

DPUC INTERCULTURAL YAYA (Youth and Young Adults) MINISTRY

**Based on the Experience and Vision of Dentonia Park United Church
Within Toronto Southeast Presbytery,
In the Toronto Conference of The United Church of Canada**

*Prepared through consultation
with the members of Dentonia Park United Church and supporting colleagues
within The United Church of Canada.*

*This project is approved by the Council of DPUC,
who has recommended it be sent to Toronto Southeast Presbytery.*

INTRODUCTION

As a church in the multicultural society of Canada, we are called to nurture respectful spaces for dialogue and equitable relationships among diverse cultural groups. This journey will lead us to transformation, to be the gift for the world as individuals, as the church, and as part of the global community. This transformative vision will lead us to our future life as an intercultural church, to move toward becoming mutually welcoming and racially just communities.

We believe that the church should bring a vision for the world. This is what the church of Christ is called to do. We are called to be a just community that lives with mutual respect in loving relationship with people and with nature. To fulfill this responsibility, we seek to educate and train young people to be responsible leaders in society through this YAYA (Youth and Young Adults) ministry. The YAYA ministry is not exclusive to a specific age group, but it includes persons of different cultures and minorities within the United Church. The YAYA ministry has a two-fold goal.

The United Church of Canada has set the direction to provoke and actualize this vision. At the 39th General Council, the Church agreed to “commit itself to becoming an intercultural church,” which means “that intercultural dimensions of ministries be a denominational priority” through building mutually reciprocal relationships among and between cultures. According to this understanding, we need to expand the meaning of “intercultural” from intentional building of relationships with ethnic minority groups, to all inclusive interaction of differences such as generational and sexuality categorizations. On top of this, intercultural ministries should seek to move beyond dialogue into mutual learning and support. This moves towards welcoming and including the many cultural minority groups which need the church’s attention in ministry, and leads to seeking transformation in all parts of our church.* Eventually, intercultural ministries should focus on the wholistic and holistic ministry through interaction of the whole people of God in the faith community, The United Church of Canada.

* YAYA group in The United Church of Canada

Ted Dekker points out a part of the problem: The lack of time and knowledge amongst senior ministry staff is not due to any failure on their part. Instead, it is a direct result of the way that the United Church has structured our ministry staff. For the most part, pastoral charges expect that their minister will be able to be everything to everyone, to make Christianity interesting and applicable to everyone

at every stage of their life. Our ministers spend lots of resources and time to receive great theological training, and then the pastoral charges expect them to organize potluck dinners and youth group meetings. Instead, we should identify the people with skills in our churches who can take on the programming and let the minister do what they are best at, whether that be youth work, preaching, pastoral care, or whatever.

—*The above was written by Ted Dekker. Release date: 13 October, 2004 and included here by Marion Current as an example.*

The 'Call to Purpose' affirmed by the 39th General Council has been the prayer that has set the spiritual direction for this proposal:

We are restless with a renewed call. We are seeking to live faithfully as a united people in a divided world. We seek to be authentic. We seek relationships that are truthful and just. We long to embody what we say we believe, to be The United Church of Canada, for our communities, for the world, and for Creation. In this spirit we pray: God of all creation, we offer you our thanksgiving for a time rich with connections, among each other and with you. We thank you for moments when we have experienced what it is to be united even in our differences. Help us to grow as a listening, discerning, learning people. Help us to give up patterns and structures that enslave us and others. Help us to acknowledge our fear and lean into your hope and your courage. Help us to grow in our trust in each other and in your Spirit. Fill us with your grace and with your wisdom, with your patience and with your love. Propel us into your future, rooted in the richness of our past. In Christ we pray. Amen.

—*"Call to Purpose: A message from the church to the church" was affirmed by the United Church's 39th General Council meeting in Thunder Bay August 13–19.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. A message from the whole of the United Church to local ministries.

