesn't have to be problematic. It doesn't have to mean better, or worse; it can mean simply different. As the saying goes, people are people (created in the image of God). They are not problems; they are people. Remember, a basic principle of both choral life and multicultural ministry is that God created us all to be unique, and share our unique gifts for the good of all God's people.

Put together a sermon, Bible study or discussion group at your church about the benefits of diversity. Ask a student to make a presentation. Be creative in your resource searching. For example, human relations and peacemaking networks offer resources and training in communication skills. Two organizations in the Lutheran network are: Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, www.lhra.org, lhra@ecunet.org, 414-536-0585 and Lutheran Peace Fellowship, www.nonviolence.org/lpf, lpf@ecunet.org, 206-720-0313 (1-5 p.m.).

¹The Highly Sensitive Person: How to Thrive When the World Overwhelms You, by Elaine N. Aron, Ph.D., New York: Broadway Books, 1996, p. 15.)

² “Iowa pastor uses Buddhist scriptures to draw Southeast Asians to Jesus,” from Mission Partners Focus newsletter, ELCA Division for Outreach, Summer 1999, p. 1

³“Fishing’ in Palos Verdes,” in Stepping Stones, Glendale Calif., IWA, December 1997, p. 4.

5 connections



To become a truly welcoming friend, don't overlook the connection of learning more about Asian American history in the United States and present day societal trends. Learning basics about Asian religious history and beliefs is also helpful.

Indentured workers and slaves

American history books make mention of Chinese laborers coming to build railroads in the American West, and the U.S. Exclusion Act—a clear legislated sign of unwelcome toward Asian people—are a recorded fact of history. However, it is little known how harsh conditions were, how Asian laborers became the “new slaves” in the Western Hemisphere after the African slave trade ended in the 19th century.

Professor Gary Okhiro writes: “Chinese and Asian Indian ‘coolies’ were sold and indentured to European and American ship captains in a barter called by the Chinese ‘the buying and selling of pigs.’” During the transpacific passage, “overcrowding and a short supply of food and water led to revolts, suicides and murders.” He quotes the testimony of coolies who were “confined in the hold below; some were even shut up in bamboo cages, or chained to iron posts...we cannot estimate the deaths that, in all, took place, from sickness, blows, hunger, thirst, or from suicide by leaping into the sea.” Asian beginnings in this New World were tragic and harsh. ¹

Japanese internment

Beliefs about Japanese internment during World War II provide just one example of how misunderstandings abound about Asian Americans.

A survey commissioned by the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation in 2000 found that almost one out of every three persons polled were unsure of or deny that the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II ever happened. (32 percent of all adults polled; 38 percent of adults aged 18-34; and 31 percent of adults 65 and older.)

Almost half or more never knew that there were all-Japanese American troops who fought for the United States during World War II.²

For a deeper sense of how the internment affected the lives of Japanese Americans, rent a video such as “Snow Falling on Cedars.” This movie is a poignant love story set against a deeply meaningful portrayal of the Japanese internment period. It is an excellent resource for discussing issues of prejudice, racism, justice, community, kindness and humanity, which all come to life in this noteworthy film.

connections *continued*

Economic issues

Misinformation about Asian Americans and economic issues also leads to the perpetuation of stereotypes and resentment.

Did you know that almost 48 percent of New York City Asian American children are born into poor or near-poor families? And although more than a third of New York City Asians 25 or older have a college degree, about 24 percent did not complete high school, and 46 percent do not speak English proficiently? ³

Sometimes the focus on Asian American entrepreneurs suggests that Asian Americans are all doing well and “using the system,” taking government contracts meant for businesses owned by other people of color.

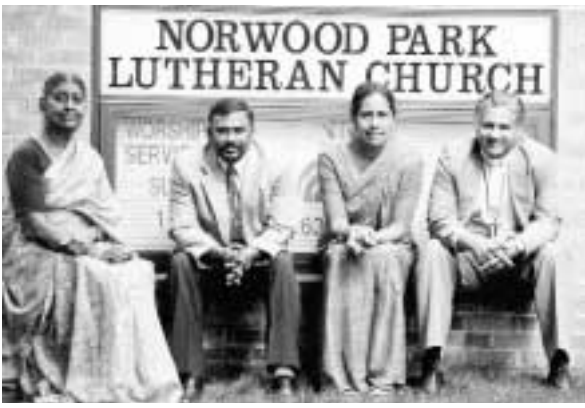
“Asian Americans are not super-entrepreneurs,” says Bonnie Wong, president of Asian Women in Business, “Eighty-five percent of Asian small business owners are immigrants—many of whom, due to limited English-speaking abilities, can otherwise expect to work only in low-paying manufacturing or restaurant jobs. They save money and borrow from friends and relatives...For every Asian American that makes money, there are numerous others out there who just make a survival living...”

“Many Asian Americans have entered the high tech field where dollar amounts for contracts are high,” Ms. Wong says, pointing out, however, that only a small percentage of federal contracts go to Asian-owned firms. “So in the overall scheme of things, we are talking about crumbs.” As there are more Asian-owned high tech firms than Black-owned, Asian Americans would get more contracts from that area. However, as there are more Black and Hispanic-owned firms in general contracting work, most contracts in that area go to them. ⁴

Asian religious history

Having an understanding of Asian religious history—both in the United States and in Asia—is also helpful to understanding Asian spiritual journeys. Some Asian persons have been Christian for several generations. Others may be the first in their family, of any generation, to become Christian.

