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Tyndale University

Development of an Innovative Model of
Congregational Engagement in Hospitality with Newcomers to Canada

A Research Portfolio

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

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By

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this portfolio was to develop a cross-cultural congregational engagement framework that would facilitate greater participation of congregants in hospitality with newcomers and refugees at The Peoples Church in Toronto. A central principle that emerged was the need to shift our ministry perspective from doing things *to* people to doing things *with* people. The framework developed as a result of this research included eight key principle and four key components: Learn, Engage, Assess and Participate (LEAP).

Hospitality is about welcoming others and making them feel at home. As someone who came to Canada over 30 years ago as an international student, I am sensitive to the needs of newcomers and refugees and the role that congregants could play in creating welcoming and inclusive spaces for them. I am also a firm believer that leadership is influence and that, through cross-cultural transformational leadership, we could create an environment where congregants would be motivated to welcome well.

This research demonstrated that there is value in meeting the physical needs of newcomers and refugees. However, effective engagement with the migrants and displaced needs to go beyond food, housing and education. The research highlighted the need to create spaces where they belong; where they could be anchored to; where they can recover the feeling of belonging that has been lost in migration.

DEDICATION

To my Heavenly Father for the grace that He has bestowed upon my life;

To my late father who instilled in me a love of learning and encouraged me to
pursue my doctoral studies. Mission accomplie, Papa!

To my later mother who was a great role model of female leadership;

To my amazing husband and my greatest encourager, Mark Belluz;

To my two wonderful sons, Joshua and Alessandro for providing me with ample
opportunities to test my leadership.

I don't know where I would be without you and I am forever grateful.

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My Church family at The Peoples Church has also been very supportive, especially the members of the Executive and Ministry Teams who provided valuable insights during my research project. I appreciate all of you for your time and expertise during this sensitive but much needed research project. Your contributions will prove useful in helping newcomers and refugees connect and develop meaningful relationships in our church.

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I pray for your continued guidance as I seek to fulfill His plan and purpose for my life in the local church and wherever He may lead me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OR ACRONYMS

BIPOC	Black, Indigenous and People of Colour
DMin	Doctor of Ministry
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
LEAP	Learn, Engage, Assess, Participate
MCC	Multicultural Church
MEC	Multiethnic Church
PAR	Participatory Action Research
TPC	The Peoples Church
TPCNN	The Peoples Church Newcomers Network
TPH	The Peoples House
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this portfolio was to develop a congregational engagement framework that would facilitate greater church member participation in hospitality with newcomers and refugees at The Peoples Church Toronto.

Hospitality was defined as welcoming others and making them feel at home. This research project identified an innovative ministry model to engage members of the congregation with newcomers and refugees. In a multicultural church context such as The Peoples Church, it involved welcoming newcomers and refugees in a way that made them feel like they belong to our church family. As a Congregational Life Pastor who migrated to Canada over 30 years ago as an international student, I was sensitive to the role that the church could play in welcoming newcomers and refugees. I also firmly believed that leadership is influence and that transformational leadership had the potential to create an environment where congregants could be motivated to welcome well.

This research portfolio is comprised of three main chapters: Chapter 2 provides my personal and ministry context, describing how God orchestrated my professional and spiritual journey to lead me to this particular topic. It is followed by Chapter 3 that describes my philosophy of leadership and theological foundation. Finally, the field research project is presented in Chapter 4, identifying effective strategies for congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers

and refugees, thereby creating a more welcoming culture towards newcomers at The Peoples Church in Toronto. All these three chapters led to some key findings in Chapter 5 and the identification of a ministry model based on the premise that becoming a welcoming community requires both practical help and incarnational presence.

This participatory research was conducted in an ever-evolving ministry context due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In spite of the temporary closure of Canadian borders, The Peoples Church continued to see an influx of newcomers and refugees as a result of world events and Canada's commitment to continue to open its borders to a certain type of immigrants and asylum seekers. I also had the opportunity to access a pool of key informants through The Peoples House (TPH), our refugee emergency shelter ministry and The Peoples Church Newcomers Network (TPCNN), a church ministry that offers a variety of programs specifically designed for newcomers. I started my research by interviewing two key members of our ministry team, the manager of The Peoples House and the pastor of our newcomers ministry. These interviews revealed the major themes of welcoming and hospitality beyond meeting physical needs to include creating a sense of belonging. The second step was to combine the major themes emerging from these interviews with the literature review to develop a survey and questionnaires for focus groups and additional key informant interviews.

One of my main objectives as a researcher with general responsibility for congregational life was to listen to the experience of congregants, newcomers and

refugees and to develop an innovative ministry model that would support congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The scope of the project was limited to acts of hospitality demonstrated by the congregation to meet refugees' settlement and integration needs. The following questions were asked to develop a greater understanding of how to mobilize our congregational resources to support individuals and families seeking asylum in Canada. What is our common definition of hospitality? What are we doing well to make newcomers feel welcome? What could we add to improve hospitality? How could we support our congregants in their efforts to welcome well?

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research was not to evaluate how successful The Peoples Church had been in facilitating the settlement or well-being of newcomers. Successful integration and settlement are often the result of multiple factors. It would have been difficult to evaluate the ministry impact on the participants given the diversity of newcomers who receive ministry. The main goal of the research was to identify a clear ministry strategy or model that could facilitate greater congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. One of my key objectives was to limit the scope of my research to the development of an innovative model of congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers based on the collected stories and experiences of both newcomers and congregants. Therefore, I began with observing hospitality demonstrated by the congregation to meet refugees' settlement and integration needs. The focus of the research was on gaining a common understanding of hospitality on one hand

and, on another hand, assessing the current experience of hospitality for both actors and recipients to determine congruency between congregational engagement in hospitality and newcomers' experience. Key questions to be explored included:

- What are we doing well to make newcomers feel welcome?
- How do we meet refugees' settlement and integration needs?
- What could we add to improve hospitality to newcomers and refugees?
- How could we provide better support to our volunteers and lay leaders in their efforts to welcome well?

The answers to these questions provided a general ministry framework that would support any future expansion of our hospitality ministries and inform the ministry model used to facilitate congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees.

Research Context: The Peoples Church

In November 2014, the Centre for Community-Based Research led an interdenominational research project entitled *the Role of Churches in Immigrant Settlement and Integration*, in which Tyndale Intercultural Ministry Centre was involved. Their findings, especially the Toronto Site Report published by Chapman, Watson, Chang and Chang provided context for this research project. The Toronto site report presented a case study on The Peoples Church Newcomers Network; which provided some historical context as well as a starting point to evaluate our church community engagement with newcomers over the past 10 years. This research demonstrated that Canadian churches were actively engaged in helping immigrants and refugees settle and integrate into Canadian society. However, it also raised such issues as the discrepancy between congregational

vision and actual actions; the absence of a proactive response of churches to the religious diversity of the country as they endeavoured to welcome newcomers; the lack of coordinated efforts between congregations and within the Christian community itself and the limited degree of collaboration between immigrant church leaders and mainstream church ministry to newcomers (Chapman et al. 2014).

Through its ethnically diverse congregation and its numerous partnerships with settlement agencies, The Peoples Church provided a variety of supports to newcomers to Canada. The Peoples House Shelter was one of the ministries that allowed the church to support the settlement of families and individuals seeking asylum in Canada. In addition to emergency shelter, The Peoples Church offered newcomers and employment support as well as small group reflection on their migration journey in light of Scriptures. This provided an opportunity for refugees to be in community to both share a meal and their experiences of migration and to obtain mentorship from members of the congregation.

The Peoples Church Newcomers Network (PCNN) was a ministry of The Peoples Church that used a holistic approach to meeting the needs of newcomers, built on a solid foundation of evangelism and global missions that has been part of The Peoples Church for more than 90 years. In addition to the provision of settlement-related services, the ministry provided for the spiritual and emotional needs of newcomers and ensured a smooth transition into the Canadian society and an active participation into the Christian community. Even though the ministry was not funded by government, using mainly volunteers and lay leaders,

it provided support services that went beyond the usual language training programs, employment services and immigration support to ministry activities that helped immigrants and the displaced to be rooted and to engage with others within the church community. The ministry gave refugees and newcomers a sense of belonging, encouraging them to be planted in the house of God and to rely on the strong foundation that the Bible promises to those who believe.

One of the objectives of the PCNN was to welcome strangers and to give congregants the opportunity to be the hands and feet of the Lord in our community by contextualizing the Gospel, coming alongside newcomers to help them have a smooth transition into the Canadian society. However, we discovered a need to be more intentional in ensuring that the congregation welcomed well, that resources were optimized and that the purposes of God were fulfilled. The ministries to newcomers and refugees rely primarily on church members from different ethnic, linguistic and racial backgrounds who serve as volunteers and lay leaders under the pastoral supervision of a newcomers' pastor. The project addressed The Peoples Church's multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual context by focusing on the nature of congregational engagement with newcomers regardless of their backgrounds.

This research seeks to identify an innovative ministry model that would help members of the congregation be more engaged with refugees and newcomers. Increasing acts of hospitality with refugees aligned with The Peoples Church's mission of creating a movement of globally engaged Christians, by supporting refugees throughout their journey in Canada and by providing congregants with a

local ministry opportunity with tremendous global impact. Appendix A illustrates the logic model for the ministry to newcomers, which serves as a visual representation of the activities, outputs and intended outcomes. The research observed the two major components of congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees: the operational processes currently in place to support congregational engagement and the resulting impact on the outreach and support provided. The research reviewed what is currently done in terms of hospitality, how it is done and how it should be done. This research covered both in-person and virtual hospitality. The evaluation of these two facets of the ministry resulted in the identification innovative ways for the congregation to welcome well and to support the integration of newcomers and refugees to life in Canada.

A Timely Research Opportunity

According to the UNHCR, “Canada has an exceptional history of welcoming refugees and is the second largest resettlement country in the world. Since 1979, Canada has resettled some 621,000 refugees. After less than one year, 90% of Syrian refugees resettled in 2015/2016 reported having a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Canada.” (*Refugee Resettlement Facts*, UNHCR, 2016). As a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Canada accepts refugees for humanitarian reasons to align with its international obligations, protect those in need and reunite refugee families. According to data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), “30,100 refugees were resettled in Canada in 2019: 9,958 government-assisted refugees, 19,149 privately sponsored refugees,

and 980 Blended Visa Office-Referred refugees were admitted to Canada” (CIMM – Refugees and Resettlement, IRCC, accessed June 2, 2021).

According to Walter Brueggemann in *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, “it is rootlessness and not meaninglessness that characterizes the current crisis. There can be no meaning apart from roots” (Brueggemann 2002, pp 3-4). As society becomes increasingly fearful of foreigners and reacts negatively to their arrival in Canada, the church, as the Body of Christ, is becoming increasingly responsible for helping the displaced, stateless and vulnerable newcomers find a safe space to thrive. In doing so, we are responding to the call to love our neighbours as ourselves. Those who have left their homes and countries of origin are able to experience a sense of belonging and a new sense of community when they join a local church. The Peoples Church as both a spiritual community of faith and a social institution in the community plays a key role in helping refugees who often feel that they are on the margin of society to establish their roots in Canada. The Peoples Church has well over 4,000 members representing a broad spectrum of racial, ethnic and linguistic groups. As a globally engaged church, we support over 200 missionary partners and projects in Canada and in 43 countries around the world (The Peoples Church Mission Report, 2021). Given the size of our congregation, our history of global missions and our current involvement across the globe, there are tremendous opportunities for congregants to connect with newcomers and refugees in a more meaningful way. How can we capitalize on the rich cultural diversity of our past and present global engagement to welcome well those who are new to Canada?

Social Innovation in Welcoming Strangers

The challenges faced by refugees varied based on their country of origin, language proficiency, levels of education and their migration experience. Many refugees landed in Canada after a very traumatic migration experience, or after having fled their country of origin on a short notice or after having spent several months or even years in a refugee camp. As a result, they often found it difficult to make meaningful connections within their host communities. During my focus group with refugees, I learned that some refugees visited and joined churches after they arrived in Canada because they were looking for a safe community to belong to. For some, joining a local congregation was a way to continue to express their faith here in Canada – having been Christians before their arrival to Canada. For others, it was a desire to engage with what they perceive to be “mainstream” Canadian religion. Others were yet seekers who were open and exploring different belief systems. Regardless of their faith journey, refugees and newcomers all sought a place where they could connect with others, having been estranged from their homelands. Even though refugees often received some form of support services through social service organizations, these services did not always address their spiritual or emotional needs. As one of the participants in the focus group so eloquently stated: “We are thankful for all the material support we receive but we need psychological help.” This is where the church could play a key role. In her book, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, Christine Pohl stated that the church hospitality often “reflects and anticipates God’s welcome: as a way of life, an act of love and an expression of

faith... When we offer hospitality to strangers, we welcome them” (Pohl 1999, 13).

As Das and Hamoud stated in *Strangers in the Kingdom: Ministering to Refugees,*

Migrants and the Stateless:

A main problem refugees, migrants and stateless face is that they find themselves in a place where they do not belong... Ministries and other victims of displacement commonly focus on serving physical needs. Initiatives and programs invest in providing shelter, clothing, food, and access to health care... Yet in the midst of providing such services, some of the deepest of human needs are left untouched... One of the harshest losses facing the displaced is the loss of belonging to a community.” (Das and Hamoud 2017, 9)

The Peoples House shelter provides great opportunities for the church to demonstrate leadership in welcoming strangers in the kingdom and for the congregation at large to engage with refugees in a more intentional fashion so that they would transition more easily into the life of the church and into the community at large. The key research question is: How can we create a more welcoming culture by facilitating congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers in general and refugees in particular?

Understanding Cultural Differences

During my research, I was made aware that the limited congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees could be the result of a failure or lack of willingness to engage others on their own terms. According to Bennett, minimization of cultural difference is “the state in which elements of one’s own cultural worldview are experienced as universal” (Bennett 2004). When it comes to congregational engagement in hospitality, the belief that everyone should be expected to participate in a particular type of activity in a culturally appropriate

way is actually a form of minimization. Can we truly speak of hospitality if our interactions and shared experiences only draw from one culture? This is what Dan Sheffield referred to in his Paper entitled *Principles for Developing Multicultural Churches* when he said: “many congregations in urban areas can ‘look’ very diverse but not actually address the issues that develop multicultural communities.” (Sheffield 2005). The degree of congregational engagement with newcomers will vary based on whether the church is a multiethnic church (MEC) or a multicultural church (MCC). In an MEC, the ethnic diversity of the congregation is not reflected in the church culture, leadership or the praxis.

For a church to welcome well, she must embrace and integrate different cultural perspectives into her programs, activities, leadership and congregational life. According to Sheffield, the multicultural church is a biblical community of believers that 1) has an intentional desire to draw together people of diverse cultural backgrounds as a sacramental, missional community in the city; 2) has reconciliatory, relational processes which accept and embrace a diversity of peoples; 3) has empowering leadership processes which draw diverse cultural voices into the decision-making structures of the congregation (Sheffield 2005). This is what The Peoples Church is trying to do through the “Make Us One” initiative, a project seeking to review ministry processes and decision-making structures to determine if they perpetuate systemic racism. One of the expected outcomes of the research was to identify a ministry model that help The Peoples Church to draw on its diversity and to create a safe space where newcomers and refugees could feel welcome.

Outcomes – Cross-cultural Congregational Engagement

One of the research objectives was to identify strategies for congregational engagement in observing, listening to and supporting refugees through hospitality. The research sought to understand how members of the congregation could be involved in helping to meet the spiritual, social and emotional needs of refugees and newcomers. The researcher reviewed the church welcome strategies and the structures and processes established by the church in the past few years to determine how members of the congregation had been engaging in hospitality with newcomers and refugees thereby fulfilling our vision to be a globally engaged church.

The main outcome of this research was the development of a cross-cultural congregational engagement framework including some key principles that would facilitate greater engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The framework was to include processes, structures and enabling tools to help congregants become fully engaged in welcoming newcomers to Canada in a way that truly reflects The Peoples Church's vision and mandate. This involved gaining a common agreement about how the church thought about hospitality with newcomers and refugees in order to: 1) offer appropriate ministry activities; 2) prioritize ministry actions and 3) lead people towards increased ministry involvement. It also entailed shifting the ministry perspective from doing things to people to doing things with people. It involved reaching across cultures and doing life together.

The research identified a set of principles that could serve as a foundation to any effective congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The framework which was developed from the research included four key components under the acronym LEAP:

→ Learn → Engage → Assess → Participate.

The proposed LEAP framework is an innovative congregational engagement model that starts with providing congregants with intercultural development opportunities. The 2nd stage involves direct engagement with individuals of other races, ethnicities and cultures. The 3rd stage invites congregants to reflect on their cross-cultural or interracial experiences to determine how comfortable they were developing deeper relationships with people from another culture, ethnicity or race. After learning, engaging and assessing, congregants would be better equipped and more confident to fully participate in doing life with newcomers and refugees not only within our church community but also in the broader society.

The development of this framework is described in Chapter 4 and its implications for ministry are presented in Chapter 5. This research highlighted some principles to mobilize our congregation to engage with newcomers and refugees in a way that reflects Christ's call on our church to be a movement of gospel-centered and globally engaged Christians. These included the need to welcome others as we have been welcome, a unyielding commitment to care in a culturally inclusive manner and the practice of incarnational presence as we engage with one another.

Definition of Key Terms

Congregational Engagement

This expression includes the variety of ways in which members of the congregation are getting involved in the church, including participation in church programs, involvement in the life of the church and service in the community. It includes interactions beyond the pews and between Sundays such life groups and relationship building with other members of the congregation. The development of healthy relationships in a caring community of faith is a key factor in active congregational engagement. Congregational engagement is often an expression of the love that congregants feel towards God and towards others. It is when congregants feel valued for what they do and for who they are.

Hospitality

According to Collins English dictionary, the Greek word translated “hospitality” (“philoxenia”) literally means, “loving the stranger.” Hospitality is the act of welcoming strangers into our community and making them to feel like they belong. In our church context, it includes not only the variety of formal programs and activities that are part of our welcoming ministries but also the attitudes and values held by our congregation resulting in newcomers and refugees feeling welcome. Christian hospitality goes beyond the provision of food and shelter to include the recognition of the value and worth of each person. Ultimately, hospitality is any action that invites others into our world. One of the results of hospitality would be that others would encounter the love of Christ as we model hospitality.

Newcomers

According to Statistics Canada's report on Canadian Immigrant Labour Market Trends, a newcomer is defined as an individual who has been in Canada for less than 5 years (Yssaad and Fields 2018). In the context of this research, the term "newcomer" describes an individual who is new to Canada and is participating in TPC programs and activities. Criteria to participate in the PCNN programs do not include specific length of time in Canada and inclusion in this group is done through self-identification.

Refugees

According to the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country. The 1951 Refugee Convention is a key legal document and defines a refugee as: "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." (Zimmermann, Dörschner and Machts 2011).