What purpose lies at the heart of The United Church of Canada in its past, present and future journey? With the Spirit of new creation, the Church has moved on in our time, and we have heard a call to step forward to reach out to the ends of the world, through reaching into the every corner of the town, or city we are in, and to all local communities within the global village. We, DPUC, have been together with this spirit of God's mission, reflecting our past journey in deep conversations, and intending to incorporate them into our dreams and future vision. We are called to listen for God's voice, reflecting on our life in Christ. We want to learn about the church that keeps its identity as the church of Christ and sustains its relevance to the world, and to discern its call through spiritual practices of critical evaluation of the past, and theological reflection. DPUC INTERCULTURAL YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT (YAYA) MINISTRY is a project that is guided by the spirit of the "Call to Purpose" of the United Church and brings the vision and concrete direction to be a transformative church that is *in, with, for* the world which is coming from the future. The message from the whole of the United Church to DPUC is "intercultural ministry" and "YAYA focused transformative ministry" that is geared towards education and training future Christian leaders in society in the fast changing global community.

2. We long for a deeper relationship with God.

We, Dentonia Park United Church, acknowledge that there is pain in our congregations and our neighbouring communities. There is pain in our wounded relationships with all those who have been marginalized and isolated, in our past and present. We recognize in our lives the pain through the

power of what is not of God, and we want to claim the courage to resist its domination. We are sustained with awareness of the healing presence of God in Christ. After hearing the news of youth homicide in our neighbourhood in 2005, we had to look again to our *raison d'être* of the church. DPUC tried to search for ways to open our church doors to the community. First, we shifted the bible study to a healing prayer service to open the church's door and welcome the community in for a quiet time and for prayer. This service focuses on the individual and communal healing of God. DPUC also created other community opportunities such as setting up the Dentonia Children's Choir, holding women's gathering for sharing stories or art and craft and other talents, and movie nights at the church. DPUC has long been committed to leading services at East York General Hospital and now at True Davidson Acres.

3. We have positive experience that inspires future ministry.

In 2001, DPUC started a special program for young people who came to Canada to study. These were young people who had left their own country with dreams of gaining international experience and of learning about different cultures, perspectives and ways of life, and they wanted to have fellowship with people in Canada. However the reality for most of these individuals was that nothing exciting happened in the first few months. After spending around three months without any significant improvement in their language skill or progress in experiencing the new culture, they began to experience frustration. They ghettoized themselves and developed a fear of connecting with the people of different races, cultures and traditions. DPUC held a gathering of around twenty young people from Korea, China and Japan and realized that ministry for them was urgent. DPUC had a good experience with these people and learned that it is not simply a ministry of helping them but about developing mutual empowerment through learning. Relationships are two-sided interactions.

4. We want to rise once more and venture into renewed mission.

DPUC was not capable of supporting this ministry which needed extra human resources and programs supported with financial backing. However, we continue to maintain connection with the members who were part of this ministry. We have one member who settled in Canada and began his career as photographer. Two of the members (now a married couple) regularly attended the service and participated the life of DPUC in worship leadership and other church events. Although they eventually returned to their home country, they continue to communicate with the congregation through video messages, and use many of the ideas that they experienced while here. Thus in many ways the relationship continues and develops even now. We remember that we encounter Christ in each other. Listening deeply, we are in search of genuine conversations and understanding—within the church and with international, ecumenical, and interfaith partners. In our conversations and decision making we will be mindful of our commitment to intercultural ministry. We want to honour children and youth as a vital part of the church's present, as well as the promise of the future that comes through education and training these future leaders of the world to be equipped with the Spirit of Christ. All these connections strengthen us to live out our faith and to work for justice and peace as the Body of Christ.