Historically, Christianity is also a minority religion in most of Asia. To many Asians it is viewed as a White person’s religion, or as an arm of imperialism. Being identified as Asian and Christian today can lead to persecution. Discuss what the following reality suggests about the challenge of sharing the Gospel with Asian people in the United States.



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In most parts of Asian today, Christians live in politically marginalized communities. Until very recently a Nepali Hindu who chose to become a Christian was subject to imprisonment under the national constitution. In Malaysia and Pakistan, Muslims who become Christians lose many of their civil rights. Christians in China are denied access to high academic and other public offices. And all over the Asian continent, Christian converts are subject to intimidation, ostracism and frequent violence at the hands of family and neighbors.⁵

Asian religious beliefs

Why is learning more about Asian religious beliefs a helpful idea?

- 1** To stretch beyond our own culture. Each of us is gifted with family and culture. However, this also means we tend to see others through our own cultural filters. If we want to communicate at deep levels, such as talking about religious faith, it helps to be aware of how culture-bound we are. Rather than be content with operating just from our own culture, we can seek to meet the Asian person halfway, by learning about what holds deep meaning for them.
- 2** To help us show mutuality and respect. Trying to understand helps show that we are truly interested in Asian persons as whole people...that we are willing to explore different worldviews. In short, we're not just wanting them to change, learn our religion, worship our way, and express themselves through church service in our ways. We also want to learn about them and how their faith beliefs are expressed. By learning about them, we acknowledge our openness to God transforming us too.
- 3** To give us a sense of differences between Asian religious beliefs and ours. If we have problems understanding Asian beliefs, even our attempt to learn will give us a sense of how different our Christian beliefs may be to an Asian person. (Important note: Some Asian persons are from families that have been actively Christian for generations, while others have backgrounds in other faiths. Don't assume that they are or aren't Christian.)
- 4** To suggest concepts and beliefs that Asian persons and Christian persons might share in common. This is a good start for building any relationship. Some persons who have had opportunity for education may be very comfortable with expressing their beliefs. Others will be living out their beliefs rather than articulating them. Learning some more about Asian beliefs may give you some key words and concepts for building commonality.

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connections *continued*

Nowadays more and more global studies books are appearing. A colorful youth-oriented book on the subject of other religions can be a welcome and welcoming addition to your church library—for adults as well as for youth.

See the ELCA Division for Global Mission's website at www.elca.org/dgm for information on China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos.

¹Okhiro, Gary Y. *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994, p. 41-42.

²"Doomed to Repeat the Past?" Dec 2000/Jan 2001 *A. Magazine: Inside Asian America*, p. 12.

³"Study: Asians in City Also Face Poverty," April 14, 1999, *New York Newsday*. For info see www.cacf.org.

⁴"The Price of the Ticket," Oct/Nov 1998, *A. Magazine: Inside Asian America*, p.38-40.

⁵Shared by Pongsak Limthongviratn based on readings of Vinoth Ramachandra.

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6

Chao Mung

resonance

What makes us resonate in our relationships with others? Resonance suggests a certain fullness. In welcoming and developing mutual ministry with Asian people, what do you think will enrich the significance of your encounters? What will sustain the relationship and bring a quality of depth and intensity to it?

To answer this question, consider the people you admire, who you feel close to. What are those persons like? Do they listen, care, pay attention to what you need and encourage or help you toward meeting your goals?

The art of asking: Resonating with subtleties

While technical excellence is a must for any serious musician, true artistry goes beyond technique. Developing resonance and musicality involves sensitivity to nuances, which beginners may not even recognize at first. More experienced students may recognize nuances, but still need practice at using them appropriately. In time, however, sensitivity does develop with intentionality. Advanced musicians can go with the flow, because subtleties at that point have become second nature. This is true as well in ministry with Asian American people.

For example, you may begin to notice the gentle art of asking in an Asian way. More familiar in the United States is the direct and time-saving way of asking people what they want, and expecting them to respond immediately. An Asian person, on the other hand, values the cultural traits of not putting oneself forward, as well as honoring someone else's decision-making process to the degree of not wanting to put them on the spot.

So, in this Asian way, you ask. Then after some time has passed, you ask again, to show you really mean it. And still later, you ask a third time to give the responder the chance to be very clear about his/her final answer. This allows not only for time to think about the question, but also for the responder not to seem overeager (if the answer is yes) or too hasty (if the answer is no).

Asian Americans learn quickly that the art of asking three times isn't the American way. If you're visiting a friend, and the question "want something to eat?" doesn't produce a "yes" answer right away, you will be pretty hungry waiting for your non-Asian friend to ask again!