A refugee is a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is outside of their country of birth or citizenship. An asylum seeker is a person who seeks protection in another country because of fear of persecution or because they have experienced violence or human rights violation. The term refugee in this research refers to both refugee claimants or asylum seekers. The term also includes both refugee claimants and those whose cases have been decided.

Statement of Limitations

Conducting research on congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugee during a global pandemic meant that I had to adjust my timetables. Some of the refugees interviewed arrived in Canada during the global pandemic and had very limited points of reference and very limited engagement with our congregation. This meant that they had a limited perspective on the level of hospitality that church members would have offered pre-Covid 19. As the country went into a lockdown, I was faced with some logistical challenges in the data collection process. The Covid-19 pandemic led me to redesign my research to take into account social-distancing measures. The focus group with refugees and interviews were rescheduled to allow for better face-to-face interactions. I used video-conferencing and online surveys to collect data; which enabled me to gather a large amount of data and to reach a greater number of people much faster.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the purpose of my research as well as the problems that this research sought to address. In chapter 2, I described my own personal and ministry context, followed by my philosophy of leadership in chapter 3, anchored in cross-cultural transformational leadership. Chapter 4 provided a full description of my field research including methodology, data collection methods, findings and interpretations and was followed by a research summary and implications for the future in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: PERSONAL & MINISTRY CONTEXT

The ministry at the heart of the research project flowed out of my own personal journey and my current ministry context at The Peoples Church, as well as the Canadian cultural context and my commitment to welcome refugees. My life as a leader has been a work in progress with God developing me by using time, events and people that impressed leadership lessons upon me, and my response to some key events and milestones in my life and ministry. The following sections describe a series of key events that shaped my life and my leadership.

A Vision of The Lord

From early on in my childhood, I felt that my life was special. I was born into a devout Roman Catholic family of 7 children. At around 12 years of age, I had a startling epiphany on my way to a market in Africa. During that encounter, I felt great love and warmth in my heart. Given that I could not really explain to my parents what I saw, I kept it to myself. It was not until 12 years later, when I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour in Canada, that the Spirit of the Lord brought back that vision to my remembrance. Following this vision from the Lord, my life's journey took me to two continents as an international student. After I turned 14, I moved to France to complete high school and then moved to Canada 5 years later to pursue university studies.

Inner-Life Growth

At the age of 24, when I dedicated my life to the Lord Jesus Christ and to his service, he reminded me of the encounter I had with Him, 12 years before in Cameroon. During these formative years, I learned to love the Lord with all my heart, all my mind and all my strength. After I received the call of God to service, I immersed myself in the study of Scriptures and joined the Metro Toronto School of the Bible where I learned intercessory prayer and discovered the importance of allowing the Spirit of God to lead me. I also went through a period of personal challenges when my faith in God was put to the test. It was also a period of increased intimacy with God and great sense of destiny. Following a period of testing and obedience, I ended up registering for an MDiv at Tyndale University.

On the personal front, I met my husband Mark in 1994, got married in 1998 and moved to the United States of America the same year for further theological education and ministry training. However, the real training ground was through clashes with other people's opinions and periods of crisis and isolation, including the loss of my father, mother and sister within a short period of time. To borrow Robert Clinton's terminology, God took me through three important checkpoints to test me as an emerging leader: 1) the integrity check to test my character included the challenge to consistency with inner convictions, the response to the challenge, and the resulting expansion of my ministry; 2) the obedience check to teach me how to recognize, understand, and obey God's voice; and 3) the word check to test my ability to understand or receive a word from God personally and then allow God to work it out in my life (Clinton, 1993).

Ministry Maturity

From 1998, I began to focus on formal theological training and to build the foundation for my philosophy of ministry (See Chapter 3). Serving in a low-income community in North Tulsa as part of an urban ministry enabled me to grow in compassion and in understanding of Christ's call to evangelism and discipleship. During that time, I had the opportunity to serve, with my husband, in a number of ministries at our local church including, running the Alpha Program, leading young adults, leading a couples ministry and teaching at the church's layman school of ministry. Unfortunately, I also went through several personal losses during that time, including the death of my father in 2000 and the death of both my mother and one of my older sisters in 2007 within 3 months of each other. These personal tragedies forced me to increase my trust in the Lord and to draw closer to Him.

When I started my journey in the DMin program, one of the books that inspired me was Henry Nouwen's book, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (1993). I was challenged by Nouwen to trust that the God who called me, would be working in me to move me toward the direction and to the places that I may not have naturally considered. One of the truths that I wrestled with was what Nouwen called the "mystery of ministry," i.e., the fact that I had been chosen to make my own limited and very conditional love the gateway for the unlimited and unconditional love of God. As a minister or a leader, I realized that I was not the healer, provider or reconciler. I was only the vehicle or the tool that God used for his redemptive purposes.

A Call to Serve Diversity

In a multicultural city such as Toronto, one could expect the Body of Christ to be multicultural. It is true that when people visit the city, they are often struck by the diversity of people in our streets. And when it comes to Sunday or Saturday, we can see people of different ethnicities and races make their way to houses of worship. As Livermore noted, “as the world becomes increasingly more connected and accessible, the number of encounters we have with those who are culturally different is growing daily” (Livermore 2009, 11). This is the reason why cultural intelligence is so critical today. It is even more important when we minister in a city like Toronto where we have over 200 different ethnic groups and where over 50% of the population is born out of Canada. A high cultural intelligence is now required even of those who are called to minister locally.

I was born in Cameroon, grew up in France and migrated to Canada almost 35 years ago. I married into an Italian-Canadian family and spent two years living in the southern United States. Over the years, I had the opportunity to travel and to live in different countries, either as a short-term missionary or as an international student recruiter. I believe that my background and life experience have prepared me for this role. Throughout my life and work experience, I always had a desire to connect with people of other races, languages, ethnicities and cultures. After I committed my life to Jesus Christ, in my young adult years, I came to appreciate what Volf described in *Exclusion and Embrace*, “At the very core of Christian identity lies an all-encompassing change of loyalty, from a given culture and its gods to the God of all cultures” (Volf 1996, 40). Having travelled extensively and

lived in over 15 different countries, I considered myself to be someone who appreciates the cultural differences in behavior and values, recognizing that all behavior was to be interpreted in that unique cultural context. As a proponent of diversity, working in a multicultural and multiethnic church, I enjoy working and worshiping in a community where people are culturally heterogeneous.

My ministry context is The Peoples Church, where I currently serve as Congregational Life Pastor. The Peoples Church's vision is to create a movement of gospel-centered and globally engaged Christians. Our mission is to grow the body of Christ for God's global mission. This is expressed through evangelism, compassion and social justice. As an immigrant who came to Canada over 30 years ago as an international student, and who has been involved in international mobility coaching and student ministry for over 20 years, I consider it a privilege to serve as a Congregational Life Pastor at The Peoples Church. In my current role, I am responsible for mobilizing the congregation to be more welcoming and for facilitating congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers.

My role as a Congregational Life Pastor requires me to interact on a daily basis with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. I am often called to provide counselling and spiritual formation within a multicultural context or to serve as a mediator in cross-cultural conflicts. I strongly believe that my background and experience have provided me with some insights into the concept of hospitality towards strangers. My commitment to embracing diversity helped me to navigate the multicultural landscape require to conduct successful ministry at The Peoples Church.

Being a researcher in a multicultural context

As an African-Canadian pastor and researcher in a multicultural context, I became keenly aware of some of the intercultural challenges emerging in my current ministry context. Doing research in a multicultural setting required that I developed my intercultural competency so that I could minister effectively across cultures. As a researcher in a multicultural context, I needed to find ways to properly interpret diverse cultural representations of the Christian faith, without compromising the Word of God. I also had to ensure that my cultural background and the resulting cultural lens did not cloud my research or community engagement. As a cross-cultural researcher, I was curious about ways to help people of diverse racial, cultural and ethnic background interact and serve well together. The ministry model emerging from my research would allow for the ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ in a way that respects the cultural diversity of our church community without quenching the beauty that such diversity brings the Body of Christ.

The Importance of Intercultural Competency

As Clinton affirmed in *The Making of a Leader*, “all leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important that was used to move them on to the next level” (Clinton 2012, 14). Looking back over my professional life, I could see several critical incidents that God used to raise my awareness of the importance of intercultural agility and cross-cultural communication skills in my growth and development as a transformational leader.

As I travelled and ministered in different countries and worked alongside diverse teams, I was able to acquire some cross-cultural communication skills and learn how to relate well to people who are different from me. There are several tenets of intercultural competency that I have found helpful in the performance of my duties as a Congregational Life Pastor and in my efforts to facilitate congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees:

1. When engaging cross-culturally as a believer or as a church, ground actions on the Word of God and on a good understanding of God's purpose for ethnic diversity.

2. To serve effectively in a multicultural church, I need to be aware of and accept my own cultural lens and biases and refrain from assuming that they are the norm or that they are superior to that of others.

3. Accept and listen to others in a manner that respects their own cultural lenses by putting their words in their proper cultural contexts.

4. All races, cultures and ethnicities are an expression of God's divine purpose in creation and should be valued.

5. All lives matter to God. Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, from the slums of Calcutta to the palaces of Abu Dhabi, God's love remains the same.

6. God's people must model what it means to live in unity amidst diversity and interracial conflicts. The Body of Christ should lead by example.

7. Engaging cross-culturally is part of my call as a minister serving in the city of Toronto.

8. The proclamation of the gospel is transcultural and trans-ethnic. To properly reflect the character of God, believers must embrace those who are ethnically and culturally different.

In *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*, David Livermore describes a cultural intelligence quotient (CQ) that “measures the ability to effectively reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful” (Livermore 2009, 13). The higher our CQ, the more we are able to express love to those that are different from us. We preach the gospel and engage in hospitality because sharing the love of God is fundamental to fulfilling the Great Commission. How can we share and how can people hear the gospel and feel the love of God if we are not able to love people beyond our own cultures?

In the book *From the Margin to the Centre: The Diaspora Effect*, Cousins spoke of the need for leaders to develop intercultural competency to be effective in serving God in a cross-cultural, multicultural ministry context (Krause, Santos and Cousins 2018). Nelson’s chapter on “Reoriented Thinking in Disorienting Times” was quite prophetic. When he wrote that “we are facing nothing less than the reinvention of how we view and understand our world” (Krause et al 2018, 24), he probably was not thinking about a global pandemic. What transpired in the past few months is the need for the church to innovate and to adopt a new approach to ministry. “The illusion of stability and convenience is a thing of the past” (Krause,

et al 2018, 26). If Nelson's call to leaders to be ready to engage and to speak to a fast-changing world fell on deaf ears before, now with a global pandemic and the church's inability to gather in a traditional building, ministry leaders have been thrust unto the global scene, literally overnight.

Effective leaders today do not have any choice but to engage cross-culturally. As leaders engage cross-culturally with newcomers, they are able to share their lives and influence their members to follow suit. This requires courage to question ourselves and to allow others to share the power and to suggest ministry approaches that we may not be familiar with. Among the multiple shifts that would be required of church and ministry leaders to acknowledge is the fact that we often do not know what to do. However, we are open to lead and engage cross-culturally, even when the only thing we know are the "next few steps" (Krause & al 2018, 89). In chapter 2 of this book, Cousins reminded us of the importance of acknowledging God's purpose in the diversity, highlighting how critical it is for Christian leaders to reach across cultures. If we are called to be a blessing and to love the nations, then it will require that we respectfully engage with people of other cultures and that we build strong relationships. It will require us to reach out to what Lustig calls "out-groups" (Lustig 2010, 130). It is interesting to see the list of biblical examples of people who found it hard to reach out across cultures, whether it is Jonah, Paul, Peter or Philip, Cousins reminds us that "stepping out of one's cultural safety zone into the ambiguity and uncertainty of embracing the stranger will result in emotional anxiety and discomfort" (Krause, et al 2018, 48). However, if we remember that we are called to be a

blessing to the nations, like the biblical characters above, we can overcome the emotional anxiety often associated with cross-culturally ministry and become more hospitable and accepting. We have to get rid of the “in-group” mentality that often fails to see the commonalities that we have as human beings created in God’s image. We often fail to understand the true meaning of the cross, i.e., God’s plan of reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles to Himself. If we are going to be effective in reaching out to the stranger, then we must allow God to help us to see others through his self-giving love.

Blinded by My Own Cultural Lenses

I realized that, as a minister called to serve interculturally, when I stepped into another culture, my cultural frame of reference and my road map were no longer effective in guiding how I was to behave in this new cultural setting. As I engaged in hospitality with newcomers and refugees in my current ministry context, I came to realize that it was easier for me to provide hospitality to newcomers and refugees from Africa than it was to welcome our Korean international students, even though I had been an international student myself. It was much easier for me to invite a young African refugee into my personal space than it was for my new Korean friends. My African upbringing made it easier for me to find common ground with newcomers from Africa whereas my limited knowledge of the Korean culture made it very difficult for me to establish a strong connection with our international students from Korea. I even managed to host a group of young African leaders in transit without hesitation but I probably would have been more hesitant to do so, had they been from some unfamiliar country.

These experiences resulted in a greater awareness of how my upbringing and cultural context have shaped my values and attitudes. I have grown in my appreciation of how my cultural background has shaped my current worldview and how it provided the lens with which I perceive and engage with the cultures around me. I now refrain from judging others by the standard of my own culture, recognizing that all behaviour should be interpreted in its unique cultural context.

I also need to be bold enough to accept that I do not always have to agree with the values and cultural norms of others. This is all the more important as I am called to share the Gospel in a multicultural setting. From Paul to Peter and Philip, we can see how critical it is to develop the necessary intercultural competency to be able to build strong connections to share the gospel of Jesus Christ across cultural boundaries. We can see throughout the New Testament, how God took them from denial to integration, helping them to develop the necessary skills to communicate the gospel in an effective way across cultural boundaries. They had to embrace God's vision for cultural diversity and change their discriminatory attitudes towards others before they could be used powerfully by God.

Reaching across cultures

Cross-cultural engagement has always been my passion since I left Cameroon and moved to France as an international student. The desire to know others and to invite strangers to do life together has been my mission for over 40 years. As Congregational Life Pastor in a global-minded church, reaching across cultures was a key skill set. According to Branson, "Matters of boundary crossings, encountering differences and dealing with issues of inclusion and

prejudice are always present in the stories of the missional expansion of the church” (Branson & Martinez 2011, 51). As a researcher studying congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees, I realized that addressing systemic racism and social inequities was also part of hospitality. As I reviewed the literature on hospitality with newcomers and refugees, one of the principles I learned from Livermore was “an approach to cross-cultural interaction that stems from inward transformation rather than from information or, worse yet, from artificial political correctness” (Livermore 2009, 13). Considering that this book was written over 13 years ago, it was interesting to note that it is one of the few books that speaks to the practical application of cross-cultural training. When engaging in hospitality, people are often very eager to learn about other cultures and how they can minister across cultures. However, they are often very slow in applying what they have learned when they come across real life situations. This is what James alluded to in James 1:22-25 when he urged believers to be “doers of the word and not hearers only. As someone who ministered cross-culturally for several years, I had to make sure that I was not just learning about other cultures but that I was acting upon what I had learned by allowing such cultural understanding to transform my life and worldviews. Livermore talks about the need to not run away when we visit another culture and “encounter dissonance” (p.13). As I engaged with newcomers to Canada, I had to move beyond simply gathering information about other cultures to transformation of my own worldview. I had to learn to demonstrate genuine Christian love regardless of unfamiliar practices from other cultures.

Ministry Context

The biblical call to Christian hospitality is the theological framework within which to assess congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees. Welcoming strangers has its foundation in the Christian tradition of extending the love of Christ to others and participating in God's mission of loving people and welcoming them into the family of God. The Peoples Church's ministry to newcomers and refugees is based on the biblical mandate in Leviticus 19:33-34 of "treating foreigners the same as native-born and not taking advantage of the foreigners who live in our land." Throughout Scriptures, we see examples of biblical hospitality in action. From Abraham welcoming strangers and entertaining angels in Genesis 18:1-16, when he offered hospitality to three men urging them to stop and rest, offering them water to wash their feet and giving them something to eat before continuing on their journey, to farmers who were instructed to leave the gleanings of their fields for the poor and the foreigner (Leviticus 23:22) and to treat the stranger as they would the poor among the Israelites (Leviticus 25:35), Scriptures include several provisions for strangers to be treated equally. Hobbs notes that the "stranger (*ger*), is not a potentially threatening traveller but is a person who has entered the community from the outside and who has taken up residence more or less permanently." (Hobbs 2001, 20) The biblical concept of Christian hospitality is the backdrop of my research, with hospitality as a way to connect and to facilitate social interaction between strangers. Hebrews 13:2 also exhorts believers to "not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it" (Heb. 13:1-2).

The biblical concept of hospitality refers to both an action or attitude and a program or service that the recipient has the right to refuse. (Vogels 2002, 166).

As a global church, our congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees is an expression of our mission to grow the Body of Christ for God's global mission. Luke 14: 13-14 exhorts the disciples to provide hospitality to people in a variety of circumstances, from the poor to the blind, lame or sick. In their book, *The New Parish*, Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen invited us to ask ourselves several questions when surveying neighbourhoods to determine where there was leadership in reconciliation, renewal, social justice and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and poor (Sparks et al. 2014). As a globally engaged church, The Peoples Church could play a key leadership role in the areas of racial reconciliation and social justice. The diversity of our congregation and our multiple missionary partnerships across the globe puts us in a position where we could address these issues with credibility and authenticity.

Christine Pohl's book, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* provides great insight into the biblical impact of offering hospitality to strangers (Pohl 1999). Even though our main purpose for engaging in hospitality with newcomers and refugees was not so that we could preach the gospel and try and convert them to Christianity, hospitality created a space for evangelism because it opened the door for us to embrace those who are different from us and to make them feel at home. By caring enough to take the time to listen to their stories, we are able to develop the type of relationships that would create the atmosphere where non-Christians may respond more favourably to the Gospel.

Part of the local mission of The Peoples Church is to serve as messengers of the Gospel in the multicultural city of Toronto and to demonstrate Christ's love, by welcoming strangers on their journey to Canada. Given the congregational diversity, missiological emphasis and the diversity of ethnicities represented in the congregation, there are tremendous ministry opportunities to be seized. The following biblical values are at the foundation of The Peoples Church Newcomers Network:

- ”compassion: seeking to show God’s love through intentional acts of assistance and support. (col. 3:12; Gal. 3:2; Zech. 7:9-10),
- connection*: providing a network of relationships within the church and with partner organizations. (Col. 2:19; Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:16) and
- community*: creating a venue for gathering and relationship building. (1 Cor. 1:10; Rom. 12:16; Heb. 10:24-25).”
(<https://thepeopleschurch.ca/newcomers-network/>: Retrieved January 21)

These values are foundational to any effort to engage the congregation in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. Biblical hospitality is about opening one’s life to others. Newcomers who land in Canada, whether willfully or due to circumstances beyond their control, are carriers of God’s potential, seeking connection to a community where this potential can be manifested. Some of the refugees who left their countries to come to Canada heard God’s call to leave their home and come to a promised land of blessings (Gen. 12:1-3), just as Abraham did. As we engage with newcomers and refugees, we do it with the understanding that they are called to be a blessing to their families and their host communities. The goal of any congregational engagement with these individuals is to help them release their God-given potential as they navigate the Canadian community.