5. Renewed call here and now toward the future

DPUC has been faithful to God's call through the painful cry of the world that comes from the neighbourhood and the ministerial context in which we live. We hold bible study twice a month at the church. We hear from the neighbouring community about ignored and neglected young people from

other countries who came to prepare for their future by learning skills that are necessary for exercising leadership and sharing their gifts in the future life in the global community. The Church's intentional reaching out to these people is crucial for a church that is called to a transformative ministry. We need to commit ourselves to seek right relationships with the people in the shadows, ignored by our busyness, and our traditional concept of mission of charity that simply gives or helps without empowering leadership. We seek the meaning of what it means to *be with* these people, so that they are transformed to be the gift for the world here and now and for the future global village. Our discernment has persuaded us that, as followers of Jesus and in the movement of the Spirit, we must attend intentionally to the YAYA group of multicultural background within our ministerial context.

6. We are inspired and empowered by the Scriptural message:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Luke 4: 18-19) Jesus also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." (Mark 4: 30-32)

7. We review DPUC Mission Statement and its Faith Statement

The mission of DPUC is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to our community. We will provide people of all races and ages with the opportunity to worship and to reach out to one another and the world in faith and fellowship.

We believe that the church's mission is in continuity with the mission of Jesus of Nazareth, which can be summed up by the words of Luke 4:18-19. We believe that the mission of Christ creates its own church. We believe that we are called to proclaim the good news of God through healing the sick, liberating the captives and preaching the gospel to the poor. We believe that to live out God's call we reach out to the ends of the world with God's love. We believe that this will lead us to serve the world as disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe that the church has its true identity in the work of Christ. We believe that, to reflect the image of Christ and transform the world that changes with cultural and social conditions, the church must be sensitive to the changes in the world around it, and must cope with the new needs in the new world.

8. We are aware of the changing context of DPUC

1. The demographics of the East York area have changed greatly during the last few decades and continues to change.
2. Remarkably, many ethnic people have immigrated into this area: particularly, East Indian, South/East Asian, Chinese, and Caribbean immigrants.
3. This change moves the area into a more diverse racial, cultural and religious framework
4. With the development of the transit and transportation system, DPUC seeks to expand its ministerial context into the wider area of the GTA.

5. Recent experience of DPUC

1. What is notable within ten years of experience is an Intercultural Ministry of Youth and Young Adults mostly who have come from Korea to Canada to have language training.
2. They are young people who came to Canada with a big dream of learning about Canadian culture and people as well as improving their language skills.
3. Three months after their arrival, most of them experience extreme frustration from no improvement of their language skills and or recovery from culture shock.
4. Although there are many Korean churches, they generally do not pay much attention to these groups of people since their stay is limited and their financial contributions are not significant.
5. Since the young people who come to Canada often feel great hesitation in stepping into a Caucasian church, they need to be warmly welcomed, into the local community and guided to realize just how important they are to the community, not just as subjects for 'help' but as equal participants.

DPUC INTERCULTURAL YAYA MINISTRY

1. Intercultural YAYA Faith Statement

1. We trust in God the Creator and celebrate God's good creation.
2. We are part of this creation and we live in God's world. We are made in God's image and yet with all different gifts.
3. We seek to respect one another, to love our neighbours, to care for creation, and to live in harmony.
4. We are called to join in God's ongoing creation and to live out God's will for creation, peace and justice with love.
5. We believe that, in this journey, we are together with ongoing trusting relationship with each other, through the Spirit of God who is with us always. Thanks be to God!

2. Intercultural YAYA Ministry Mission Statement

1. As followers of Jesus Christ, we serve the world with the spirit of Christ.
2. We share our own cultural identities while learning about Canadian cultures and traditions.
3. We strive to build a community of trust that is full of love and mutual respect.
4. We aim to build a network of support and encouragement and sustain it for the future in each individual's own context.

3. Intercultural YAYA Ministry Goals And Objectives

1. To be the trustful and responsible leader of the future world, we build the ongoing network of trusting relationship and sustain it.
2. Encourage and support each other to be equipped with knowledge, information and experience to witness the good news of God.
3. Develop and learn to plan and manage small group gatherings.
4. Develop skills to build trusting relationship through small group sharing and large group gathering.

5. The trusting relationship built through this ministry will continue throughout their life as Christian leaders of the world.
6. Develop leadership by exchanging their role within the structure.