Certainly this "art of asking" is not always used in every Asian interaction. However, it is an example of a difference that can also be a blessing, because it can be part of the joy of friendship on a deeper level.

welcome, welcome



resonance *continued*

Beyond the interpersonal

Being aware of cultural differences is a good start toward building authentic relationships. However, multicultural education alone doesn't necessarily create an environment that is truly welcoming and hospitable, because society is already geared in a different way. That is why faithful Christians who become advocates and partners against racism, sexism, ageism, and other "isms" are such tremendous witnesses to God's love and justice. Caring about community issues affecting Asian Americans is a meaningful way to develop resonance in your relationship. Ask your Asian church friends about community issues that are of concern to them.

Developing resonance suggests a fullness and depth to our vocal abilities. In ministry this means going beyond the times of joy to be there in times of need. We may prefer to sing bright anthems rather than songs in a minor key. However, being welcoming means giving ourselves up to God to be used for the Spirit of reconciliation, wholeness and healing, because being human involves both the joy and suffering. Without the sharing of griefs, how can we truly appreciate the need to work for justice, and the depth of joy when it comes? How can we be a friend who is there for both good times and bad?

Good training for songmaking is also specific. It defines terms and sets standards of excellence so that conscientious students of the art can do well, and know that they are doing well. The following section seeks to clarify the meaning of racism against Asian people. As racism is a major and pervasive phenomenon affecting people of color and white persons, understanding its symptoms is a significant foundational aspect for ministry with Asian persons in the United States.

"It's not fair that my good intentions are clouded over by the perception of my racial background," you may exclaim. "Why can't an Asian person see beyond our racial differences and see me?" The point is well taken. In fact, your Asian neighbor, friend, or fellow church member may be feeling the same way.

There is a wide range on the continuum of human relations, ranging from being loved and heartily welcomed, to being tolerated, to being politely accepted, to being unwelcome or rejected, to being objects of scorn, hostility and hate. Trust does not come easily for many reasons. May God help us all to stand up together to lift up what is life-giving and good!

These are the kinds of realities in society that inflict emotional pain on Asian people, and perpetuate a climate in which Asian persons are devalued. Your prayers, help and support for dealing with racism will be much appreciated.

Racism Against Asians:

24 Symptoms and Syndromes

1. **Model minority myth.** Expecting Asians to fulfill the stereotype of being economically and scholastically successful, quiet, hard working. This myth serves three functions. It upholds the racist system (“See, it’s possible to succeed, the Asians did”); it can be used to deny social services and funding (“Asians don’t need any help”); and it can be used to pit Asians against Blacks and Latinos, setting Asians up for resentment by others (“Asians aren’t like those others”).
2. **Racial jokes and demeaning behavior.** Not teaching children that “slant eye” taunting and racial slurs are wrong.
3. **“Forever foreign.”** Viewing Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners or as “not American enough.”
4. **Scapegoating.** Blaming Asian immigrants, Asian-Americans or Asian nations for economic problems.
5. **Impatience/irritation with accents.** Being annoyed with Asians who speak English with an accent, while accepting Irish, French, Italian and other accents.
6. **“They’re not Asians.”** Viewing Asian Americans almost as “honorary white people” rather than accepting our Asianness.
7. **Faceless mass syndrome.** “They all look alike.” “Their names all sound alike.” “They’re all alike.” Not wanting to deal with or hear about Asian generational differences, the diversity of Asians and Asian cultures.
8. **Renaming.** Tendency to “rename” an Asian person with a shorter or “more American” name when they have not suggested that themselves. (Note: “Oriental” is a Eurocentric term. Historiographers chose Europe as the place where history began, and Asia was declared “the Orient,” being east of Europe.)
9. **Sexiness/sexlessness.** Seeing Asian women as exotic sex objects or the men as too macho. Or, the opposite: viewing Asian women or men as sexless.
10. **Devaluing interracial relationships.** Being unaccepting of people who cross racial “boundaries.” Making denigrating or insinuating comments about them. Implying that their genuine, loving relationship is improper, “wrong,” or offensive. Assuming that every interracial relationship involves exploitation.
11. **“They’re pagans, they’re uncivilized.”** Viewing Asians as non-religious or pagan, seeing Asian beliefs and spiritual practices as substandard. No recognition that, for example, 4,699 years of recorded history in China means centuries of wisdom, teachings, and learnings.
12. **Second-class Christians.** Considering Asians to not be Lutheran enough or assuming they could not be from Lutheran or Christian backgrounds. Viewing Asians as second-class Christians or only as a mission field.

Racism Against Asians *continued*

13. *Conformation.* Expecting Asians to conform to the dominant culture of the congregation, including speaking English in worship. Not inviting Asians to incorporate their language and culture into the practices of the congregation so that they can feel that their heritage is part of the whole as well.

14. *English only.* Strict adherence to the belief that Asian people must use English only, and leaving them no other option even when bilingual or translation help is badly needed.

15. *Not really adult.* Considering Asian adults as “cute” and not really adult, when they are small in stature or bone structure by “American” standards. This fairly innocuous misperception at its opposite extreme can lead to demeaning, “bullying” kinds of behavior, such as physically moving Asian adults aside —as though they were objects instead of people — when they are “in the way” or “not moving along fast enough.”

16. *Violent behavior and attacks.* Name calling, “why don’t you go back where you came from” insults, racist flyers, defacing of property, physical attacks and killings. Asian American adults, children and families are widely affected by hate crimes perpetuated against them.