My ministry context is also informed by the policy framework developed by the municipal government to guide their efforts in the provision of settlement services. The first Toronto Newcomer Strategy was approved by City Council in February 2013 to “facilitate the successful settlement and integration of all newcomers to Toronto.” On May 14, 2021, Toronto City Council adopted the Toronto Newcomer Strategy for 2022-26 which took into account the increasing number of newcomer arrivals, most notably resettled refugees and refugee claimants and the impact of COVID-19 on newcomers in Toronto. According to the Toronto City Council report, “due to the pandemic, Canada has seen a dramatic drop in new permanent resident arrivals in 2020. In the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area in 2019, for example, number of permanent resident arrivals was 117,700. In 2020, it was 61,045, almost a 50% decrease” (Toronto City Council, 2021). The vision of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy 2022-2026 is that: “Newcomers living in Toronto have a sense of belonging, well-being, and connectedness; that they feel safe, supported, welcome and engaged” (Toronto Newcomer Office, 2021). The problem is that most City programs were geared towards meeting physical needs such as housing support, food and employment. If one of the key objectives was to create a sense of belonging, the programs offered did not seem to meet these goals. In addition, the Covid-19 global pandemic further exacerbated barriers and challenges newcomers already faced such as language barriers, unemployment or low paying jobs, limited access to the internet which resulted in increased isolation. However, this strategy served as a great reference as it highlighted some principles that were congruent with The Peoples

Church's approach to congregational engagement which may result in newcomers and refugees developing a sense of belonging and feeling connected, safe, supported and welcome in the life of our congregation.

Final Thoughts

True and responsive hospitality requires intercultural competency in order to be able to understand and to embrace other cultures. To be able to deal and to engage well with others, I had to rely on three factors - awareness, knowledge and skills: 1) an awareness of my own cultural biases and of the cultural biases embedded in other cultures; 2) the knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of my cultures and that of others and 3) the ability to act in adaptive ways when I am placed in a different context than my own.

As a leader in a multicultural and multi-ethnic church context, I have to adopt a philosophy of leadership that is conducive to the development of the intercultural competency of others. The following chapter introduces my philosophy of leadership including a practical theology of leadership as well as the theological framework that supports my commitment to lead our congregation into the development of deeper connections with newcomers and refugees. As a cross-cultural transformational leader, I am committed to inspiring our congregation to serve beyond their perceived talents and skills and to become people of influence. The following chapter includes some key leadership principles that I live by in order to inspire the leaders serving with me to express their God-given talents in ways that not only transform them but also transform the newcomers and refugees that they connect with.

CHAPTER 3: PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP

In the past few years, we have witnessed the failure of so many leaders across the world. We witnessed a leadership vacuum in many sectors of our society. As students in Tyndale University's Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program in the leadership track, we had the opportunity to discuss and analyze a variety of leadership philosophies and models. From leader-centered to follower-centered, from task-orientation to people-orientation, from autocratic leadership to servant leadership, leadership philosophies abound but there is an abysmal failure in praxis. When comparing some of these leadership philosophies against the Holy Scriptures, we can see that the Bible is full of various leadership models and approaches. However, as I reflect on my personal journey described in Chapter 2, I realize, as a Christian leader, that there are certain leadership approaches that resonate with me more than others. In this chapter, I will explore what definition of leadership do I subscribe to, which biblical principles serve as a foundation to my approach to leadership, how do I live out these principles in my personal and professional life and what leadership praxis do I find more pertinent in my ministry context.

Definition of leadership

Leadership is often compared to beauty and is said to be in the eye of the beholder. As a result, it tends to be defined in a very subjective manner. In 2000,

Andrew J. Dubrin estimated that there were 35,000 definitions of leadership in academic literature (Pye 2005, 32). Twenty years later, one can only imagine how many there may be. We can estimate that there are probably as many definitions of leadership as there are leaders and followers. As a student of leadership, my definition is derived from a combination of literature review, biblical studies, mentorship influence and life experiences.

Leadership is influence and impact

One of the greatest influences in my life and ministry has been my mentor, John C. Maxwell. In his book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, Maxwell gives a simple definition of leadership by stating that “the true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less” (Maxwell 2007, 23). According to Maxwell, real leadership cannot be awarded: it must be earned through influence. Maxwell strongly believes that influence is a skill that can be developed and has dedicated his life to teaching individuals how to acquire influence. In his book *Power and Influence*, Robert Dilenschneider identifies influence as one component of what he calls the “power triangle” that helps leaders advance in their leadership – the other two being communication and recognition (Dilenschneider 2017). Dilenschneider sees communication as the starting point for any leader. As leaders excel in communication, they will gain recognition and as he or she gains recognition, his influence will increase.

In his book *Developing The Leader Within You 2.0*, John C. Maxwell described 5 levels of leadership that leaders can aspire to. He sees leadership as growth on a continuum that includes growth in yourself, your relationships, your

productivity, and your people (Maxwell 2019). To lead well, you must embrace your need for continual growth and improvement, and the 5 Levels can serve as a leadership GPS to help individuals with their leadership journey. These five levels of leadership are meant to help individuals increase their influence by assessing where they are at along the leadership continuum and by identifying a series of intentional actions that they can pursue to increase their influence. The goal is to move from leading by rights and position to leading by respect and influence. The goal is to reach a level where people follow you because of who you are and what you represent. “Great leaders who reach the pinnacle are developing leaders who are able to develop leaders” (Maxwell 2011).

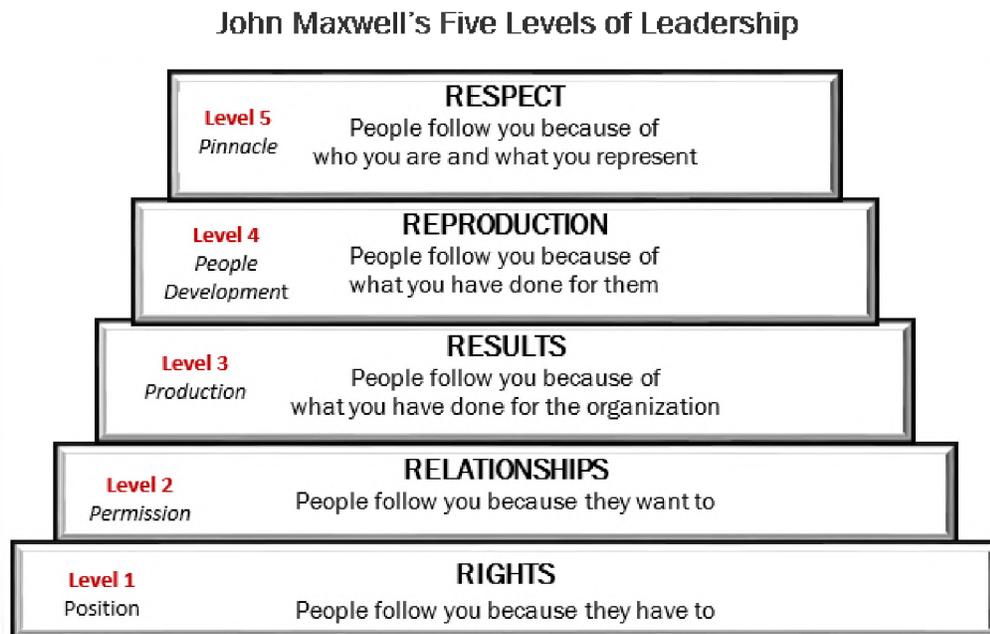


Figure 1. The 5 Levels of Leadership (Maxwell, 2011)

This influence is accomplished by a leadership style that is lived out in the marketplace and in the broader community. As we welcome newcomers and

refugees and influence their lives (level 4), we can hope to reproduce more leaders who will in turn reach out to others. This is echoed by Watson and Santos in *Tentmaking. Creative Mission Opportunities Within a Secularizing Canadian Society*, where tentmakers “witness with their whole lives, and their jobs are integral to their work for the kingdom” (Watson 2019, 132). Leadership is therefore defined primarily by the impact that it has on others rather than the mere skills and talents of the leaders. If leadership is a gift, it must be unwrapped for the benefit of others.

Leadership is transformational

My philosophy of Christian leadership is grounded in transformational leadership theory which refers to a leadership style where the leader’s behaviors influence followers and inspire them to perform beyond their perceived talents and skills. Transformational leadership was first coined by James Victor Downton in 1968 and was further refined by James McGregor Burns (Burns 1978) and Bernard M Bass (Bass 1985). These authors defined it as a theory of leadership where a leader works with his or her team to implement change that would result in an increase in members’ competence and self-esteem. Because they trust their leader, team members are willing to go beyond the call of duty to make things happen. Transformational leadership inspires people to achieve greater results than they thought possible. It refers to the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morale in both the leader and the follower. Leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership pay attention to the needs of followers and motivate them to reach their

fullest potential. The transformational leader will train his or her team and then, once equipped, he or she will release them and give them authority to make decisions. This is similar to Jesus' leadership approach with his disciples. This is also Paul's suggestion in Ephesians 4:11-12 when he describes the five-fold ministry leadership roles in the Church, i.e., "to equip the saints for the work of service". As such, transformational leadership leads to the empowerment of followers.

James MacGregor Burns first used the term transformational leadership in 1978 to describe a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (Burns 1978).

Transformational leadership is a leadership style where followers and leaders work together for a common cause to ensure group success. It is "a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (Burns 1978, 103). According to Burns, transformational leaders seek to raise the consciousness of followers by appealing to higher ideals and values such as liberty, justice, equality, peace, and humanitarianism, not to negative emotions such as fear, greed, jealousy, or hatred. Followers are elevated from their "everyday selves" to their "better selves." Both Burns and John Maxwell believe that transformational leadership may be demonstrated by anyone in the organization in any type of position. Recognizing that everyone has the ability to influence a newcomer or a refugee could result in greater congregational engagement in hospitality. Transformational leadership can be exhibited by people influencing peers or superiors as well as subordinates.

Burns contrasted transformational leadership with transactional leadership, in which followers are motivated by self-interest. He also differentiated transformational leadership from influence based on bureaucratic authority, which emphasizes legitimate power and respect for rules and tradition.

This leadership theory was further developed by Bernard M. Bass in 1985 who defined transformational leadership in terms of the leader's ability to transform followers by making followers more aware of the importance and values of task outcomes, “by activating their higher-order needs, and by inducing them to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization” (Bass 1985, 16). As the transformational leader increases his or her influence on followers, the latter would feel greater trust and respect toward the leader, and they would be motivated to do more and to go beyond the call of duty. Contrary to charismatic leadership that tends to keep followers weak and dependent on the leader, transformational leadership seeks to empower and develop followers to reach their full potential. Bass expanded Burns’ definition to include a certain degree of transactional leadership. The extent to which a transformational leader is effective could then be measured by the level of influence he or she has on his or her followers and on their performance. This is why John Maxwell asserted that “everything rises and falls on leadership” (Maxwell 1999, 4). In his book, *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*,” Bass describes a transformational leader as someone who is a model of integrity and fairness; sets clear goals; has high expectations; encourages others; provides support and recognition; stirs the emotions of people; gets people to look beyond their self-

interest and inspires people to reach for the improbable (Bass 1998). Gary Yukl defines transformational leadership as “both a micro-level influence process between individuals and as a macro-level process of mobilizing power to change social systems and reform institutions... It involves the influence by a leader of subordinates...to empower subordinates to participate in the process of transforming the organization” (Yukl 1989, 8).

Transformational leadership assumes that the leader possesses qualities inspiring followers through a strong vision, which encourages commitment and buy-in (Hickman 2010). According to Peter Northouse, the theories of transformational and charismatic leadership are broader in scope; they simultaneously involve leader traits, power, behavior, and situational variables (Northouse 2016).

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that resonates with me because it is other-centered. Throughout my career as a leader or as a leadership coach, I made every effort to build an atmosphere of trust and loyalty with my team, creating a space where my team or followers would receive more than just working for self gain and by instilling a sense of purpose and mission. I always encouraged them to not hesitate to challenge the status quo and to alter the environment to support their success. This resulted in enhanced followers’ motivation, morale, and performance. As a transformational leader, I strive to be a visionary; connecting the followers’ sense of individuality and self to a larger purpose and an organization’s collective identity; being a role model for and inspiring followers; positively challenging followers to take greater accountability

of their work; providing individualized support to employees and knowing their strengths and weaknesses to align them with tasks that enhance their overall effectiveness.

Leadership is about being a change agent

According to Noel Tichy and Mary Anne Devanna, transformational leadership involves change agents who are courageous and believe in people. They are “value driven, lifelong learners, and have the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty” (Tichy & Devanna 1986, 4). A transformational leader is one who has high morals and values, a strong sense of purpose and evaluates moral and ethical consequences of decisions. He or she encourages divergent thinking and stimulates others, considering each individual’s needs, thus building the respect and trust of his followers. Transformational leaders provide followers with an inspiring mission and vision and give them an identity. According to Gregory Stone, Robert F. Russell and Kathleen Patterson, “transformational leadership achieves change or transformation in the value of others through the mechanisms of four key leadership behaviours: idealized or charismatic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration” (Stone, Russell, & Patterson 2004, 349-361). These ways in which a transformational leader influences his followers are commonly called the four “I’s”:

Idealized influence – also referred to as charisma. The transformational leader serves as a role model for followers. Because followers trust and respect the leader, they emulate this individual and internalize his or her ideals.

Inspirational motivation – Transformational leaders have a clear vision that they are able to communicate to followers. These leaders are also able to help followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfill these goals.

Intellectual stimulation – Transformational leaders challenge the status quo, encourage creativity, are open to new ways of doing things and exploring new opportunities to learn.

Individual consideration –Transformational leaders keep lines of communication open so that followers feel free to share ideas and so that leaders can offer direct recognition of the unique contributions of each follower.

Leadership is pragmatic

Transformational leadership is pragmatic, “getting the job done,” but it is also a selfless leadership that focuses on identifying strategies to achieve goals and outcomes rather than recognition and admiration. It is about inspiring others to do their best and to show up in their best self. According to Northouse, it is “the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower” (Northouse 2016, 162). Transformational leaders often use a collaborative participatory approach to leadership that uses relational exchange.

Leadership is about others

In *Relational Leadership: A Biblical Model for Influence and Service*, Walter C. Wright Jr. rightfully summarizes what it takes to exercise servant leadership: “knowing we are called, loved by God, and kept for Jesus Christ, and

seeking to make a difference in the world by investing ourselves in relationship with those around us that are characterized by mercy, peace and love” (Wright Jr. 2009, 13). Wright Jr. defines leadership as “a relationship between two people in which one person seeks to influence the vision, values, attitudes or behaviours of the others” (2009, 22).

Leadership is about serving and equipping others. Ephesians 4:1-13 speak of leaders being called to equip the saints for the work of service. We are called to serve and not to be served. Leadership is about empowering other to serve God. It is about helping others develop their God-given talents in order to fulfill the Great Commission. In *Servants and Fools: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*, Arthur Boers examines Jesus's pattern of leadership and how this pattern is rooted in service and sacrifice, cautious about power and hierarchies and prioritizing the vulnerable (Boers 2015). Transformational leaders seek to enhance the morale, performance, and motivation of employees, inspiring change driven by a strong purpose, and creating a culture of trust and innovation within the organization. Some of the characteristics of transformational leadership that I find appealing include:

- 1. Proactivity and ability to take the right risks:** Transformational leaders trust their instinct, and use the intelligence gathered by team members to make informed decisions. They do not shy away from difficult decisions.
- 2. Adaptability:** They are ever willing to adapt to new situations, and seek creative ways to respond to the dynamic business or ministry environment.

3. **Humility:** Transformational leaders tend to not let their ego interfere with the best interest of their team or the organization.
4. **Inspirational and self-management:** Transformational leaders are some of the most inspiring leaders with tremendous ability to motivate themselves and others to rise to the occasion. They treat each follower as a valued individual and take the time to understand what motivates them.
5. **Openness to new ideas:** Transformational leaders make deliberate efforts to solicit new ideas from team members, and also use their insights in making decisions which elicit desired actions from their team members.
6. **Visionary leadership:** Transformational leaders set a realistic and achievable vision for the organization, communicate the vision effectively to their followers, and inspire a sense of commitment and purpose. By getting every person to buy into the common vision, transformational leaders are able to guide the organization in the direction that they want.

In a nutshell, transformational leaders understand that these characteristics are not reserved for the few charismatic leaders but rather that leadership is all about influence.

Biblical and Theological Foundation

A call to leadership is a call to surrender one's life to the service of others. However, to qualify for leadership, one must also be submitted to Christ's leadership at all times. A leader is called to serve others under the guidance and leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. Looking at my own life and ministry and that

of other Christian leaders who have influenced me in the ministry, I can identify some biblical principles that surrounds the call to Christian leadership.

Principle #1: Leadership is influence - John C. Maxwell

The second law of John Maxwell's book *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* is the law of influence. This law states that "the greatness of a leader is not measured by the amount of money one makes or position one has, but by the number of lives one influences" (Maxwell 1998, 23). Contrary to Jude's image of "shepherds who only feed themselves" (Jude 12-23) or in reference to the irresponsible leaders that Ezekiel 34:1-10 denounces - leaders who use their power to draw people to themselves and to put themselves on a pedestal (true biblical leadership is about influence through service). In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus Christ tells his disciples that they are to be people of influence. As disciples of Jesus Christ, this call to be influencers is extended to us today. Jesus, during His memorable Sermon on the Mount, declared that believers were to be the "salt of the earth" and that it was possible for them to lose their flavor and be trampled under foot by people. Believers are compared to "a city set on a hill that cannot be hidden". The leadership described in Matthew 5:16 is the ability to "let our light shine before people in such a way that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven".

Principle #2: Leadership is about character and trust

Leadership is about trust. We listen to people that we trust and we trust them because they have demonstrated character and integrity. A necessary condition of trust is interdependence, a relationship based on transparency and a

reliance on one another. Denise Rousseau defines trust as a “a willingness to be vulnerable under conditions of risk and interdependence.” (Rousseau et al. 1998, 395).

Principle #3: Leadership is about being a vessel for the ministry of the Spirit

Leadership is a call to join in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We see it with Deborah, Samuel, Moses, Esther, Huldah, and Abraham where God called leaders to step into the unknown and to follow his leading. Biblical leadership recognizes that success is not through human strength but by the power of the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6-8).