4. What Is the Target Group?

1. All youth and young adult group in our ministerial context as supporting group.
2. The initial focus group is a Korean and Japanese group comprised of individuals who have come to Canada for language training and as visa students.
3. Eventually, we will expand to all individuals in the YAYA age group, including students, young professionals, etc.

5. How to Recruit?

1. Send out an invitation to YAYA group people within the United Church.
4. Send out an invitation to global partner churches over the world.
5. Send out an invitation to students at universities and colleges within GTA.
6. Publicize the program to ethno-specific communities through newspaper articles and advertisement of the special events.

6. Intercultural YAYA Ministry Action Plan

1. Thursday evening gathering is the main event that consists of many small group programs followed by a service that includes the sharing of questions and new issues that arise in the small group gatherings.
2. We are open to many differences among people and are willing to learn from these people while sharing different perspectives and gifts that we are all given from creation.
3. We welcome young people of different race, culture and religion, who would like to share our church life, give them times and spaces to let them feel home, and support them by creating programs as necessary. We believe that this is how we live out the spirit of The United Church of Canada.
4. These young people will eventually be scattered around the world but will carry this spirit to be the genuine gift for the world.
5. We have a vision for this new ministry to bridge young ethnic groups and wider YAYA groups and to encourage ethnic people to join a local congregation and share their own cultures and traditions with the congregation and with one another.

Plan 1: Small group gathering in general.

1. Learn to write and speak English well.
2. Through skits, learn Canadian types of expression. With young people's perspective and sensitivity, study the future world and the shape of the church and ministry.
3. Develop resources for the future ministry wherever their lives will lead them
4. Divide the whole into small groups of 10-12.
5. Gathering location may vary depending on the theme and by invitation of congregations.
6. Share the young people's experience with the congregations who want to invite YAYA group.

Plan 2: Small group gathering after the Sunday service.

1. Led by the members by taking turns.
2. Sharing with native English speaking members of DPUC.
3. Question and answer regarding the worship liturgy and sermon.
4. Discussion for other YAYA future plans and business.
5. Recording by the members with corrections made.

Plan 3: Thursday gathering

1. Bible Study
2. Cultural Presentation and Sharing
3. Practice musicals or skits.
4. Gathering with the different topics in different groups.
5. Intercultural Sing-A-Long (with a band if possible)
6. Talent Shows
7. Potluck suppers

Plan 5: Thursday Worship

1. Worship with Gospel music and liturgical dance.
2. Witnessing to God's grace.
3. Healing prayer service.
4. Guest speakers on how to become future leaders of the world.

***Other Ministries to Consider
with INTERCULTURAL YAYA MINISTRY
or independently.***

**GATHERING FOR PREPARING MINISTRY
FOR FUTURE WORLD AND ITS STUDY**

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To start As East End Project
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Study Group for Future Church and Ministry.

1. Young people's study group for future world and lifestyle
2. Based on the study, project the church's ministry and worship and its resource.
3. Advanced Program students gathering of different disciplines.
4. Prepare the future worship, bible study resource.

WEB MINISTRY IN THE DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Based on the Experience and Vision of Dentonia Park United Church
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Website Creating and Resource Development Team

1. Create a website with global net work for incorporating church's mission and sharing ministry resources.
2. Global information pool for culture and theology.
3. Making connections and communications with churches in countries of young people through internet, and assisting them to find their homes after returning to their own countries or going to other parts of the world.

INTERCULTURAL YAYA MINISTRY STUDY TEAM

Barbara Mintz (DPUC), Marlene Mintz (DPUC), Helen Fraser (DPUC), Estella Green (DPUC), Claudia Green (DPUC), Marion Current (DPUC Diaconal Minister), Barbara Edwards (DPUC), Rev. John Lee (DPUC), Rev. Eiko Hosaka (Intercultural Guest)

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YOUR NAME CONGREGATION:

I/OUR CONGREGATION would like to participate in: helping small group gathering, food prep, communication, story sharing, or