17. *Denial.* Denying that racism exists and Americans have perpetrated racist acts against Asians. Not wanting to deal with hate crimes against Asians.

18. *Fear of conflict.* Truth-telling doesn’t have to mean the person is looking for a fight. What the person shares (an Asian saying they felt “left out,”) is a clue toward showing you care, and building a better and stronger relationship with that person. This is not a world where justice reigns unless people decide to uphold it. People who experience racism may be expressing sadness and disillusionment as well as justifiable anger.

19. *“You can’t fool me” syndrome.* “Don’t tell me about racism against Asians. I know how racist they are against other people.”

20. *Not recognizing human and justice needs.* Disbelieving that domestic violence happens in Asian communities. “But the man looks so innocent, he can’t have done that!”

21. *Cheap labor and other dehumanizing views.* “They like living 12 to a room.” Not recognizing that poverty makes people do what they must to survive.

22. *Tokenism and glass ceilings.* Bending the rules to promote Asians because of ethnicity rather than ability, and then watching them struggle, or fail. Passing over/not promoting Asians who have the qualifications.

23. *Devaluing decision-making abilities.* Not believing that Asians have a right to make their own decisions or can make good decisions, about their future in general or in the church. Not wanting them to congregate.

24. *Not taking Asians and racism seriously.* Thinking Asians are exaggerating about the pain racism inflicts, or about how widespread it is. Expecting Asians to “be big about it” and overlook racism. “It happened long ago.” “You’re being too sensitive.” “People are just ignorant.” “It’s not that bad.”

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support

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One Asian lay leader says, “Our church is not looking to bring people in the front door just so they’ll leave from the back door. We seek to help, and relate to their spiritual needs.” This is right on the mark. Without support, efforts that are otherwise effective may fall by the wayside. Consider what support is needed in your church’s situation. Consider how a financial gift to an Asian ministry or organization can witness to your church’s support. When a gift giving occasion comes up, see if a purchase from an Asian business would fit the bill.

Together on the journey

To begin with, Asian members may consider the spiritual path to be more important than church membership. “Life is not a station, but a journey,” says Timothy Fong, pastor of Chinese Life Lutheran Church in Alhambra, Calif. Having a friend to walk with on the journey is highly valued. And a great deal of meaningful sharing back and forth can happen between friends that will not happen between acquaintances.

New thoughts and challenges will abound, but also joy and laughter. Learning to accept and appreciate both is also one of the gifts of Asian culture to the United States, through the Chinese concept of yin and yang.

In Chinese culture, yin and yang are the two fundamental powers of life, two polar forces that interact continually in a circle of communication that never ends. Neither is more important than the other. Both are necessary if full potential of life is to be found.

A listening ear, a helping hand

Listening, showing respect and care can go a long way, even if an agreement or solution to a problem is not forthcoming. Offering advice may or may not even be the most helpful. But you can always ask if you can help.

Depending on the situation, showing up with practical help before being asked can also be wonderful. Church members have experience with this, not only with Asian friends. For example, when someone you know is recuperating from an operation, or mourning the death of a loved one, your offer to run errands, help baby-sit or bring food over to the house can be a powerful and deeply appreciated expression of care.

“I thought Asians didn’t have any problems”

The fact is that Asians are a very diverse community, ranging from successful professionals to families struggling with poverty. When Asians are viewed as contributing and

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support *continued*

successful, they may find themselves welcomed in a good number of circles (and hopefully, not resented for being “too successful.”). However, the true test of biblical hospitality—or simply true civility and kindness—is how they act in a situation that is not ideal.

Simply being Asian or speaking English with an Asian accent can lead to being treated with annoyance and disdain in stores, banks, and everyday social interactions. Certainly Asians are not the only persons who experience the frustration and stress of discrimination, because of being different in age, gender, race or other reasons.

While the purpose is not to feel sorry for the Asian person or to denigrate the non-Asian person, it is caring, sensitive and wise to be able to see and recognize the very real struggles that others have, even if we do not have them.

Hostility and hate crimes are far more widespread than is commonly known in church circles. Police brutality against Asians, attacks by white supremacists, and racist comments in workplaces, stores and public areas are all part of a climate of violence that Asian Americans face every day. (See www.elca.org/cmm for information on “No Hate Allowed,” a resource for opposing hate crimes against Asians and other people of color.)

Being Asian American does not exempt them from personal and family tragedies, marital problems, workplace stress, financial hardships, loneliness, despair, accidents, health problems and HIV/AIDS. Being Asian American in the United States means that on top of the joys and sorrows they experience with the rest of humanity, they also face specific challenges related to being people of Asian heritage in a country that has historically not welcomed Asians.

“The truth is,” observes The Rev. William Wong of the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation in Davis, Calif., “there are hurting people in our churches and communities who would so welcome allies: brothers and sisters who care enough to lend a shoulder to cry on, cheer us on when we stand up against injustice, and befriend and stand beside us in solidarity.”

Invisibility and health issues

Theresa Kim points out a ramification of being an invisible minority in the field of health. Asian women have to “second guess” advice from doctors, because studies are conducted on Caucasian women with the resulting recommended dosages of medicine being inappropriate for Asian women.