Principle #4: Leadership is about the growth and empowerment of others

Leadership is about serving and equipping others. Ephesians 4:1-13 declares that leaders are called to equip the saints for the work of service. As a Christian leader, I am called to empower others to serve God and not to lord it over them. It is about helping others develop their God-given talents in order to fulfill the Great Commission. In order to do so, a leader would need communication, courage, discernment, generosity, initiative, listening, passion, problem-solving, servanthood and wisdom.

Principle # 5: Leadership is about full trust and dependence on God

Scriptures present a long list of leaders in the history of Israel and in the Early Church who have demonstrated their dependence on God. Whether it is Moses, Jesus or Paul, prayer and dependence on God seem to be the hallmark of their leadership success. In his book, *In the Name of Jesus*, Henri Nouwen states that “biblical leaders must find their identity deeply rooted in God’s love (Nouwen

1989, 28). They must realize that any leadership they seek to exercise must be grounded on a permanent intimate relationship with the Incarnate word, Jesus Christ. According to Nouwen, “only an intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ can anchor a biblical leader in the love of God” (Nouwen 1989, 13). A biblical leader is aware of his or her need to depend on God for the power to guide and nurture the flock for which he or she has been called.

Principle #6: Leadership is a gender-neutral call

In Skip Bell’s Book, *Servant & Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*, there is a chapter on women in the Old Testament which highlights several female leadership examples such as, Judge Deborah, a visionary leader, a leader full of wisdom in Queen of Sheba, a leader who is not afraid to speak the truth based on Scriptural authority in the person of Huldah the prophetess, or Esther, a young female leader who is not afraid to take a risk to intervene on behalf of her people (Bell 2014). I believe that God has called both male and female equally to provide leadership. The New Testament also has many examples of women in leadership. If biblical leadership is a call to understand the values of Jesus, develop a relationship with him and witness to his presence in the world, then the New Testament contains many female examples of leadership. In the resurrection stories, Jesus shows himself first to Mary of Magdala, Joanna and Mary the mother of James, who went on to tell the apostles (Luke 24:1-11). Mary of Magdala had heard her call in the forgiveness she experienced from Jesus. After all, it was the “yes” of surrender of Mary, Jesus’ own mother that allowed Jesus to come into the world. She is the one who nurtured him through childhood and

taught him to be human. She pondered all the events of his life in her heart, and faithfully followed him to the cross. Given the impact that her son ended up having on the world, she was as leader who raised a leader. She was certainly a woman of great influence, which is leadership. The best leadership is found by choosing leaders from a pool of talents that includes women. According to Eagly and Carli, leaders are individuals who “influence and inspire the activities of others to foster the progress of a group, an organization or a nation towards its goal” (Eagly and Carli 2007, 9). We see examples of such great leaders from Deborah and Esther in the Bible to Margaret Thatcher and Tsai Ing-Wen in the present age. Saint-Michel reviewed a large body of research on gender and leadership and argued that “as research on gender and leadership suggests that transformational leadership is more congenial to female leaders, such leadership behaviors constitute a prototype of ideal leaders” (Saint-Michel 2018).

Nehemiah: A great example of leadership by influence

The biblical narrative in the book of Nehemiah greatly influenced my leadership. Nehemiah saw a need and a leadership vacuum in his community and he stepped up into a position of leadership. When Nehemiah heard that the walls surrounding Jerusalem lay in ruin, he decided to do something about it and embarked in a rebuilding project. He cast a vision, developed a plan and managed to mobilize hundreds to join him in a rebuilding project that was completed in just 52 days. Nehemiah exemplifies what happens when God intervenes in the lives of ordinary people led by a gifted leader committed to working in tandem with God to accomplish his purposes. The people of Israel had experienced different styles

of leadership with Zerubbabel and Ezra. However, under Nehemiah's leadership, the People of Israel took collective action and worked hard until the walls were rebuilt in a record time. I can relate to Nehemiah as a leader because of the type of assignments I was given throughout my leadership career and ministry. I have always led projects or initiatives that seemed impossible to complete. I often faced tremendous opposition but always saw God work behind the scenes to ensure completion and success. Nehemiah provides very pragmatic lessons in sound leadership and leadership principles that I have applied to my leadership both as a Christian business leader and now as a Congregational Life Pastor in a large multicultural church.

Nehemiah is a great case study of a 360-degree leader, leading within, up, across and down. He led himself with discipline and a sense of responsibility (Neh. 1). He led his superior – King Artaxerxes. He led his peers – Fellow Israelites (Neh. 3-5) and, finally, he led down – as governor (Neh. 5-13). True leadership begins with self-leadership, continues with leading up with excellence and respect, then with leading across by serving others and taking the initiative to be part of the solution for the needs of others.

The book of Nehemiah provides a great example for me of a transformational leader who embodied ten major leadership principles presented in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* and summarized in the *Maxwell Leadership Bible*: 1) Leadership is influence (Neh. 2:5-8, 16-18); 2) Great leaders are effective communicators of vision (Neh. 2:17-18); 3) Leaders possess tremendous faith in people (Neh. 3:1-32); 4) Great leadership is always assisted by

other people (Neh. 3:1-32; 13:13); 5) Problem-solving is the quickest way to gain leadership (Neh. 4:7-23); 6) Everything rises and falls on leadership (Neh. 4:9-15); 7) Leadership can be taught (Neh. 4:21-23); 8) Leadership must be in the hands of a few, ministry in the hands of many (Neh. 5:1-7); 9) The most important ingredient in leadership is credibility/integrity (Neh. 5:14-19); 10) Leadership takes responsibility for every area of the task (Neh. 6:1-14) (Maxwell 2014, 603).

Great leaders like Nehemiah are authentic leaders who have learned to trust God for their blessings and credit others for their success. They successfully apply John Maxwell's Law of empowerment, acknowledging that "to lead others well, we must help them to reach their potential by being on their side, encouraging them, giving them power, and helping them to succeed, because only secure leaders give power to others" (Maxwell 2007, 145). Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that would create the type of environment in which newcomers may thrive. By walking along side newcomers, transformational leaders are able to mobilize their congregation to empower others.

Transformational influence is a style of leadership that is congruent with the servant leadership style that Christ exemplified throughout his ministry. Whether we look at Nehemiah, Esther, Jesus Christ, John C. Maxwell or Margaret Thatcher, we can see how transformational leaders could inspired the activities of others to foster the progress of a group, a movement or a nation towards its goal. The review of literature on transformational leadership combined with the study of several models of leadership in Scriptures enabled me to confirm and validate my philosophy of leadership as a cross-cultural transformational leader.

My Philosophy of Leadership as a Christian Leader

My Ministry Context

From the time I accepted the call to ministry, I always felt compelled to look for opportunities to lead in a way that contributes to the personal and professional development of those around me. I spent many years reaching out to individuals and serving the Lord Jesus Christ in the marketplace. From leading a lunch Bible study for government staff members to coaching leaders in the marketplace and facilitating a Business as Missions fellowship, tentmaking has always been the foundation of my ministry calling. I consider my life to be a living epistle, a letter from Christ to be read by people (2 Cor. 3:2-3). I agree with my mentor, John C. Maxwell who gave a simple praxis of leadership in his book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, as previously cited, “the true measure of leadership is influence.” According to Maxwell, “real leadership is simply the ability to empower others to succeed by adding value to them on a consistent basis through intentional influence. Enlarging others makes you larger” (Maxwell 2007, 151). This is a style of leadership that could have great impact in my current ministry context if I could apply these principles to mobilize our congregation.

For several years, I considered myself to be a tentmaker which is described by Orlando Costas as “a comprehensive faith perspective of all of life continuing to be within God’s agenda” (Costas 1979, 25). As an entrepreneur, a pastor or a

civic leader, I always looked for ways to improve the lives of people around me and to help bring people and organizations to their highest potential. Whatever the circumstance or the challenge before me, I always made every effort to lead the way to the optimal solution by working through people and systems. The Peoples Church is a diverse congregation including many immigrants and newcomers to Canada. The Holy Scriptures contain many stories of migration and cross-cultural experiences. Whether it is the exodus or exile of the people of God in the Old Testament or Paul's journey or the migration of early Christians, we can find many examples of market place ministry, cross-cultural and community engagement in these biblical narratives. Jeremiah 29:7 was a reminder to the children of Israel to seek the peace of Babylon where they were sent into exile. In Deut. 10:19 and Lev. 19:33-34, they were required under the Law to welcome the immigrants. In Acts 2, we see the Holy Spirit break into the Early Church and showcase the diversity of the body of Christ. When I reflect over the past 90 years of engagement of The Peoples Church in global missions, it is clear that the Holy Spirit has been active in empowering the church to respond to its own cultural context. The variety of nationalities reflected in the congregation are the result of the church's responsiveness to its community and dependence of God. The church's motto, 'Together in God's global mission' reflects this awareness of the fact that our theology and reflection over God's goodness should be translated into community engagement and mission. When we reflect over what is going on in the world today with the Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to discern what would be helpful for the church to do as God's people. Recalling and discussing the

stories such as the story of Oswald J. Smith who founded the Church in 1928 or the church's handling of racism should help us learn from what God did in the past and to find wisdom and courage to act and care about things that matter to God. As Branson put it: "Any church that wants to learn about and be shaped by God's agenda of gospel of reconciliation must need to study its historical context." (Branson 2011, 50). Remembering the history of The Peoples Church helps to gain a better understanding of its renewed vision of "a movement of gospel-centered globally engaged Christians."

As Congregational Life Pastor at The Peoples Church, I now have the opportunity to lead a team of pastors, lay leaders and members into a change process in order to live out our shared mandate of being gospel-centered and globally engaged Christians. As I carry out this leadership mandate, I am driven by the core belief that leadership is influence. I see my current role as one of raising leaders who will be influential members of our community, whether at home or abroad. I see my role as one that is focused on inspiring our congregation to serve beyond their perceived talents and skills. I would like to inspire the leaders serving with me to express their God-given gifts and talents in ways that not only transform them but also transform our community. I hope to build a certain level of trust with my team members so that they would be willing to go beyond the call of duty to make change happen in their lives and in the lives of those around them. As I mobilize our congregation to be engaged in hospitality with newcomers and refugees, I will encourage everyone to realize that they do have the potential to be a person of influence on someone new to Canada.

Developing a Practical Theology of Leadership

My commitment to ministering to newcomers is related to a similar belief as stated by Andrew Root in *Evangelical Practical Theology* that “the context, then, in evangelical practical theology is active engagement in mission” (Root 2014, 79). According to Branson, practical theology has to be located in the local community. In his book *Churches, Cultures and Leadership*, Branson defines “practical theology” as an invitation into “new ways of discovery, imagination and discernment – a movement into deeper reflection for better forms of direct ministry.” (Branson 2011, 39). Branson’s definition of practical theology is based on his view of the church as an entity with a mission to participate in the mission of God in the world (*missio Dei*). If a church is to live in responsiveness to and dependence on God, reflective discernment is a continuous practice, rooted in the current environment and experiences of the church” (Branson 2011, 39). Branson identified five steps to his practical theology: 1) Naming and describing a current praxis in the church; 2) Analyzing praxis in context using resources of one’s culture; 3) Study of and reflection on Scripture, theology and Christian history; 4) Recalling and discussing stories from the church and 5) Discerning and shaping new action.

This is slightly similar to the model proposed by Osias Segura-Guzmán in “The Practice of Theology” in the book *Local Theology for the Global Church* that includes: “locating reality in its context, experiencing vividly, reflecting over that experience, acting consequently, and evaluating the action to be taken

(Segura-Guzmán 2010, 134). In *Reenvisioning Theological Education*, Robert Banks highlighted the importance of connecting practice and theory in theological education (Banks, 1999). Theological education should lead to theological reflection and then to responsive action on the mission field. Banks speaks of the “practice-theory-practice” cycle, believing that “theological education is a dimension of mission and has a vital missiological content; it is an aspect of the teaching ministry of the church involving specialized testimony to the kingdom.” (Banks, 1999). The practical theological training ascribed by Banks is more missional. He defines the missional model as being "primarily though not exclusively concerned with actual service — informed and transforming — of the kingdom and therefore primarily focuses on acquiring cognitive, spiritual-moral, and practical obedience" (Banks 1999, 144). Banks provides a great practical theology framework for marketplace ministry when he states that the church's "prime task is to undergird its people's vocation in the world" (Banks, 219). I was inspired by Bank’s approach to practical theology training to develop the LEAP framework based on my research findings. Many key informants interviewed spoke about a missional approach to congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees that is both informed and transformative. Our theology is put into practice as we serve. We welcome the strangers and aliens well because we have been welcomed ourselves.

According to Ray S. Anderson in his book, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, “practical theology involves reflection on the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ in the world. It is the ongoing mission in the world and to the world

that provides the aims and the goals, tests the methods and adds the necessary energy and vision that guide the task of practical theology” (Anderson 2009, 31). He defines practical theology as “Christopraxis,” the idea that “God is first and foremost a minister revealing God’s self for the sake of union with humanity.” (Anderson 2009, 52). As someone engaged in marketplace, cross-cultural and international student ministries, I would agree with Anderson that “theology as a reflection on God’s action should serve ministry. God reveals himself as we connect, walk alongside and minister to our newcomers and refugees. Our theology is put into action as we serve and as we reflect on the impact of the Word on the individual that we serve, we get a greater revelation of God’s handiwork in the lives of those we minister to. Knowing God in theory is very different from experiencing his hand in action. For Anderson, we understand God’s ministry better as we engage with humanity. “Christopraxis begins by calling the church itself into a radical conformity with the Spirit of Christ as a formative reality of new humanity. Christopraxis becomes the hermeneutical criterion and spiritual conscience of the life and mission of the church.

My Leadership Praxis – A Call to Transformational Leadership

As a Christian leader and minister called to serve in a multicultural and multiethnic congregation, I strongly believe that it is in the encounter with God on the mission field that the Bible becomes alive and incarnational. This encounter has to be based on Scriptures as we see with Paul in Acts 18. As we preach the Gospel and the Word of God is sown and takes root in peoples’ lives, then they

would experience Christ and have an encounter with God. As a result of that encounter, they would experience the presence of God and reflect on the impact of that experience on their lives. Such reflection may lead to a better understanding of the Word of God and to an adjustment or reformation of how we minister. As we experience God's action in the marketplace and we reflect on that experience, we grow not only in our knowledge of him but also in our capacity to believe in his ability to reveal himself to others and for his kingdom to be established in our communities.

On December 1st 2020, I answered the call to church leadership by joining the staff of The Peoples Church as Congregational Life Pastor. My role is to support the lead pastor in the operationalization of the Church vision and to grow a team of pastoral leaders responsible for discipling the congregation from cradle to grave. In that role, I am providing leadership to the Children, Youth, Young Adults, Adults, Seniors, Discipleship, Life Groups and Newcomers ministries. The current vision of the church is to help every member become fully engaged in cross-cultural ministry and in the marketplace. Watson and Santos identify three theological paradigm shifts that are needed to address the discrepancy that many Christians often demonstrate between Sunday and Monday: (1) a shift from the "sacred-secular" divide; (2) a shift from a "clergy-laity" divide; and (3) a shift from the "church-community" divide (Watson and Santos 2019, 143). As I step into my new leadership role, a new praxis is being shaped as I reflect on our church history, my past community and business involvement and my new role as Congregational Life Pastor. This new praxis is enlightened by three factors:

1) The belief that there is **no separation of secular work and Christian ministry** because God's divine power has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

2) The belief in **the Priesthood of all believers** and that there is no such thing as full-time work and part-time ministry as everything that I do is part of my calling and my expressing God's will and purpose for my life. As a matter of fact, many bivocational ministers do not describe themselves as part-time because "they consider their entire lives as full-time ministry" (Samushonga 2019, p. 68).

3) As a minister of the Gospel and someone who strives to be an influence, I believe in the value of **combining work and witness**, being salt and light in the marketplace. As believers, we are Christ's incarnational presence in our communities. We are part of what Watson and Santos call "the "gathered" and "scattered" natures of the church...being called to care as a community but also to care for the community (Watson and Santos 2019, 144).

For several years, I led with a separation between faith and work, seeing my work and business a place to generate income to support the ministry of the church. However, as Paul Stevens reminded us in *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace*, when we open the Bible, we see God at work (Stevens 2006, 5). As I develop and refine my ministry praxis, I am reminded by Branson that practical theology has to be "located in the local community" based on the view of the church as an entity with a mission to participate in the mission of God in the world (*missio Dei*). As a transformational leader committed to

empower others to live out their God-given purposes here on earth, I need to practice reflective discernment, rooted in my current environment and experiences of the church” (Branson 2011,39). Several questions emerged from this reflection: How do I lead a movement of gospel-centered and globally engaged Christians? How do I lead my team in a way that empowers them to lead others in the knowledge of Christ? How can I be an effective transformational leader in an environment that defines influence according to a variety of cultural lenses? How can I adjust my praxis of leadership to take into account the diverse needs and cultural norms present in our multicultural congregation?

My Leadership Praxis – A Call to Cross-Cultural Leadership

Serving as a leader in a multicultural congregation in a multicultural city such as Toronto means managing diversity and engaging in cross-cultural evangelism and social justice. My role as a Congregational Life Pastor requires me to interact on a daily basis with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Engaging and leading cross-culturally is an important part of my call as a minister serving in the city of Toronto. I am often called to provide counselling and spiritual formation or to serve as a mediator in cross-cultural conflicts.

I am inspired by leaders such as Nehemiah who were called to accomplish seemingly unsurmountable tasks such as developing our congregants in their ability to be persons of influence in our community. I am called to coach our leaders and congregation to maneuver effectively through the minefields of race relations. My practical theology of Christian leadership is adjusted as I strive to

minister effectively to two congregational members of different cultures who are challenged while attempting to do life together because of the cultural lens with which they are approaching their interactions. When engaging in hospitality with newcomers and after reflection, I am reminded that ethnic identity cannot wholly define us nor can it save us. At the same time, I am confronted with the challenges of trying to build a sense of community unity and bring closer people who are different from me and from each other.

As a gospel-centered transformation leader, I need to learn to work across culture to influence and develop others in a way that empowers them while ensuring that they draw closer to the Lord Jesus Christ. I strive to embrace diversity in my leadership style so that I do not unintentionally discriminate towards people who are not like me. As a cross-cultural transformational leader, I need to avoid the type of minimization presented by Cousins when he spoke in one of his lectures of the multicultural church that prides itself on having 30 flags on the wall and a couple of potluck international dinners while failing to realize that their level of intercultural engagement is very shallow. In multicultural churches such as The Peoples Church, we often have a tendency to respect each other's cultures without any truly deep engagement with each other's worlds. If I want to be a real influence in the lives of our congregants as Maxwell describes it, I need to be more intentional in identifying the cultural influences that shape my attitudes on race, and in explaining why we must honor the priceless value of God's image in all people. This is what Miles McPherson calls "The Third Option" (McPherson 2018). As I reflect on my ministry context and read from

individuals such as Miles McPherson, I become increasingly aware of the fact that God offers a third option indeed. As McPherson simply put it: “God’s Third Option invites us to honor that which we have in common, the presence of His image in every person we meet. When we honor the presence of His image in others, we acknowledge their priceless value as precious and beloved of God. The Third Option empowers us to see people through God’s eyes, which enables us to treat them in a manner that honors the potential of His image in all people” (McPherson 2018, 5). Doing ministry and leading from this place requires intentionality, a prayerful commitment to obedience and whole-hearted trust in God’s provision. Choosing the Third Option, allows God to move us from the very divisive “us versus them mentality” to a more united “we can do this together.”