“Thousands of clinical studies are conducted on scores of ailments and remedies every year,” she says. Yet Asian American participation is limited or non-existent due to

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“physicians’ lack of interest in referring more patients of Asian descent to these studies, language barriers, our own limited awareness about health risks, and fear of experimentation... We fail to reap the benefits of studies on disease prevention, screening and treatment options that may pertain more specifically to our community,” and “the lack of data also hinders medical researchers’ efforts to obtain funding for studies pertaining to our community.”¹

Media images

Media representation is another area in which Asian Americans are seeking visibility. In television shows Asian actors and actresses are primarily cast in roles requiring “foreign looking actors,” while most roles are for “all American” types. Darrell Hamamoto, a University of California associate professor in Davis and author of a book on Asian Americans and the politics of TV representation, says that subordinate roles are what most viewers are used to, because “that’s the power relationship that exists between the United States and most Asian nations. White Americans perceive us as a colonized and foreign people, and the TV audience has that image reinforced every day without fail.”

Karen Narasaki, acting chair of the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition, says that “the challenge is to get to the point where our faces and our names are accepted as being American...”

“We’re not asking that every series have only Asian Americans, or even that every series have an Asian-American on its full-time cast. We’re just asking for TV to more fully reflect the reality that America is today.”²

Identity Politics

Race-conscious movements for recognition—otherwise known as identity politics—are probably more hotly debated beyond church circles than within. However, social justice minded believers are among those who have entered into the fray. Dr. Timothy Tseng and Dr. David Yoo, seminary and college professors from the West Coast, are articulate advocates for keeping our eyes on the vision of God’s “beloved community.”

“Christians committed to racial justice should resist the temptation to gloss over the differences and inequalities caused by a fallen world and society...”

First, recognize and name ‘White’ privilege and power over all of us... Ultimately it is an idolatry that confers benefits only to a select group in our society.

Second, reject extreme forms of identity politics. Let us keep our eyes on the prize

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support *continued*

—the beloved community. Our racial identities do not define us completely, for we are named after the One who has redeemed all humanity.

Third, support and take part in ministries that stress racial partnership while respecting the presence of “ethnically based” groups. Eleven o’ clock on Sundays may be America’s most segregated hour, but instead of passively decrying this reality, work so that the flock scattered on Sunday will be ready on Monday to be partners in mission.”³

¹“Wanted: for Clinical Studies,” Aug/Sept 1999 A Magazine, p. 20.

²“The Faces in the Glass Are Rarely Theirs,” Alan James Frutkin, New York Times, Sunday Dec. 24, 2000, p. 31 and 40.

³Tseng, Timothy and David Yoo. “The Many Faces of America,” in “Crossing the Racial Divide: America’s struggle for justice and reconciliation.” Washington, DC: Sojourners, 1998, p. 26.)



Be a friend...

Follow Christ, not human wisdom (Colossians 2: 6-8). Be alert for traditions, habits and behavior that demean Asian Americans. Be proactive about their rights. Teach tolerance. Don't let denial or ignorance reign. Help defuse resentment, replacing it with God's affirmation for all people.

Rejoice and give thanks (Philippians 4:4, 8-9). Lift up the gifts of Asian people through educational and recognition programs. Create an environment so that mutual ministry can happen.

Inspire by standing fast for liberty (Galatians 5: 1). Ask Asian Americans how your church can be supportive on issues that matter to them. Stand with them against racism and hate violence. Empower Asian Americans.

Equip the saints (Colossians 3:16). Teach and instruct your people about Asian and other multicultural issues. Organize workshops. Buy books to circulate among members. Study as a group why God made us who we are culturally in this time and place.

Now is the time to act! (Galatians 6:2) Help carry burdens. Volunteer or donate to programs that provide dignity and encouragement to Asian people.

Do justice (Micah 6:8). Take Asian Americans seriously when they speak. Ensure that they are equally represented in leadership groups and decision-making. Support their causes and encourage others to do the same.

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8 diction

When singers see lyrics that include words they do not know, they do well to learn the meaning of those words. Similarly, if the “language” or “lyrics” of multicultural ministry are unfamiliar to you, that is the perfect opportunity to find out what they mean. This can literally mean looking up words in a dictionary or website. However, at a deeper level it means being committed enough to the end result that you seek, to spend some time in study.

The fact that you are reading this book is already a sign that the Holy Spirit is working in you, that you want to develop your awareness, knowledge and skills multiculturally. Good for you! Keep learning about Asian people, and you will have a better handle on what's going on. Look up some of the books and websites listed in the back of this book. Good singers know how to hone their art by regular study. Then when the time comes to sing (in this case, to take part in actions and activities of hospitality), you will feel more prepared.

Asking for feedback is a good practice. That is, ask “would you tell me what you heard me say? That way I will know if I have been clear.” Don't just ask the person if he/she understood you, because most people will respond by saying that they did.

For inspiration, read “Hawaii sunshine: beacon to the unbeliever,” in the Winter 2001 issue of *Voices of Congregational Life* from the ELCA Division for Congregational Ministries. This ELCA congregation, Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu, baptizes 40 to 50 adults every year, and has inspired 17 members to go to seminary. One of these 17 who has moved to the East Coast has founded Eutychus Ministries, an organization to strengthen youth ministry for future generations.

Eventually, like a singer who is fully grounded in the art, you may be able to develop the gift of being able to anticipate needs before they are expressed. This is obviously beyond “Asian Ministry 101” but it is a vital and special part of Asian cultural values and community life. If you eventually reach this level, it can be a real delight to your Asian friends. If not, don't worry. As long as they know by your words and deeds that you really care about them, the finer points of intercultural relationships can develop later. What are some ways to show hospitality and keep Asian church members? The consulting team for this guidebook came up with the following list, for starters:



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Ways to show hospitality

- 1 Asian governing board/minority committee—aside from the congregation council.
- 2 Asians on congregation council.
- 3 “Bridge persons” gifted in cross-cultural relationship building.
- 4 Discretionary fund for Asian ministry.
- 5 Ecumenical vision.
- 6 English-language classes.
- 7 Fellowship, such as a post-worship noon meal.
- 8 Friendship.
- 9 Hospitality.
- 10 Infusion of money from ELCA for pastor’s salary so full-time ministry can happen.
- 11 Intercultural sharing (faith, facilities, programs) and making an effort to understand Asians.
- 12 Lifting up and interpreting Lutheran eucharistic theology.
- 13 Meeting practical needs.
- 14 Mutual transformation.
- 15 Passionate patient leader who knows the culture.
- 16 People feeling at home with language and humor.
- 17 Pulpit exchange/visibility for both pastors.
- 18 Relationships built around mutual ministry.
- 19 Teamwork gathered around a common vision.
- 20 Total Quality Ministry.
- 21 Yearning to be a healthy church, with hospitality being a part of that.

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Ways to be clear in your outreach

The team also offered suggestions from their experiences (administrative, language, leadership, partnership, sociocultural and spiritual) to help in your efforts to be clear in your outreach.

- 1 Build Christian community among people whose religious culture is non-Christian.
- 2 Decide on money matters.
If the Asian group meets separately. Who pays how much for the utility bills?
- 3 Change terminology and understanding say, for example:
"English-speaking" instead of "Anglo"
"Two parts of the congregation" instead of "two congregations"
"Asian American" instead of "Oriental"
- 4 Encourage people in their spiritual journey.
- 5 Find theologically trained Asian leaders.
- 6 Get more Asian language resources such as liturgies and hymns.
- 7 Go beyond inviting to immerse English-speaking pastors in Asian events.
- 8 Minister across generations.
- 9 Move power and authority from council to committees and ministry teams.
- 10 Understand and seek to relieve the stresses of being physically different people in a monocultural environment.



9 communication



What splendid results can be achieved, when we combine feeling with “technique” in singing our songs of welcome and hospitality.

Everything we learn is meant to come together for the purpose of communicating God’s love. When we offer ourselves to God, we can become instruments to convey the spirit of welcome, living testimonies that can draw people to the faith.

“I can’t see God, but I can see you.” said an Asian international student to Dorcas Wang, his spiritual adviser at the Chinese International Christian Fellowship, Fargo, N.D.

Now is the time...

An Asian family entered the worship hall at a conference just as a Spanish song was being sung. One of the churchwomen there thought of passing a songsheet to the family as an expression of welcome. For a second, she hesitated. Should she pass it to the oldest son, who had led the group in, and was probably its English-speaking leader? Or perhaps to the next boy, the “middle child”? Ah, but the youngest was so sweet, it might be fun to encourage a little one. Or maybe she should affirm the mother, woman to woman.

In hindsight the churchwoman realized that acknowledging the father as head of the family was the most proper course of action. Later when she and the oldest son had become friends, she told him this story, sighing “And by then you know what happened.” “Yes,” he laughed, in good-natured understanding. “By then the song was over.”

Yes, sometimes even when we are unsure, we may want to take some action before the opportunity to be welcoming is lost. From the outside looking in, or in hindsight, clear courses of action may be more apparent. But when we are in the midst of organizing ourselves and our ministry, things may not be so easy.

And so we pray that God will use us, and that we will be attuned to the calling. It may help to know that it is the expression of the heart that will make the ultimate difference, not the expressions of the mind. If you care, it will show, and will make an impression on your Asian church friend. Let us learn how to convey trustworthiness, so that relationships can grow. Let us learn how to be present in the moment, and find the sacredness that God has created in this place for you and your Asian sisters and brothers.

You may need to sing out first. Otherwise how will it become known that the church is a gathering place of care, a community of people who want to sing new songs with others, and be different from the ways of the world?

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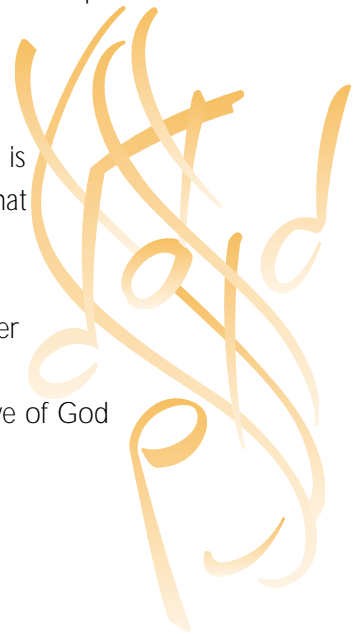
welcome, welcome

communication *continued*

Cultivate the art of hospitality, and ask God to make you a blessing. God is the conductor, the director who will at times lift up various voices to serve in the mass choir of creation. It may seem at times that certain voices are receiving more attention, or are being held up as more important than others. However, this is not true. None of us can hear the whole song when we sing; only God can. Our role is to learn our part as best as we can, using the gifts that God gave us. Trusting God, we can lift up our voices and give hearty thanks.