Livermore’s CQ map illustrates why churches have often been accused of perpetuating racism in their communities. His CQ map presents the four components of cultural intelligence as: “knowledge CQ, interpretive CQ, perseverance CQ and behavioral CQ” (Livermore 2009, 14). In other terms, the journey to genuine hospitality with newcomers and effective leadership begins with understanding cross-cultural issues and differences. It continues with increasing our awareness of our own cultural lenses with which we interpret the world in which we minister. We then proceed with applying that knowledge to the relationship that we form and the leadership that we provide. How well we apply what we know and how well we allow what we know to transform us will determine how successful we become in expressing the love of God and leading

cross-culturally. It is one thing to minister to those that are like us or like what we do. It is another thing to minister and provide leadership to those who do not agree with what we say or do not support our ideologies.

Leadership in this multicultural context is about creating an environment in which the people of God can come together to develop and express their gifts, gain new perspectives and engage in the salvific work of Christ. It is about translating the gospel into the different cultural contexts so that God's reconciliation call could be clearer and more powerful. As we live out the gospel in our efforts to welcome newcomers and refugees, we demonstrate Christ's incarnational presence by becoming the hands and the feet of Christ extended towards our newcomers and refugees. As we remember that God has accepted us into His family, we are able to invite others to join. We welcome others as we ourselves have been welcome.

Successful discipleship and engagement in hospitality in a multicultural church like The Peoples Church is about developing intercultural competency to be able to understand and to embrace other cultures. To be able to provide effective cross-cultural transformational leadership, I have to rely on three factors:

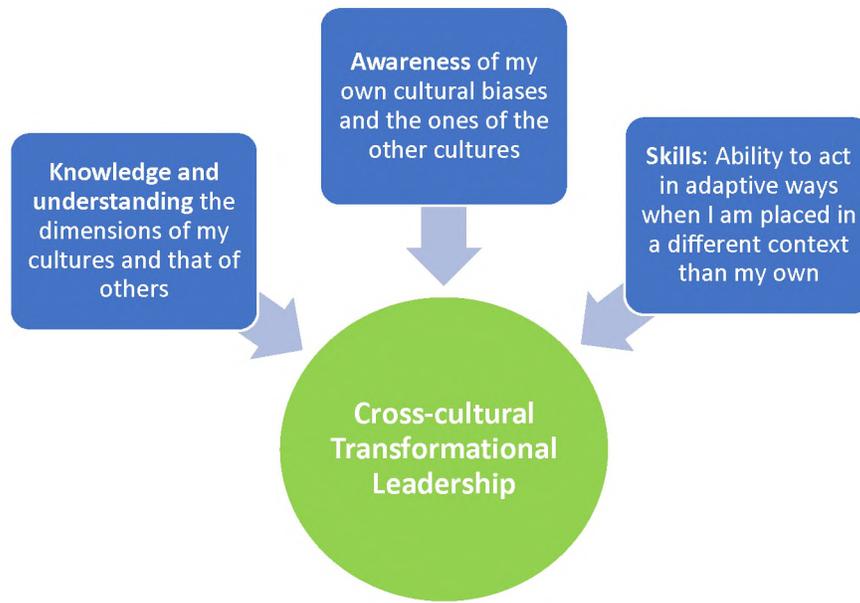


Figure 2. Cross-cultural Transformational Leadership - Belluz

Leadership at The Peoples Church means a commitment to engage in intentional ministry and community interactions with people from different cultures; whether is sitting down with seniors from a different cultural background or learning to engage with some of my colleagues and team members from low-context cultures. This would help me to appreciate their communication styles and to understand the rationale and cultural meaning behind some of their behaviours. I will continue to refrain from judging others by the standard of my own culture, recognizing that all behaviour should be interpreted in its unique cultural context and in light of Scriptures. Getting to know my team and the congregation better will greatly contribute to my ability to empower them.

As a faith leader during a global pandemic, I had to deal with conflicts emerging within our faith community around a variety of issues. I have had to mediate brewing conflicts between some of our congregants divided along political and ethnic lines. I tried to be more intentional in reflecting over these

interactions in order to get an understanding of the mental framework within which different cultures operate. I learned to accept that I do not always have to agree with the values and cultural norms of others in order to welcome all people. I am committed to being more intentional about embracing our congregational diversity. What do we need to do as a global church now that the audience that we are preaching to may come from anywhere from Toronto to Ouagadougou? Nelson's citation of Edwin Friedman about the fact that "our inability to engage the culture in new ways and transform our organizations is ultimately a failure of nerve" (Friedman 2007, 13) is quite pertinent in today's environment.

As our congregation continues to be engaged globally, our approach to congregational engagement and leadership would have to become more global. Reiche et al define global leadership as "the processes and actions through which an individual influences a range of internal and external constituents from multiple national cultures and jurisdictions in a context characterized by significant levels of task and relationship complexity" (Reiche, Bird, Mendenhall & Osland 2017, 553). My research project described in Chapter 4 illustrates some of these processes and actions and seeks to understand more deeply how these concepts can best be developed in our context at The Peoples Church.

Final Thoughts: Continuing on my Leadership Development Journey

Leadership is the ability to influence others in a way that adds value to them and helps them fulfill the purposes of God for their lives. As a minister called to serve cross-culturally, I realize that when I step into another culture, my cultural frame of reference and my road map may no longer be effective in

guiding how I am to behave and lead in this new cultural setting. I am now keenly aware of how my upbringing and cultural context have shaped my values and attitudes. I have grown in my understanding and appreciation of how my cultural background has shaped my current worldview and how it provides the lens with which I perceive and engage with the cultures around me. As someone called to transformational leadership in a multicultural environment, I am learning to refrain from judging others by the standard of my own culture, recognizing that all behaviour should be interpreted in its unique cultural context. I need to be bold enough to accept that I do not always have to agree with the values and cultural norms of others. This is all the more important as I am called to share the Gospel in a multicultural setting.

The leadership principles learned during my research will help me address the challenges of leading within a multicultural congregation using a monocultural approach to discipleship. My ministry context is not static but it is everchanging due to the growing diversity of the city of Toronto. Therefore, I will continue to seek every opportunity for intercultural leadership training and for continued engagement in effective cross-cultural ministry. It is armed with this theological foundation and practical theology of leadership that I approached my field research project. The following chapter will delve into the detailed description of the methodology used to observe the acts of hospitality currently demonstrated by congregants of The Peoples Church with the ultimate goal of identifying a ministry model that would allow our members to be leaders and to influence newcomers and refugees who make The Peoples Church their home.

CHAPTER 4: FIELD MINISTRY PROJECT

The field ministry project aspect of this portfolio focused on the development of a congregational engagement framework based on key principles discovered during this research that would facilitate greater engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees at The Peoples Church Toronto. In this chapter, I describe the research methodology used during the project, the selection and recruitment of participants, the data collection and analysis, research findings and interpretations and some ethical considerations.

Welcoming Strangers – Congregational Engagement in Hospitality

The Great Commission is God's call to the Church of Jesus Christ to be an extension of the hands and feet of the Lord in our respective communities. The idea of missions in the church has historically been described as God's calling people to leave their countries to go to far lands to make disciples of Jesus Christ. With the industrial revolution and the increasing impact of technological changes, new developments in transportation and the resulting impact on the mobility of individuals, we witnessed demographic changes here in Canada that brought the nations to our doorsteps. The Church in Canada had to redefine its missiological goals to include not just foreign missions but also missions at home.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) reported that, in 2021, IRCC exceeded its target by welcoming more than 405,000 immigrants. In

2022, this target will rise to 431,645 new permanent residents (PRs). In 2023, Canada will aim to welcome an additional 447,055 immigrants and in 2024 another 451,000. The following table summarizes Canada's immigration targets between 2022-2024 by immigration class:

Immigration Class	2022	2023	2024
Economic	241,850	253,000	267,750
Family	105,000	109,500	113,000
Refugee	76,545	74,055	62,500
Humanitarian	8,250	10,500	7,750
Total	431,645	447,055	451,000

Table 1: Canada Immigration Levels Plan 2022-2024 -IRCC

Since the start of the pandemic, the Canadian government has tried to minimize disruptions to the immigration system so it can continue to welcome skilled workers, family class immigrants, refugees, temporary foreign workers and international students. 49% of these newcomers landed in Ontario with 47.9% settling in the Greater Toronto Area. As a result, churches like the Peoples Church have seen an influx of newcomers to Canada every Sunday. These demographic changes are providing members of the congregation with opportunities to engage in missions at home by welcoming the nations that are landing on our doorsteps and in our communities.

Models and Resources

Through ministries such as The Peoples House or The Peoples Newcomers Network, we created a process where congregation members can provide hospitality to newcomer and refugees, thereby providing a cross-cultural bridge that connects newcomers and refugees with the church and the local community.

The following articles and books proved useful in the evaluation of the different approaches used by churches and Christians to welcome strangers.

“Integrating Immigrants into the Life of Canadian Urban Christian Congregations: Findings from a National Survey” by Janzen, Chapman and Watson spoke to the way in which Canadian churches are addressing the cultural diversity created by demographic changes. They suggested that “efforts must be made at three broad levels: (1) promoting a church vision in which immigrants not only passively belong but also change the very character of the church, (2) creating church structures (or forms) that facilitate the integration of immigrants, and (3) adopting church processes (or functions) that facilitate immigrant integration” (Janzen et al. 2012, 444). Some of the key components of the proposed models include: intentionality, sharing of resources, principles and values that address cultural differences and issues of power, social structures and processes to facilitate immigrant integration.

From the Margins to the Centre: The Diaspora Effect: A Collection of Essays to Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministry Centre is a collection of articles on how churches are sharing the Gospel in the new environment (Krause et al. 2018). Migration and displacement have always

been part of the biblical narrative as God directed people from Abraham to Jesus Christ. This collection of essays gave a useful insight on the way churches could welcome and support the integration of immigrants and refugees and how ethnic churches and Christians could be engaged in this process (Krause, Santos and Cousins 2018, 201). In chapter 14, “From Displacement to Diaspora: Finding a Place for the Outsider Within the Mission of God,” Das provides some great insights into the impact of migration or statelessness on individuals.

“Ministering to migrants and the displaced involves more than assisting with physical needs, housing, school, language and jobs. Disconnected from their ancestral land and the community they grew up in, their understanding of who they are is often undermined. Lacking roots in their new land, most struggle with developing a new identity and a sense of belonging” (Das 2017, 204)

This is where the church can really play a key role, as both a spiritual community of faith and a social institution in the community, in helping these individuals find community and recover a sense belonging.

“Extending Hospitality to Strangers” – A Missiology of Theologia Crucis, explains that “ministry to strangers is not just about being kind to strangers; it is the actual way to demonstrate Christ’s incarnational presence in our community and to be vehicles of the peace, healing and freedom” (Koyama 1993). By entertaining strangers, a believer reveals the true nature of Jesus Christ. Gary Nelson’s book, *Borderland Churches: A Congregation’s Introduction to Missional Living,* gives some examples of how to be the church rather than having church, to understand and engage our culture, to become the missional people living in the borderlands, participating in God’s work of applying all the values and virtues of Christ’s reign in the context in which God has placed us (Nelson, 2008).

Field and Scope

The focus of this research was to identify a ministry model for congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The research was conducted in two stages: (1) to explore how The Peoples Church has been welcoming to newcomers and refugees and (2) to identify principles, strategies and processes that would facilitate congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The survey method was used in combination with other qualitative methods such as key informant interviews and a focus group comprised of residents of The Peoples House. The interview questions were developed in collaboration with key staff directly involved in welcoming ministries. Data was collected from September 2021 to December 2021 including the observation of four events in which the researcher participated. Observation notes were collected but there was no identification of specific individuals. Interviews were transcribed and saved on the researcher's computer in a password protected folder. Observation notes were also transcribed and kept in a secure electronic file.

Field

The Peoples House has the capacity to host 8-12 individuals at a time. The Peoples Church Newcomers Network serves approximately 30 newcomers every month from a variety of backgrounds through a variety of programs. My data collection and observation focused on surveying individuals playing particular roles in our programs rather than on particular demographics or cultural groups. Participants were invited to participate in the research through an information

letter. Some were invited to an in-depth interview, while others were asked to respond to a written questionnaire or to engage in a focus group discussion on congregational hospitality. For example, in order to assess the level of support currently provided to our newcomers and refugees, I conducted key informant interviews with the manager of The Peoples House and with the newcomers' pastor. These interviews allowed me to articulate more insightful questions for the survey that was sent to newcomers, volunteers and lay leaders. I also conducted a focus group with individuals who resided at The Peoples House, after discussions with The Peoples House manager. I also sent a written survey to those who attended or served at our Newcomers Sunday Fellowship or special events.

I also observed several events organized by The Peoples Church's cultural fellowships. These cultural fellowships are connection groups with a welcoming and missional focus based on people's shared culture and language. The cultural fellowships provides both cultural celebrations and outreach within the diaspora. In addition to the review of formal hospitality ministries such as The Peoples House and the Newcomers Fellowship, I interviewed leaders and volunteers involved in other congregational ministries involving hospitality such as our life groups ministry. This allowed me to assess other levels of support that newcomers and refugees may have received from members of the congregation. I also had follow-up interviews with some ESL Bible teachers and key ministry leaders to confirm the accuracy of the some of the information provided, given that many newcomers did not have English as their first language. Detailed questionnaires, interview questions and survey results can be found in Appendix F, G, H and I.

Participant Sample

The participant sample was drawn from five distinct groups, each providing a particular perspective and understanding of hospitality with newcomers and refugees. Research participants were also grouped according to the methods used to collect information. The selection and recruitment process of each group of participants was slightly different.

Group #1 was made up of 5 out of 9 of the current residents of The Peoples House. A focus group was organized at The Peoples House through the manager of The Peoples House, one of my key informants. Four residents were not able to join us due to language barriers and personal reasons. The focus group took place on a Thursday evening in the common area of the House to ensure that residents were comfortable. Group #2 was made up of a selection of newcomers who attended The Peoples Church Newcomers Fellowship. These were primarily made of ESL Bible learners. A 10-question survey was sent to these newcomers asking them to provide their opinion on how welcoming The Peoples Church had been. Group #3 was made up of volunteers and lay leaders of The Peoples Newcomers Network. 19 out of 40 surveys sent were returned. This group included ESL instructors, International Student Ministry volunteers, Special Events coordinators and cultural fellowship lay leaders. Group #4 was made up of three key ministry leaders with direct involvement with hospitality to newcomers or refugees. Group #5 included four congregants and leaders with no direct involvement with newcomers or refugees.

GROUP	NUMBER	ROLE	TYPE	METHOD	STORAGE
Group #1	5	TPH Residents Program participants	Verbal Narrative Words	Focus Group	Laptop (password protected file)
Group #2	6	Newcomers Program Participants	Mixed data	Survey	Online Survey Monkey
Group #3	19	Volunteers & Lay Leaders	Mixed data	Survey	Online Survey Monkey
Group #4	3	Ministry Leaders Key Informants	Narrative Verbal	In-depth Interviews	Laptop (Password protected)
Group #5	4	Staff	Staff	In-depth interviews	Laptop (Password protected)

Table 2. Participant Sample

The survey sent to newcomers (Appendix F) in Group #2 was different from the one sent to ministry volunteers and lay leaders in Group #3 (Appendix H). Appendix F collected data on congregants' acts of hospitality while Appendix H was capturing the volunteers and ministry teams' perspectives. I also had a semi-structured interview with a former missionary who had been attending The Peoples Church for over 50 years. She provided me with a very interesting

historical perspective on congregational engagement with newcomers. In addition, I had the opportunity to observe some of our cultural fellowship leaders (4) in their efforts to mobilize our congregation towards the creation of culturally responsive spaces to welcome newcomers and give them a sense of belonging as they navigate their new life in Canada. Cultural Fellowships are safe spaces normally led by a group of lay leaders from a particular region of the world to allow congregants to gather with people who speak their language.

Scope

The purpose of the research was not to evaluate, in a general way, how successful The Peoples Church had been in its welcome programs in facilitating the settlement or well-being of newcomers. Successful integration and settlement are often the result of multiple factors. It would have been difficult to evaluate the ministry impact on the participants given the diversity of newcomers who receive ministry. The main goal of the research was to identify a clear ministry strategy or model that could facilitate greater congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. One of my key objectives was to limit the scope of my research to the development of an innovative model of congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers based on the collected stories and experiences of both newcomers and congregants. Therefore, I began with observing hospitality demonstrated by the congregation to meet refugees' settlement and integration needs. The focus of the research was on gaining a common understanding of hospitality on one hand and, on another hand, assessing the current experience of hospitality for both actors and recipients to determine congruency between

congregational engagement in hospitality and newcomers' experience. Key questions to be explored included:

- What are we doing well to make newcomers feel welcome?
- How do we meet refugees' settlement and integration needs?
- What could we add to improve hospitality to newcomers and refugees?
- How could we provide better support to our volunteers and lay leaders in their efforts to welcome well?

These key questions were probed in all different methods of data collection. The answers provided a general ministry framework that would support any future expansion of our hospitality ministries and inform the ministry model used to facilitate congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees. The scope of this research was limited to the development of what would become known as the LEAP Ministry framework. Due to the delays caused by the current global pandemic, the implementation and testing of the LEAP framework was postponed to September 2022.

Methodology

The focus of my research project was to determine how to engage members of The Peoples Church in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The methodology used was a combination of participatory action research and narrative research. Data collection was conducted through observation of the different aspects of our hospitality ministries, examination of congregants' interactions with newcomers and refugees, administration of two surveys and listening to interviews and stories of refugees, newcomers, congregants and

leaders. I endeavoured to be sensitive to intercultural considerations in my interactions with participants both as a researcher and a staff member.