The Gospel message is a song with endless possibilities for expression. And God wants to work that song through us. Our part is to apply ourselves as we are able, then to leave the rest to God so that the song can flow. When the Holy Spirit inspires, we will not only be singing – we become the song.

May God bless our efforts to sing songs of welcome to each other that will be music to the hearts of all. Then may the sound of our music overflow beyond our church doors and bear witness to the love of God who created us for joy. ●



Selected Resources

A. Magazine, Inside Asian America, designed for young career adults and others who enjoy a savvy overview of news, features, style and commentary. Subscriptions 800/346-0085, x 558. \$15 for six issues/1 year.

Cobbler, Michael L. and Lily R. Wu. *Living the Faith: A Guide for Strengthening Multicultural Relationships*. Chicago, Ill: ELCA Commission for Multicultural Ministries, 2000. Augsburg Fortress Code #69-6360. 6-0001-2516-X.

Fong, Ken Uyeda. *Pursuing the Pearl: A Comprehensive Resource for Multi-Asian Ministries*. Valley Forge, Penn: Judson Press, 1999. 242 pp. \$18. www.judsonpress.com. 1-800-4-JUDSON (1-800-458-3766).

Law, Eric H.F. *The Bush was Blazing But Not Consumed: Developing a Multicultural Community Through Dialogue and Liturgy*. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 1996. 161 pp. Exodus 3 is the theological starting point for these techniques, processes and practical guidelines to build multicultural structures that everyone can live and thrive in.

Law, Eric H.F. *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace*. St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2000. A theological approach to enabling a community to act inclusively. Written by an Episcopal priest who is also a multicultural trainer.

Lee, Enid, Deborah Menkart and Margo Okazawa-Rey, editors. *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-Racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development*. Washington, D.C.: Network of Educators on the Americas, 1998. 468 pp. 202/238-2379 or 202/429-0137).

Liu, Eric. *The Accidental Asian: Notes of a Native Speaker*. New York: Random House, 1999. These elegant essays delve into issues of race, assimilation and identity from a second generation Asian perspective.

Namioka, Lensey. *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*. Yingmei Yang, a little girl from China, is the narrator of this uproarious and insightful story of cross-cultural learning and growth. 1999. Yearling/Bantam Doubleday Dell. \$4.50. ISBN: 0440412315.

Okhiro, Gary Y. *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994. 203 pp. ISBN: 0-295-97339-0 Essays examining the Asian American experience in terms of historical consciousness, race, gender, class and culture. Includes history of shared struggles and solidarity between Asian and African Americans.

Park, Andrew Sung. *Racial Conflict and Healing: An Asian-American Theological Perspective*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996. 198 pp. ISBN: 1-57075-078-5. Banquet of many courses for Christians who hunger for solid fare in race discussions. Historical review of Korean American culture, Asian American oppression in the United States, memorable human interest stories, food for thought about tensions between ethnic minorities not only against them.

Wong, Eva. *Teachings of the Tao*. Boston: Shambala, 1997. 152 pp. \$10. ISBN 1-57062-245-0. It's been said that Confucianism tells you about Chinese people's culture, but that Taoism tells you about their religious beliefs.



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Organizations and Websites

www.aac.sunysb.edu/about_us/faq.html Demographics and other facts about Asian Americans appear in this Asian American Center site of the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

www.aac.sunysb.edu/links.asp Provides links to many Asian and Asian American internet resources.

www.aaja.org The Asian American Journalists Association encourages young Asian Pacific Americans to enter the field of journalism, and ensures fair and accurate news coverage of Asian Pacific American communities.

www.agoraministry.org In Minneapolis, the mission of the Multicultural Center is to equip congregations for expanded Christian mission and ministry among emerging ethnic communities and in established congregations in the Twin Cities. See their website for info on events, their leadership training school, worship center, welcoming center, and more. E-mail: CherianP@agoraministry.org or KathyH@agoraministry.org. Tel: 612/879-5380.

www.apawli.org The Asian Pacific Women's Leadership Institute is the only national, non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing and enriching leadership skills for Asian Pacific women leaders. E-mail: apawli@apawli.org.

www.AsiaforKids.com Books, videos, CD-ROMS, crafts, games, dolls, music. Ask for a catalog. E-mail: sales@afk.com. Tel: 1-800-888-9681.

www.asianweek.com For news on APA politics and arts as well as commentaries on the states of Asian America, this website of the national weekly newspaper Asianweek is an excellent resource.

www.asiasource.org This website of the Asia Society, while focusing mainly on Asia, also offers information on Asian Americans (see "AsiaViews"). "AsiaProfiles" includes facts on countries. For tips on cultural dos and don'ts, check out "Business Protocols" in the Resources box.