A participatory action research methodology was most suited to evaluate the activities and processes of The Peoples Church and to identify specific actions that could be taken to improve congregational involvement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees because this methodology allowed for the involvement of both the providers and the recipients of hospitality in the identification of strategies for improvement. This methodology also allowed for research participants to be involved in all phases of the research, The survey instruments were developed based on in-depth interviews with two of our ministry key leaders, they were tested and validated with 6 former newcomers who are currently serving as volunteers or lay leaders. Some of our ESL Bible instructors provided some great insight since they were former newcomers. Participants provided the data that helped us in the development of the framework and the same participants will be involved in the validation and the testing of the proposed ministry model. Adjustments of our current ministry practices will be made, based on the findings of this research. Ernest Stringer describes this approach as “a systematic approach to investigation that enables people to find effective solutions to problems they confront in their everyday lives” (Stringer 2014). It provided a framework that would allow all parties to reflect on how they do life together and to identify shared solutions. Judith Bell in *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*, makes reference to Denscombe’s advice to use action research when seeking to bring new solutions to

an existing organization. Denscombe specifically recommends using action research when the aim is “to arrive at recommendations for good practice that will tackle a problem or enhance the performance of the organization and individuals through changes to the rules and procedures within which they operate” (Denscombe 2002, 27). Action research was a good methodology to use to help us assess where improvements can be made in the way The Peoples Church is extending hospitality to newcomers and refugees. The methods used to collect data engaged participants into the refining of the processes and ministry activities themselves.

A narrative research approach was used to collect qualitative data from the participants about their particular stories and how they intersected with The Peoples Church. Narrative inquiry included a collection of personal stories from both newcomers and members of the congregation about their experience of hospitality, at both giving and receiving ends. The personal history of refugees since their arrival to Canada provided helpful data in the evaluation of some of our congregational hospitality efforts. For instance, hearing about their experience living at The Peoples House shortly after their arrival to Canada provided some helpful data on how to improve the quality of the hospitality provided to the refugees living at The Peoples House. The narrative research approach allowed me to uncover feelings that some participants did not express explicitly. It also gave me several pages of interview records that shed some light on various aspects of congregational engagement in hospitality, including direct links to the history of the church. Once the narratives were collected, I noticed certain patterns and

themes emerging as I read and analyzed the interview summaries and survey results. I noted these themes down, compared them with information on other research on how to welcome well or on congregational engagement in hospitality. This method provided helpful data for the development of the LEAP framework.

The post-modern narrative approach proposed by Savage and Presnell in *Narrative Research in Ministry A Postmodern Research Approach for Faith Communities* made me realize, as a researcher, that “the assumed notions of the realities of life and faith embedded in social discourse and internalized by the faith community may be blocking a preferred alternative story that could be transformative for the community” (Savage and Presnell 2008, 68). For instance, hearing the story of one of our former missionaries describing how she did not feel welcome when she returned from the mission field provided a powerful narrative highlighting that congregants need to feel welcome in order to welcome well. I took the time when analyzing the data collected to navigate through the stories that I heard and to interpret these stories with an open mind, always thinking about the context in which both the participants and I were coming from.

Narrative research methodology was used to gather participants’ accounts or stories about their experience in the church’s newcomers welcome and integration programs. These methodologies are more conducive to this type of research project because they entail what Sensing calls a “mutually shared engagement with others” (Sensing 2011, 20). The variety of survey instruments that I used allowed for the inclusion of diverse voices and a broader community engagement. It is by engaging in meaningful dialogue with our newcomers and

refugees that needs and interests were identified. I sought to be aware of the power dynamics and the different presuppositions that each participant was bringing to the collective identification of innovative solutions.

Data Collection Instruments

The exploration of our congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees required a variety of methods, especially given the cultural diversity of the participants involved and the broad range of their English-language proficiency. I conducted an extensive literature review on immigration and settlement support within the Christian community, followed by observation of the different activities of our newcomers and refugee ministries. The data collection process was revised over time to accommodate my changing ministry context during a global pandemic.

The following instruments were used: 1) Participant observation; 2) Surveys; 3) Guided interviews; 4) Focus groups; and 5) Personal stories.

Participant observation: Being a member of the ministry team helped me to engage in the same experiences as newcomers and refugees. Spending time with them in a variety of events provided me with a greater understanding of their perspectives, their needs and the current impact of the ministry on their transition to Canada. Participant observation was conducted both during in-person gatherings, interactions after services at our Connection Centre and through the series of online activities that were organized by The Peoples Newcomers Fellowship to stay connected during this pandemic season. The participant

observation process was overt since I disclosed to the participants that I was conducting research and shared the topic with them. I took note of their actions in my journal in order to be less intrusive, I observed their interactions during meals, the tone of their conversations, noted some of their personal concerns, their requests for prayer, the concerns for their families left in their country of origin, their reactions to certain images, their interactions with their Canadian language instructors, how they processed sad news, how they reacted to good news.

Surveys: Given that some of the newcomers did not have English as their first language, a simple questionnaire was developed with ten short questions to obtain specific information about congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees. To ensure that the individual surveyed represented a broad cultural and ethnic diversity and that my sample was representative of the diversity of our congregation and of our newcomers and refugee population, the survey was sent to all participants in our newcomers' ministry (see Appendices F, G, H and I for survey questionnaire and results).

Focus Groups: A focus group was organized with five residents of The Peoples House. Another focus group was planned with ministry volunteers, i.e., ESL instructors, ministry volunteer and lay leaders to validate certain findings and processes. However, due to provincial gathering restrictions due to the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, these focus groups were replaced with one-to-one conversations.

Guided Interviews: Key informants were interviewed individually through guided interviews to give participants the opportunity to provide information in

their own words. Directed interviews were conducted with key ministry leaders, including the manager of our refugee house. Interviews were conducted after securing participants' consent in an ethical manner. The interview method included using open ended questions framed in conversational tone and terms that are also broad enough to allow respondents to provide detailed stories in their own words, asking questions worded to elicit narratives, and consisting of a minimum number of broad primary questions complemented with probing questions. My general interview guide consisted of five broad primary questions with multiple probing questions listed under each primary question (see Appendix B).

Narratives/Stories: Refugees' stories are valuable sources of data since they provide both personal accounts of their migration experiences as well as how they experienced The Peoples Church during their transition into the Canadian society. According to Bell, "information derived from story-telling can be structured in such a way as to produce valid research findings" (Bell 2005, 21). The use of stories allowed me to capture participants' experiences even though I did not share their cultural background. Through guided interviews, I listened to their stories gathering both positive and negative experiences. The narrative thematic analysis process I used consisted of five stages identified by Cresswell: (a) "organization and preparation of the data, (b) obtaining a general sense of the information, (c) the coding process, (d) categories or themes, and (e) interpretation of the data." (Cresswell 2014).

Using these diverse instruments was necessary to capture the various experiences of the participants, given the demographic diversity of our

congregation. The surveys and focus groups conducted with refugees and newcomers took into account their limited English-language proficiency. I paid attention to any potential misunderstanding or cultural sensitivities that may limit the full participation of some participants. I endeavoured to be sensitive to intercultural considerations in my interactions with participants both as a researcher and as a church leader.

Through interviews and focus groups, I was able to inquire about some of the processes currently in place including: spiritual formation, housing support and connection to the ethnic diaspora. The focus groups also allowed me to provide a safe space for refugees to provide candid input, given that these focus groups were held in a familiar environment at the Refugee House. The surveys allowed me to confirm and validate what we were doing well to make newcomers feel welcome. Nineteen volunteers responded to the survey; which provided sufficient data to assess how we met refugees' settlement and integration needs. These volunteers also provided some qualitative data through an open-ended question at the end of the survey. Interviews and focus groups provided qualitative data on what we could do to increase congregational engagement in hospitality to newcomers and refugees. My interactions with newcomers and refugees allowed me to examine congregational activities and processes through the refugee's or newcomer's lens. I made sure that it was understood that participation in the focus group was voluntary and that the information that they provided would not identify them when it is made public. Some of the refugees who were uncomfortable with the focus group process were excused from the session.

Data Analysis

Data collected included transcripts from interviews, notes from focus group, church documents and research-related literature, survey results and participants observation notes. Appendix F, G, H, and I present the results of surveys completed by 6 newcomers and 19 volunteers of The Peoples Newcomers Network. These surveys were created based on the interview responses of key informants early on in the process. The surveys allowed me to validate certain responses and attitudes. They covered the following information: 1) How they define hospitality; 2) their experience at The Peoples Church; 3) the gaps that they saw when it came to hospitality with newcomers and refugees; 4) what would be ideal with regards to hospitality with newcomers. Some of the recurring words used in the key informant interviews seemed to have the highest percentage when both congregants and newcomers were asked how The Peoples Church could demonstrate radical hospitality with newcomers and refugees, based on their experience and observations.

My data analysis included the review of 25 survey responses, transcripts from 7 interviews and a focus group with 5 refugees, summarized into codes using Johnny Saldaña's approach to coding. He describes a code as "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual aid" (Saldaña 2013, 3). I read through my interview notes several times and coded responses according to a certain number of descriptive codes. I reviewed the participants' responses highlighting key phrases, circling recurring words or underlining participants'

statements that I found impactful. The data was coded looking for patterns or repetition of certain key words in responses. I also looked for frequency in the use of certain terms. I used In Vivo coding, using words and phrases from my key informants because I wanted to “honour the participants’ voice” as suggested by Saldaña (2016, 106). Terms such as “making friends,” “belonging,” “family,” “walking along side,” “doing life together,” “safe space,” “sharing” were used more than 5 times by respondents. Deductive codes were derived from the research questions and inductive codes arose from the data itself. I continued to organize the data through clusters of meaning by categories and broad themes using pattern coding and looking for recurring phrases or common threads in participants’ responses. This enabled me to organize a large number of codes into smaller and more meaningful units of analysis. Saldaña defines a theme as “an extended phrase or sentence that identifies what unit of data is about or what it means” (Saldaña 2013, 175). Once the information was coded, categorized and themed, I reviewed some of the notes I made to myself during the interviews, including my personal reflections on some of the participants’ comments. Relevant texts were extracted from my interview and focus group notes to illustrate the various themes. In Table 2 below, the codes were condensed into eight major categories and themes including: (a) sharing resources to meet practical needs, (b) doing life together, (c) creating a sense of belonging, (d) listening to each others’ stories, (e) helping people find their place, (f) creating a safe space, (g) learning and becoming, (h) creating an inclusive community.

CODE	# OF TIME USED	CATEGORY	THEME
“ESL classes”	20	Programs	Sharing resources
“meeting physical needs”	18		
“social events”	18		
“meeting practical needs”	15		
“providing housing support”	7		
“employment mentoring”	6		
“translation”	6		
“making friends”	20	Structures	Doing life together
“getting to know them”	16		
“walking alongside”	11		
“sharing”	11		
“inviting them”	10		
“from doing ‘to’ to doing ‘with’”	10		
“being together”	10		
“safe space”	11	Structures	Creating a safe space
“secure”	8		
“accepted”	8		
“sharing power”	6		
“build bridges”	6		
“create a pathway”	3		
“being equal”	3		
“acceptance	15	Processes	Listening to stories
“listening”	10		
“hear their stories”	7		
“speak their truth”	3		
“hear their pain”	3		
“ask questions”	3		
“networking”	16	Outcomes	Finding their place
“invited to serve”	15		
“volunteer”	14		
“mentor”	6		
“leadership”	6		
“I want to give back”	6		
“training”	10	Outcomes	Learning and becoming
“learning”	10		
“informed”	9		
“transition”	6		

“growing”	6		
“give people tools”	6		
“equip congregants”	5		
“learning about cultures”	5		
“free of discrimination”	3	Values	Inclusive community
“patience”	2		
“inviting everyone”	10		
“all of us”	10		
“welcoming strangers”	6		
“One in Christ”	7		
“no more US vs. Them”	5		
“eliminate language barriers”	7		
“no racism”	3		
“being like Jesus”	11	Values	Belonging
“being like family”	11		
“making friends”	11		
“feeling accepted”	11		
“acceptance”	5		
“bring outsiders in”	3		

Table 3. Codes, Categories and Themes

Figure 3 below is a visual representation of the complexity of the term “hospitality.” There are many facets to hospitality and, like beauty, hospitality is in the eye of the beholder. Given the cultural diversity of The Peoples Church, we need to add a diversity lens to it which makes it even more complex. What may seem hospitable in one culture may be insulting or inappropriate in another. By categorizing the words spoken during interviews or written in response to surveys into broad themes, I was able to deduct some key principles that could be used to inform the development of a cross-cultural ministry model. When asked to provide a definition of hospitality, participants indicated that hospitality meant responding to the need for provision and safety but that it also encompassed concepts such as

listening, creating a sense of belonging, embracing diversity and sharing power. These main themes derived from the participants' coded responses were used to develop key principles that would guide the implementation of the proposed ministry model.



Figure 3. Main Themes

Ethics in Ministry-based Research

As a researcher evaluating a ministry for which I have oversight, I realize that my work could affect the support provided to the newcomers and refugees we serve. As a Congregational Life Pastor with a leadership role in our ministry to newcomers and our congregational engagement, I had to provide a clear understanding of the objectives of the research project to all participants. I secured

proper permissions from participants, reassuring them of the protection of their personal information as well as their privacy, if “their stories” were used as illustrations or to support a particular statement. Therefore, mechanisms were put in place to ensure that the identities of the respondents were protected during the qualitative data compilation process. These mechanisms included efforts to maintain anonymity, confidentiality and privacy. Anonymity was maintained by not collecting identifiers that would connect responses to a particular individual such as name, address, gender, race or ethnicity. Confidentiality was guaranteed through an agreement via informed consent that their information would not be disclosed outside of the research. I informed participants that their privacy would be maintained during recruitment and data collection. As suggested by Judith Bell, I made sure that “everyone involved knew why the investigation was to take place, who will see the final report, and who will have responsibility for implementing any recommended changes” (Bell 2005, 9). In *Action Research for Health and Social Care*, Hart and Bond recommend some great protocols to “ensure that participants are fully aware of the purpose of the research and understand their rights” (Hart and Bond 1995).

Blaxter, Hughes and Tight recommend that you “get the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. It involves reaching agreements about the uses of the data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated” (Blaxter et al. 2001). Because the newcomer population includes refugees who may have experienced trauma during the migration process, I made every effort to be sensitive to their heightened need for

anonymity and confidentiality. This is why a focus group was organized with residents of The Peoples House and why a survey was selected as a data collection instrument for attendees and volunteers of The Peoples Church Newcomers Fellowship. Sending anonymous surveys through the Survey Monkey cloud-based tool was a good way to protect the identity of respondents. Every questionnaire or every interview began with a promise to keep their responses confidential and their stories anonymous. The promise of confidentiality and anonymity on the consent form meant that their completed questionnaires, their survey responses or the notes from their interviews would only be seen by me.

Eliminating the power differential in my current ministry context was almost impossible. As much as I wanted to avoid the power imbalance between the research participants and me, as a researcher, I could not – especially because of the respect most non-Westerners place on pastoral roles and positions. It was hard to determine how participants responded to that power imbalance in their responses. That being said, to mitigate the effect of this power differential, I made sure that participants understood my role as a researcher and clearly informed them that I was not conducting the research in the context of my role as Congregational Life Pastor but rather as a DMin student from Tyndale University. Tim Sensing cites Berg’s description of informed consent as the “knowing consent of individuals to participate as an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or any similar unfair inducement or manipulation” (Sensing 2011). I made sure not to pressure participants into participating or into

signing a consent form that they did not understand or without discussing with them any implications of their participation.

According to Savage and Presnell, “those who study ministry situations tend to both see and interpret through the shady glass of their own experience, thought forms, internalized cultural discourse, and faith group commitments” (Savage and Presnell 2008, 53). I had to be very careful, in my analysis of The Peoples Church’s congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees, not to bring my personal experience of migration or my personal bias about specific people groups or people of particular faith backgrounds. To mitigate this, I made sure that my interview questions were open ended and avoid asking leading questions. I also made sure that participants understood that my research project was not meant to address a particular professional challenge that I was facing and that it would only identify best practices that could be shared with The Peoples Church leadership. Participants were reminded that the purpose of the research was to develop a ministry model that would facilitate congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees and that there was no guarantee that suggestions, ideas and proposed models would be implemented or adopted.

Finally, this research was conducted under the supervision of my Research Portfolio Advisor, Dr. Brian Craig, Tyndale Doctor of Ministry Leadership Track Coordinator, Dr. Michael Krause, and DMin Program Director, Dr. Mark Chapman. The Tyndale Research Ethics Board approved the study on April 23rd, 2021 and participants were advised that any ethical concerns about the study could be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board.

Findings, Interpretation and Outcomes

In this section, I outlined the results of my research, explained my understanding of what these findings meant, and considered their implications for congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. In order to identify strategies and processes to facilitate such congregational engagement in welcoming well, I reviewed the data collected to see what themes were emerging to answer my research questions:

- What are we doing well to make newcomers feel welcome?
- How do we meet refugees' settlement and integration needs?
- What could we add to improve hospitality with newcomers and refugees?
- How could we provide better support to our volunteers and lay leaders in their efforts to welcome well?

The examination of the data collected revealed eight main themes based on key words mentioned repeatedly by participants: sharing resources and meeting practical needs, doing life together, creating a sense of belonging, listening to each other stories, creating a safe space for engagement, helping people find their place in the church community, inviting people into a journey of learning and becoming and creating an inclusive community. My review and reflection on these themes, coupled with my notes from participant observations led to the development of a ministry model that would facilitate congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. One of the major findings of my research was that we needed to broaden the definition of “hospitality” to encompass not only actions and activities that would make newcomers feel welcome but also attitudes and values that would result in the co-creation of safe spaces, shared spaces and shared

experiences. Many respondents mentioned the need to see hospitality as a two-way street. Newcomers indicated that they needed to feel that their contribution to the community also mattered. They looked forward to building new experiences with their new Canadian friends and aspired to be part of something meaningful. Lay leaders and volunteers noted that, as they welcome newcomers and refugees, they were reminded that hospitality included creating an environment where newcomers could express their gifts and talents and a recognition that they could enrich our church community. Several respondents indicated that we needed to be careful not to invite people into our space without giving them room to breathe. They noted that we needed to create a culture where “alternate voices were heard and valued,” where people were “allowed to express themselves” and “not afraid of courageous conversation.”

. I also discovered that a sense of belonging was created from both formal welcome programs and informal welcoming attitudes. The concept of the “welcomed welcoming” was repeated by several people. Several respondents indicated that it was much easier for them to welcome others because they had been welcomed themselves. Several also saw their extended hospitality as a way to reflect Christ’s incarnational presence in their community. Overall, hospitality was viewed more as helping people to “be” in community and to belong than “doing things to them or for them.” The comprehensive definition of hospitality led me to refine my research project title from hospitality towards newcomers and refugees to congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees.