www.cacf.org This website of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families includes a national directory of policy and advocacy organizations working to improve health care, social services and/or education for Asian American children. Articles are included on Asian American issues such as the model minority myth.

www.ChinaSprout.com An English-language community and e-commerce site for families who have adopted children from China. Messages can be posted for others to respond to.

www.elca.org/cmm At the homepage of the ELCA's Commission for Multicultural Ministries you can sample resources, find out about Asian ministry work and more.

www.elca.org/dgm Country Reports from the ELCA's Division for Global Mission provide general overviews of countries where ELCA has ministry connections. (Asian and other)

Eutyclus Ministries, Inc. A non-profit, non-denominational parachurch organization founded on the kingdom vision of promoting and supporting the youth ministry of Chinese churches in North America. Provides workshops and literature; consultation and networking; intergenerational communication seminars for parents and teens and short-term youth missions to nurture discipleship and leadership. P.O. Box 1037, Somerset, NJ 08875-1037. E-mail: Eutyclus3@aol.com. Tel: (732)951-9711.

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www.global.lao.net Enables connection to Lao American community websites including www.laovision.net (site of the premier Lao publication of the United States) and Laonet, an internet community of Lao students and professionals from all over the world (also reachable through laonet@lao.net).

www.iwarock.org "Iwa" is the Japanese word for "rock" and refers to the "Rock of Salvation," Jesus Christ. Iwa's mission is to help Christians and churches more effectively reach and disciple the 97% of Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans who do not yet know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Resources include materials, programs, strategies and training. E-mail: IwaRock@aol.com. Tel: 818/541-9089

www.lhra.org The Lutheran Human Relations Association of America is dedicated to bringing people together to change hearts and build up the body of Christ in a divided world. E-mail: lhra@ecunet.org. Tel: 414/536-0585.

www.lib.uci.edu/rrsc/sasian.html For info on Southeast Asian culture and people, see this site from the University of California in Irvine.

www.naatanet.org The National Asian American Telecommunication Association promotes a pluralistic society through funding, broadcast, exhibition and distribution of Asian American media arts. NAATA presents stories that convey the richness and diversity of the Asian American experience, illuminating personal and community viewpoints and issues, and contributes to the ongoing dialogue of what it means to be American.

www.nacca-usa.org The North America Christian Creative Association is a contemporary music ministry that seeks to inspire Chinese Americans to embrace a Christian life. Services include a songwriters network and music production. Founded by a former deacon of an ELCA church in Alhambra, California, NACCA is made up of young energetic volunteers in the Greater Los Angeles area. Let their website and music inspire you too! E-mail: NACCA@netscape.net. Tel: 626-965-7828.

www.nawho.org National Asian Women's Health Organization (NAWHO) is conducting a campaign to educate doctors and patients alike about the importance of including Asian Americans in clinical data.

www.nonviolence.org/lpf Lutheran Peace Fellowship is an international community of peace-makers who pray and work to eliminate violence, oppression and militarism, and seek to build a culture of justice, nonviolence and reconciliation. E-mail: lpf@ecunet.org. Tel: 206/720-0313 (1-5 pm).

www.sscnet.ucla.edu/aasc/ The Asian American Studies Center of the University of California-LA offers this impressive site in the field of education.

www.teachingforchange.org Website of the Network of Educators on the Americas in Washington, D.C., a nationwide organization of teachers dedicated to social change. E-mail: neadc@aol.com.

www.vqministries.org VisionQuest Ministries is a "prophetic, bridge building, circuit riding, seed sowing" organization that trains leaders and assists Chinese/Asian American churches in their development of English language or "second generation" ministry. VQ primarily serves in the NJ-NY area but its mission extends beyond to the East Coast and "St. Elsewhere" USA. E-mail: KRMMB@aol.com. Tel: 732-238-4409.

CLIP and Use

15 Asian-friendly ways to say Welcome

歡迎

歡迎

Chinese

ຍິນດີຕ້ອນຮັບ

ຍິນດີຕ້ອນຮັບ

Laotian

환영합니다.

환영합니다.

Korean

Chao Mung

Chao Mung

Vietnamese

स्वागतम

स्वागतम

Hindu

ಶುಷ್ಕಗತ

ಶುಷ್ಕಗತ

Kanada

ವೃತ್ತಿಣ

ವೃತ್ತಿಣ

Tamil

ಸಿಲೈ

ಸಿಲೈ

Tulu

ようこそ

ようこそ

Japanese

Mabuhay

Mabuhay

Takalog (Filipino)

Txaistos

Txaistos

Hmong

welcome, welcome

ស្វាគមន៍

Cambodian

ស្វាគមន៍

ကျာဟက။

Maylayalam

ကျာဟက။

స్వీ శతం

Telugu

स्वీ శతం

ยินดีต้อนรับ

Thai

ยินดีต้อนรับ

සිලි ගනිමු

Singala

සිලි ගනිමු

welcome, welcome

A guide to ministry with Asian church members
for English-speaking congregations

환영합니다.

This guidebook is for English-speaking congregations who want to strengthen and retain Asian membership in areas where Asian populations are not large. *Welcome, Welcome* is a concise and practical guide to building relationships with this growing population of God's people in the United States.

ยินดีต้อนรับ



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