Findings

Overall, the research showed that The Peoples Church was very active in serving newcomers and refugees with a number of transactional activities. The chart below describes activities that respondents suggested the church should engage in to demonstrate hospitality. It also indicated that newcomers would appreciate fewer transactional programs and more emotional and psychological support. The majority of those surveyed (89.47%) indicated that they wanted someone to “listen to their stories,” and 94.75% appreciated being invited for lunch or to a one-to-one meeting. The results of these surveys corroborated what I heard from leaders and individuals who were interviewed. When asked to define the term hospitality and how the church could provide radical hospitality, many of them used terms such as “making friends,” “belonging,” “becoming family.” The common theme when defining hospitality was creating a sense of belonging, providing emotional safety and allowing newcomers and refugees to find their place in the welcoming community. The data revealed that there was a great emphasis at The Peoples Church for transactional activities such as an ESL Bible Studies, an outing to the mall or to the zoo. However, several respondents also indicated that they wished the church had provided some emotional support and the opportunity to build genuine friendship. Balmer’s book *Meeting our Multifaith Neighbours* reminds us that Christian hospitality had to be inclusive “especially when attempting to build relationships with friends or neighbours who are not of faith or similar faith persuasion (Balmer 2006, 43). Below is a compilation of some of the responses we received on the hospitality.

The data collected presented several ways in which congregants could engage in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. These ranged from meeting the practical needs of newcomers and refugees to creating a welcoming community that takes into account the increasing diversity of the congregation. Overall, responses to the survey indicated that The Peoples Church was welcoming towards newcomers and refugees. When asked how welcoming The Peoples Church had been to newcomers and refugees, 50% of surveyed participants selected “Extremely welcoming” and 50% “Very welcoming.” When the same question was asked of The Peoples Church Newcomers Network, the “Extremely welcoming” responses increased to 83.7%.

1. Sharing resources and meeting practical needs

The analysis of the data collected highlighted the positive impact that current welcoming ministries had on newcomers and refugees. When newcomers were asked to describe how The Peoples Church was currently meeting the needs of newcomers or refugees, 60% of respondents noted that the greatest needs that were being met were English language training and social interaction. Emotional support, spiritual needs and a sense of belonging were noted by 40%. When it came to the provision of a safe community, only 20% made reference to community. When it came to financial aid, immigration support and trauma counselling, none of the survey participants felt that these needs were being met (see Figure 1). The data gathered from the survey of newcomers were consistent with the qualitative data obtained during the focus group with some residents of The Peoples House. When asked about their experience at The Peoples House, the

residents said unanimously that they felt like “family.” Some of the residents indicated that they wish this was not transitional housing as they really felt that the leaders and volunteers were going beyond the call of duty to make them feel safe, secure and part of the church family.

Meeting practical settlement related needs was described by many as a way to connect with newcomers and refugees by demonstrating that we care. It was considered to be a way to nurture the whole person, spirit, soul and body. One leader noted that sharing a meal in the name of Jesus Christ was a Sacrament. Some respondents noted that when we meet practical needs in the name of Jesus Christ, recipients would experience the love of God and divine care through our actions. During the interviews with leaders, many indicated that congregational engagement to address practical needs should be grounded in the desire to extend the love of God rather than a need to feel appreciated or needed. They felt that those volunteers who served out of a strong relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ were more welcoming of newcomers and refugees. The sentence “you cannot welcome if you are not secure and safe” was repeated by at least 6 people interviewed.

The research highlighted a variety of ways in which congregants could be engaging with newcomers and refugees. However, several respondents interviewed noted the need to ensure that “we were welcoming out of a heart of abundance.” “Welcoming the poor, strangers and displaced is the essence of the Body of Christ.” “Congregants needed to ensure that they were not serving without prayer and worship.” Participants noted that it was important for people to

experience the welcome of Christ so that they could extend it to others. “If you have not experienced the welcome of the Creator, it would be difficult to extend that same welcome to others,” declared one of the leaders interviewed. Serving newcomers and refugees out of a place of abundance meant that congregants were eager to share their resources with others because they were keenly aware of God’s provision of these resources. The types of support provided to newcomers and refugees were: English language learning (60%), social interaction (40%), spiritual needs (40%) but also mentorship (40%) and a sense of belonging (40%).

2. An invitation to do life together

The data collected revealed that 50% of the key informants interviewed believed that hospitality is not something that we do to or for newcomers but it is an invitation to “do life together.” When asked about her understanding of what hospitality is, one of the leaders stated: “Hospitality is about having the other becoming one with us.” Another stated that “hospitality was something that we did with newcomers and refugees and not to them.” Welcoming newcomers and refugees was said to be ongoing and not a one-time thing. It was not about performing a task or a welcome ministry but it was about learning and becoming together. Most leaders interviewed spoke about the fact that being hospitable towards newcomers and refugees began with feeling welcome by God. God offered hospitality to us first by giving us a church family and the Great Commission. He also offered us His grace to fulfill His calling upon our lives. When we are hospitable towards others, we are responding to what God has first done for us (Oden 2001,87). This was echoed by Pohl who said: "A life of

hospitality begins in worship, with a recognition of God's grace and generosity. Hospitality is not first a duty and responsibility; it is first a response of love and gratitude for God's love and welcome to us" (Pohl 1999, 172). Most key informants noted that by doing life together, we were extending hospitality with newcomers and refugees as a response to what God had done for us.

3. Creating a sense of belonging

Creating a sense of belonging was a recurring theme throughout the data collection process. When newcomers and refugees were asked what they desired the most as participants in the different programs offered by The Peoples Church Newcomers Fellowship, 50% noted a sense of belonging in their response. According to David C. Ratke, hospitality is "What Christianity has to offer in a pluralistic world." (Ratke 2012, 307). We are called to welcome all in the name of Jesus Christ. Some of the leaders interviewed noted the importance of training congregants to help them deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ. Participants noted that, as the congregation deepened its relationship with Jesus Christ and experienced the fullness of the love of God, the easier it would be for them to extend that love to others. This was well summarized by one of the leaders who said: "At the feet of Jesus Christ, we meet everyone." She went on to speak about Christ's ability to bring down the dividing walls that tend to result in an "us" versus "them" approach to congregational engagement. Participant noted that we were all one in the eyes of God, fully loved and fully accepted. That acceptance should be the cornerstone of how we engage with those who are new to our community.

4. Listening to each others' stories

Another finding was that welcoming newcomers and refugees was considered to be about getting to know the other. Participants noted that there could not be a single strategy because everyone was different. As one respondent noted: “we cannot have a cookie cutter strategy because newcomers and refugees come from so many different backgrounds and life circumstances.” Listening to each other’s stories created an environment where relationships could be established and strong bonds could be formed. It was the conversations back and forth between newcomers and congregants that created the path to deeper connections. There was an acknowledgement among all participants of the power of stories in creating a sense of community.

Many newcomers, especially refugees, had experienced rejection and trauma. One leader interviewed reminded me that newcomers and refugees were often seen as people without names and stories. In fact, many of them felt the need to change their names for fear of persecution or ridicule or to make it easier for people to pronounce them. Several of the leaders interviewed also revealed that newcomers’ involvement with the congregation, especially in life groups, could provide the community that they needed to feel valued. Interviewed leaders called for the creation of opportunities, space and time for people to exchange stories. Exchanging stories would allow people to know one another at a much deeper level. As relationships were formed and deepened, it became easier to identify areas in the community where newcomers and refugees could serve and contribute.

5. Helping people find their place

One of the themes that was highlighted in the data collected was that, for newcomers and refugees to feel welcome, they would need to find their place in the church family. One of the concerns raised by ministry leaders and volunteers was the need to ensure that people were not just welcome into a community and left to fend for themselves. We need to make sure that they are also supported in the pursuit of their dreams. Several key leaders interviewed spoke about the need to give people the opportunity to serve. As one of the leaders said: “Serving is a power dynamic. To minimize the power imbalance, we need to give newcomers and refugees the opportunity to serve so that they don’t feel needy and helpless.” One of our long-time congregants deplored the fact that since returning home as a missionary, she had not been able to find her place at the church. As a result, she had found it challenging to invite others to join. “How can I invite others to join us and feel at home in our church community if I do not feel connected myself?” She asked rhetorically in response to one of my interview questions. She felt that she could not invite someone into something that she did not feel a part of. This type of feeling was also noted by several newcomers. In response to the survey question related to the way the church could demonstrate hospitality with newcomers and refugees, 50% indicated that “offering access to simple volunteer opportunities for newcomers” would be a great idea. Congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees should not be limited to “receiving ministry” or “hosting them in our living rooms.” Participants felt that it had to include “inviting people to join in, breaking down the dividing walls that are preventing them to feel

part of our community and inviting them to provide full input for integration.”

One of the respondents interjected: “Are we ready for this?” She was referring to the challenge that sharing power could present for some long-term serving members of the congregation. Helping people find their place is a suggestion that is congruent with our *Make Us One* initiative, a leadership initiative that is looking for ways to identify and dismantle any trace of systemic racism in our church. Since 2020, our church had been on a journey to speak out about the evil of racism in our society. Some of the people interviewed mentioned the need to look at congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees with a diversity and anti-racism lens.

6. Creating a safe space

One of the key findings in both our interviews, surveys and focus group was the need to create a safe space for both newcomers and refugees and the congregation at large. Participants noted that members of the congregation needed to feel safe as they welcome strangers into their space. Newcomers and refugees needed to feel safe as they attempted to navigate the welcoming opportunities presented by members of The Peoples Church. Safe space was understood to be both physical and emotional. In her book, *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race*, Reni Eddo-Lodge describes a structural racism that made it hard for young black schoolboys to succeed in England like their white counterparts. She defined structural racism as “dozens, or hundreds, or thousands of people with the same biases joining together to make up one organization, and acting accordingly... Structural is often the only way to capture what goes

unnoticed – the silently raised eyebrows, the implicit biases, snap judgements made on perceptions of competency” (Eddo-Lodge 2017, 64).

One of the key factors identified in creating a safe space was trust. Several informants mentioned the need to trust the Lord to be able: 1) to discern what is being said by newcomers and refugees when they interact with the congregation; 2) to understand where the other person was coming from; 3) to avoid any offense as a result of limited or lack of intercultural competency; 4) to address any power imbalance that may exist as a result of newcomers feeling in position of inferiority in their newly developed relationship with congregants; and 5) to receive the grace necessary to speak the truth in love and to not be afraid of courageous conversations. Talking about this form of radical hospitality, Henri Nouwen said:

Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines. (Nouwen 1975, 71)

This is echoed by Gaddy who describes hospitality as “creating a free, friendly, safe environment into which people are invited so that we can learn to know them and become friends with them” (Gaddy 2004, 22). For participants, hospitality was not just a matter of inviting newcomers and refugees into our physical spaces, it was also about holding an emotional space where they could be vulnerable and still be accepted, where they could be wrong and not be ridiculed, where they could just be – as one of the respondents so rightfully said. They spoke about being open to alternate voices and worldviews and allowing these voices to be expressed, even if they may challenge our current paradigms.

7. Inviting people into a journey of learning and becoming

A metaphor that one of the respondents used to describe hospitality with newcomers and refugees was “learning to swim in the ocean.” She used this metaphor to describe the degree of engagement in hospitality of an individual, acknowledging that it was all a matter of degree. Congregational engagement in this context referred to the process of getting members of the congregation to move “from the deck to the shores and from shallow waters unto the deep.” Based on this ocean metaphor, the invitation to engagement with newcomers and refugees could be likened to that of Peter in Matthew 14:28-29 who was asked by Jesus to walk on the water toward him. The data obtained through stories points to the diversity of responses to the call to hospitality. Many respondents acknowledged the fact that we were all invited to serve and to share but we were not all serving in the same way. God seemed to be leading everyone in their own welcoming journey. To continue using the ocean metaphor to describe congregational engagement, one respondent declared in one of the interviews: “Deep-dive is not for everyone. Many people prefer to live their lives ‘from the shore.’”

8. Creating an inclusive community

A recurring theme throughout the data collection process was the inclusive nature of the welcoming ministries of The Peoples Church. Through participant observations, I noted that the actions of the volunteers and leaders towards newcomers and refugees were perceived to be welcoming and inclusive. Newcomers and refugees were perceived to be equally served and supported

regardless of their race, sexual orientation or beliefs. The Newcomers' Fellowship was able to provide an inclusive community that embraced people as they came and freely shared resources to meet emerging needs. This could not be said of the rest of the congregation. After the brutal murder of George Floyd in the hand of a white police officer, two black members of the congregation, relatively new to the country, approached me, in two separate incidents, to express their disappointments at the reactions of some of their life group members when she expressed her appreciation for the "Black Lives Matters" movement bringing to the surface the systemic racism that Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) often faced. One person was considered "too negative" and the other was considered "too divisive" and "too confrontational." According to Ijeoma Oluo, "the rise of voices of colour, coupled with the widespread dissemination of video proof of brutality and injustice against people of colour, has brought the urgency of racism in America to the forefront of all our consciousness" (Oluo 2018, 5). Some of the respondent suggested that effective congregational engagement in hospitality should also explore the current racial landscape and not shy away from addressing social injustices that have shaped our society and may have trickled down into our church.

It was also suggested that the issue of race could also be extended to the issue of faith. As people of different faith are welcome and cared for, they may eventually inquire about or respond to the gospel. However, we do not ask congregants to use hospitality for evangelism but rather we exhort them to be ready to give a reason for the hope that we have within us with gentleness and

respect (1 Peter 3: 15). As our congregants get involved in “doing life together” with newcomers and refugees through hospitality, there would be opportunities for them to “witness to our hope in Jesus with our Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim friends, among others” (Han et al. 2012, 13-14). In that sense, we could say that creating an inclusive community does not negate the preaching of the Gospel. On the contrary, it creates an environment of trust, mutual respect and mutual benefit which may eventually lead to opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Throughout my research, I was able to observe this phenomenon as I witnessed the salvation and water baptism of some of our newcomers and refugees.

Interpretation and Outcomes

The main outcome of this research was to be the development of a congregational engagement framework including some key principles that would facilitate engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The key themes identified in the findings seemed to support that a great indicator of congregational engagement in hospitality would be the degree to which members of the congregation were able to create a safe and inclusive space where everyone could find a sense of belonging, opportunities to express their God-given gifts and a place where everyone could all contribute. This sentiment was very well summarized in the response of one of the newcomers who responded to the survey. When asked what her greatest need was at the moment to feel welcome at The Peoples Church, she wrote: “maybe not be treated as someone vulnerable in need of help, instead a true friend, an equal.” This is a sentiment that was echoed during the focus group I held with residents of The Peoples House as well as

volunteers who responded to the survey. This means that any effective ministry model to be developed should be based on a common understanding of hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The model that I proposed could be used in our ministry planning and discernment process to: 1) offer appropriate ministry activities; 2) prioritize ministry actions and 3) lead people towards increased ministry involvement. It also entailed shifting the ministry perspective from doing things to people to doing things with people. Using open-ended questions in our interviews provided some great insights into the way hospitality with newcomers and refugees was currently understood and practiced. Leaders interviewed spoke about the importance of creating a safe space and developing a sense of belonging. However, a few spoke about other aspects of hospitality such as the sharing of power and cross-cultural transformational leadership to nurture the development of newcomers' potential. Looking at A. Maslow's hierarchical theory of needs, it was possible to see that current outreach to newcomers tended to be limited to the first two levels of the pyramid. Successful congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees should result in the development of relationships that would help newcomers reach self-actualization and, at a minimum, help them experience love, friendship and a sense of belonging. The proposed model was derived from the main themes and congregational gaps identified by the participants. If implemented, the proposed ministry model and related key principles could help the congregation feel more empowered to engage with newcomers and refugees in a more genuine and sustainable fashion. The proposed model.



Figure 4. Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943)

LEAP: A Congregational Engagement Ministry Model

The research findings highlighted a number of principles that would support the implementation of a congregational engagement framework in hospitality. LEAP is a practical ministry model that I have developed, based on these principles, to facilitate a safe and inclusive environment where ALL congregants, whether newcomers, landed immigrants or Canadian born, would find a place where they belong so that they can all contribute to the diverse tapestry of the Body of Christ, with “every joint supplying” (Ephesians 4:16). This ministry model provides a congregational engagement framework also based on Paul’s reminder in Ephesians 4 that “God makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.” The proposed ministry model emerging from my research is a cross-cultural congregational engagement framework includes four key components under the acronym LEAP:

Learn → Engage → Assess → Participate.

The LEAP framework is to be reiterative to ensure that everyone could participate regardless of their level of intercultural competence.

Step 1: Learn

The first step is providing congregants with intercultural development opportunities, including diversity training. At this stage, congregant would be encouraged to obtain their Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). David Livermore recommends that one obtains a cultural intelligence quotient (CQ) which measures the ability to effectively reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful” (Livermore 2009, 13). The higher our CQ, the more we are able to express love to those that are different from us. Training could also include topics such as forced migration, cross-cultural pastoral care, the Canadian immigration system, anti-racism, cross-cultural ministry framework, building bridges with ethnic communities or understanding the refugee crisis. This aspect of the model would address some of the perceived needs like the creation of safe spaces, listening to stories and creating an inclusive community. In *So You Want to Talk About Race*, Oluo addresses head-on some of the issues that may prevent us from creating a truly inclusive community. She presents a number of definitions and concepts that people need to understand when working at the intersection of culture, race, ethnicity and complex systems (Oluo 2018). This training could be provided as part of our discipleship courses or as part of our *Make Us One* initiative, designed to review any systemic bias that may be present in our church community. The implementation of this training is scheduled for September 2022.

Step 2: Engage

The 2nd stage intentionally engages newcomers. Miles McPherson spoke of being educated about “the other” and going into an “Otherhood” to experience how it felt to find oneself in a totally unfamiliar environment. This would address the issue of power. Engaging with people from different faith backgrounds would also provide a great opportunity to apply what we have learned. Congregants would be encouraged to build cross-cultural friendships. They would also be invited to serve in our current welcoming ministries that offer opportunities to engage with newcomers and refugees such as The Peoples Newcomers Network or The Peoples House. This would address the need for belonging raised by newcomers.

Step 3: Assess

The 3rd stage assesses how comfortable we are interacting with people of another race or culture at a deeper level. At this stage, a congregant looks into the issue of fear of “the other.” This stage will include a self-assessment of how well congregants are doing in establishing strong relationships with people of different backgrounds.

Step 4: Participate

“Train me, equip me, ask me, I am in!” This was a statement made by one of leaders who was born in Canada to describe a state of mind believed to be prevalent within our congregation. She described herself as a very open and curious individual but acknowledged that she had not been as involved in the

development of deep friendships with newcomers because of “her fear to offend.” After learning, engaging and assessing, people are better equipped and more confident to fully participate in our church community. At a minimum, they feel a sense of belonging to a community of people who are interested in doing life together; which is congruent with our mission of “growing the Body of Christ for God’s global mission.”

You will find below a visual representation of the LEAP framework which can be used for staff training. The 8 principles identified in the research findings will also be included in the training.



Figure 5. LEAP Ministry Framework

The LEAP framework would force us to be more intentional about our congregational engagement strategies. Too often our hospitality with newcomers and refugees has been reduced to a series of transactional programs exclusively geared towards meeting the physical needs of newcomers and “orienting them” to the Canadian cultural landscape. We had limited our engagement to helping

“them” get a job, find housing, access health care or schools for their children, learn English or be acquainted to the local culture and the “Canadian way” of doing things. Even though these activities are critically important, many newcomers still felt alone and rejected by the church community. This feeling was not due to a lack of appreciation of the level of hospitality offered. It could have been because what newcomers need, more than anything else, is a place to belong. Figure 6 presents key principles that would guide the implementation of the framework. These principles were derived from our key themes.



Figure 6. Principles for congregational engagement with newcomers

These principles could be used to guide ministry decisions pertaining to newcomers and refugees. They could also be used to evaluate how well we are

connecting with newcomers and refugees. This research demonstrated that there is value in meeting the physical needs of newcomers and refugees. However, effective engagement with the migrants and displaced needs to go beyond food, housing and education. We need to create spaces where they belong; where they could be anchored to; where they can recover the feeling of belonging that has been lost in migration. They need help with finding a way back to their journey of self-actualization.

In my leadership praxis in chapter 3, I mentioned that serving as a leader in a multicultural congregation in a multicultural city such as Toronto meant managing diversity and engaging in cross-cultural evangelism and social justice. This research project is a great testing ground for cross-cultural transformational leadership. If we start with the premise that leadership is influence and that everyone has the potential to exert influence on others, we can see how a ministry model based on the LEAP framework could lead to effective congregational engagement in hospitality. As I reflect on my ministry context and the findings of my research project, I am discovering a common thread between my calling as a cross-cultural transformation leader, my ministry context in a multicultural church setting as Congregational Life Pastor at The People Church, our church mission to “grow the Body of Christ for God’s global mission,” and the need to create a place where newcomers and refugees would develop a sense of belonging. That common thread points to God’s invitation to honor that which we have in common, the presence of God’s image in every person we encounter. This would require transformational leadership. Effective congregational engagement would

require that we empower members of our congregation to see people through God's eyes and to become more intentional about inviting people to join our community and to contribute in a manner that honours God's plans and purposes for their lives. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, doing ministry and leading from this place requires a prayerful commitment to obedience and trust in God's ability to move us from the very divisive "us versus-them mentality" to a more united "we can do this together."

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Successful integration and settlement of newcomers and refugees is often the result of multiple factors. In “Integrating Immigrants into the Life of Canadian Urban Christian Congregations: Findings from a National Survey,” Janzen, Chapman and Watson describe the way in which Canadian churches are addressing cultural diversity (Janzen et al. 2012). This research attempted to take the analysis a little further within the four walls of The Peoples Church to identify elements which should be included in effective ministry models, for the provision of support and hospitality with newcomers and refugees.

Conclusions

The purpose of this research project was to identify effective strategies, structures and processes used by a congregation to provide hospitality to newcomers and refugees. Some of the findings derived from interviews and focus groups with key informants helped us to identify key principles and practices to inform a model for hospitality ministries engaging newcomers and refugees. The research findings included a set of principles that could be tied to other ministry objectives such as evangelism and discipleship. These research findings will greatly contribute to enhancing The Peoples Church engagement with newcomers and refugees and provide a ministry model that could be used by other churches to welcome and support refugees and newcomers to Canada.

The innovative ministry model identified in this research will help mobilize and engage the congregation in facilitating the daily integration of refugees not only into the Christian community but also into the community at large. The LEAP framework will change the way congregants are encouraged to engage with newcomers and refugees and help everyone move away from the “us” versus “them” dichotomy. By learning and acquiring intercultural competence, we will be equipping our members with tools that could help them develop long-term relationships with newcomers and refugees.

As a multicultural and multiethnic church, The Peoples Church is a community that reflects the diversity of the Body of Christ and that, hopefully, reveals the hidden glory of the God that we worship. The application of this congregational engagement framework to all our ministry activities and programs should help those who have left, fled or lost their homes and their countries, losing their identity in the process, find another place they can call home, a place with new friends, a place where they can serve, a place where they can belong again

In my practical theology and philosophy of Christian leadership, I made reference to the great opportunity that I had, as Congregational Life Pastor at The Peoples Church, to lead a team of pastors, lay leaders and members into the deployment of a more welcoming culture. This would require the implementation of a culture change process that would empower us to live out our shared mandate of being “a movement of gospel-centered and globally engaged Christians.” As I carry out this leadership mandate, I am driven by one of my core beliefs that leadership is influence. As a cross-cultural transformational leader, I see my

current role as one of equipping our members to become people of influence who are engaged both locally and globally in the development of the potential of others. I see my role as one that is focused on inspiring our congregation to serve beyond their perceived talents and skills. I would like to inspire our congregation to represent Christ in our hospitality and in our service, empowering everyone, especially newcomers and refugees, to express their God-given gifts and talents in ways that not only transform them but also transform our community.

Implications

The focus of this research project was to identify a ministry model for effective congregation engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. What I discovered, through this research project, was that the development of an innovative model of congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers would require that we ask ourselves a different set of questions:

- ➔ How can we become a more welcoming community *with* newcomers and refugees rather than *to* newcomers and refugees?
- ➔ How can we allow our understanding of hospitality towards strangers to be shaped by the way we engage with newcomers and refugees?
- ➔ How can we shift our understanding of welcoming newcomers and refugees from a program or specialized ministry that only certain people are called to do, to a core component of the life of a gospel-centered and globally engaged church such as The Peoples Church?

- ➔ How can congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees become the core principle in every ministry of our church?
- ➔ What elements should we included in a training program for volunteers?
- ➔ How could we continue to include the voices of all program participants in formulating ministry models? The adage, “nothing about us without us” is one of the greatest findings of this research project.

This research highlighted key principles to consider in mobilizing our congregation to live out our vision to be a globally engaged church. These include:

- ⇒ Welcoming others as we have been welcomed
- ⇒ Making the commitment to care in a culturally responsive fashion
- ⇒ Practicing incarnational presence as we engage with one another
- ⇒ Making sure that there is a space for everyone at the table

Becoming a welcoming community requires both practical help and incarnational presence. According to Pohl, Christian hospitality is “distinctive because of its emphasis on including the poor and neediest, the ones who could not return the favour” (Pohl 1999, 6). We need to provide activities that would allow people to become familiar with one another, to connect in a low-risk environment and to form genuine friendships with newcomers and refugees. We need to train people on how to be a more inclusive community. This supports our *Make Us One* Initiative, a congregational change initiative that we began in 2020 to recognize and appreciate the beauty and rich diversity of our congregation and to seek the Holy Spirit’s transformation in our lives to keep us united in Christ. As we seek to build a ministry model that would bring the congregation into effective

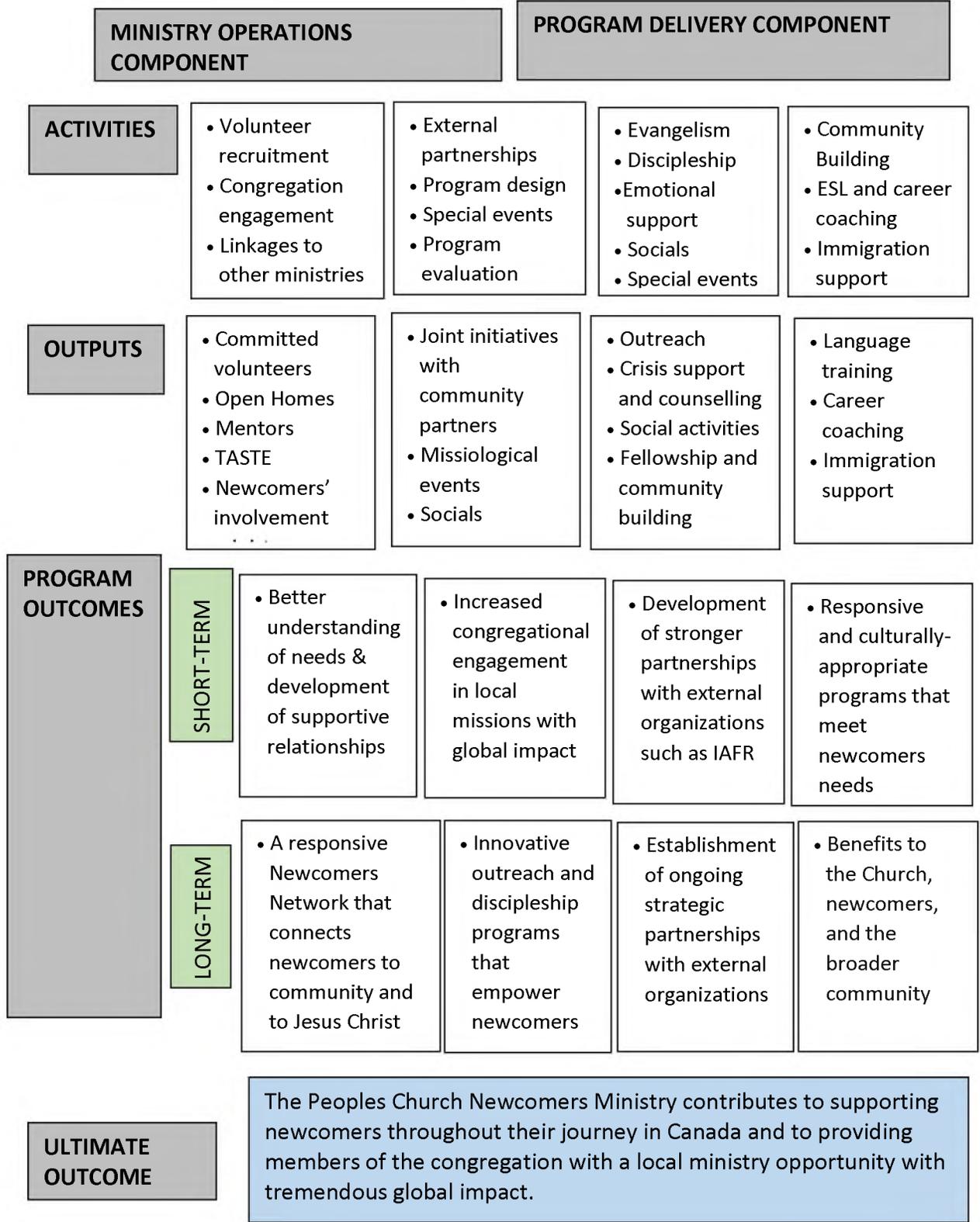
engagement with newcomers and refugees, we echo Jesus's prayer in John 17 that the Father would make us one, not only with each other, but also with him.

God's ultimate call to the church is to engage with newcomers and refugees in a way that reveals his heart of compassion for vulnerable people. It is also a demonstration of his desires for his creation to live in harmony with one another. It is in the acknowledgement of his plan for unity in diversity that we will see his perfect plan of adoption into the family of God be established. The proposed LEAP ministry framework will help our congregation navigate the multicultural landscape by increasing their intercultural competency and by taking the risk to engage in each other's world in a more authentic fashion. This process has to be iterative: Learn, Engage, Assess, Participate, then repeat.

As I conclude my research portfolio, I am humbled by the realization of how far-reaching God's hand had been in guiding me throughout my DMin endeavour. I am amazed to see how God led me to choose my particular field research project three years before appointing me as Congregational Life Pastor at The Peoples Church. I now realize that my decision to pursue a Doctor of Ministry had implications well beyond academic scholarship. I am also amazed to discover how my own personal journey from a 13-year-old young African woman with an epiphany to a cross-cultural transformational leader led me to be welcomed and planted into one of the oldest multicultural churches in Canada. I hope to use this ministry model to live out my leadership praxis by helping to create a community where individuals who feel uprooted and disconnected could re-establish roots and form new life-giving identities, to the Glory of God.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Newcomers Ministry Logic Model



APPENDIX B: Interview Questions

Q1: What is your definition of hospitality?

Q1.a) How would you define hospitality in the context of congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees?

Q2: What is your understanding of newcomers' needs?

Q2.a) Have you been directly involved with welcoming a newcomer or refugee?

Q2.b) If so, please describe your experience

Q3: What can the church do to get more people involved in welcoming newcomers and refugees?

Q4: What do you see as obstacles to having more congregational engagement with hospitality with newcomers and refugees?

Q5: How can we train the congregation to be more welcoming?

APPENDIX C: Information Letter

Regarding Research conducted at The Peoples Church by Solange Belluz, D Min
Student at Tyndale University on the following subject:

*Development of an Innovative Model for Congregational Engagement in
Hospitality with Newcomers to Canada*

and request for your consent to participate in this study.

Demographic changes in Canada have occurred as a result of an aging population and increasing levels of immigration. Canadian cities such as Toronto are welcoming daily a large number of newcomers looking for opportunities to improve their living conditions, to study or simply to contribute their skills to the Canadian economy. With increasing world conflicts and the resulting refugee crisis around the world, community-based organizations such as churches have found it necessary to become more responsive to the needs of refugees.

The Peoples Church is committed to serving locally in the multicultural city of Toronto and to demonstrating Christ's love, welcoming strangers on their journey to Canada. The Peoples Church Newcomers Network (PCNN) is a ministry of The Peoples Church that uses a holistic approach to meeting the needs of newcomers, built on a solid foundation of evangelism, social justice and compassion. In addition to settlement-related services, the ministry strives to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of newcomers and ensure a smooth transition into the Canadian society and an active participation into the Christian community. The Peoples Church also runs a refugee shelter, created in response to the need for the church to provide a solution to the current refugee crisis. The Peoples House offers a safe home for approximately 8-14 refugees at a time who would otherwise have no safe place to stay in Toronto.

The purpose of this research project is to identify innovative strategies to mobilize and engage the congregation in hospitality with newcomers and refugees. The research will evaluate the two sides of the hospitality equation: On one hand, we will need to engage newcomers and refugees to identify hospitality ideas with the greatest impact on them, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds and ages. On the other hands, we want to capture the ministry models and hospitality ideas used by volunteers and lay leaders to get a better sense of the processes and strategies that help the congregation connect with and welcome newcomers and refugees.

Some of the findings and results that we hope to obtain through interviews and focus groups with key informants will help us answer the following questions: What are we doing well in the area of congregational support to newcomers and

refugees? What could we do to improve hospitality with newcomers and refugees? What type of support newcomers and refugees wished they had received from the congregation? How could we provide better support to our volunteers to ensure congregational engagement? The answers to these questions will provide the analytical framework to help us identify options for congregational hospitality.

To assist me with the questions above, I will collect data through interviews of newcomers, refugees, lay leaders and volunteers. I will also conduct an extensive literature review on Christian hospitality and strategies used by churches to support newcomers. This research will be conducted as part of my pastoral role as Congregational Life Pastor at The Peoples Church and under the supervision of my Research Advisors, Dr. Brian Craig and Dr. Narry Santos, DMin Leadership Track Coordinator: Dr. Michael Krause, and Program Director, Dr. Mark Chapman in the Doctor of Ministry Department at Tyndale University.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research by answering a short questionnaire or joining one of my focus groups between November and December 2021. Your participation is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. The information you provide will be aggregated for integration into my final doctoral research portfolio to be completed in 2022.

You will be invited to share as much as you feel comfortable. Confidentiality of all information shared will be guaranteed as all data will be stored in a password-protected folder. We will do our best to protect your anonymity as a participant and you will be free to opt-out of the study at any time without consequence. You are not waiving any legal rights by choosing to participate in this research study.

This study will conform to all the requirements of Canadian ethical guidelines as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and the *Tyndale Research Ethics Policy Manual*. Should you have any questions, feel free to communicate with me directly by email at _____ (I am the only person who can access this email account). You may also direct any questions or concerns about the ethical nature of this study to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at Tyndale University at _____

Thank you for considering participation in this study as we work together to enhance The Peoples Church's congregational engagement with newcomers and refugees.

Solange Belluz
Principal researcher
DMin Student

APPENDIX D: Research Study Consent Form - Refugees

Congregational Engagement in Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

Name (please print):

1. I have read the attached document outlining the purpose and details of this research project and have had an opportunity to ask any relative questions.
2. I understand that there are no known risks in participating in this project. However, I understand that my participation in this research is completely voluntary and I may withdraw from this process at any time for any reason by notifying the researcher. I am not waiving any legal rights by participating in this study.
3. I understand that I will be participating in a research project that seeks to identify strategies and actions to facilitate congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees and that my comments will contribute to the development of options and possible ministry opportunities.
4. I understand that my name will not be used in any public presentation of this research. All information given, conversations recorded and comments made will only be communicated publicly as aggregate data. No individuals will be identified unless specific permission to do so is given.
5. I understand that the researcher has informed other focus group participants, if applicable, that information shared within the group should be kept confidential.
6. I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the implementation of the suggestions or recommendations gathered during her research and that the research project will only identify best practices which may be shared with the senior leadership of The Peoples Church, other churches and settlement agencies.
7. I understand that I may be asked to participate in a focus group, to share my story and my experience of migration and to provide feedback on the ministry

and support I have received from The Peoples Church and the congregation at large. Such information will not be shared publicly without my explicit consent.

8. I understand that my ESL Instructors, where applicable, will be also be interviewed to provide information and feedback about participation in the different programs offered through The Peoples Church Newcomers Network.
9. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided verbally or in writing now and in the future. However, the research project report and the data collected during this research may also be published in professional journals or presented at conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality.
10. I understand that I may have access to the full research project report or summary of findings.
11. I understand that in spite of the researcher's involvement in the congregation and the size of the PCNN, the researcher will ensure complete anonymity of the information collected and that protocols will be in place to protect my privacy and to maintain confidentiality.
12. I understand that any questions that I may have regarding this research project may be directed to Solange Belluz at _____, Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the Tyndale Research Ethics Board at reb@tyndale.ca.

I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research project:

- YES**
- NO**

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX E: Research Study Consent Form – Lay Leaders

Congregational Engagement in Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

Name (please print):

1. I have read the attached document outlining the purpose and details of this research project and have had an opportunity to ask any relative questions.
2. I understand that there are no known risks in participating in this project. However, I understand that my participation in this research is completely voluntary and I may withdraw from this process at any time for any reason without consequence by notifying the researcher. I am not waiving any legal rights by participating in this study.
3. I understand that I will be participating in a research project that seeks to identify strategies for congregational engagement in hospitality with newcomers and refugees and that my comments will contribute to the development of options and possible ministry opportunities.
4. I understand that my name will not be used in any public presentation of this research. All information given, conversations recorded and comments made will only be communicated publicly as aggregate data. No individuals will be identified unless specific permission to do so is given.
5. I understand that the researcher has informed other focus group participants, if applicable, that information shared within the group should be kept confidential.
6. I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee the implementation of the suggestions and recommendations gathered during her research but will only identify best practices which may be shared with the senior leadership of The Peoples Church, other churches and settlement agencies.

7. I understand that I may be asked to participate in a focus group, to share my experience as a volunteer or lay leader at The Peoples Church. Such information will not be shared publicly without my explicit consent.
8. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided verbally or in writing now and in the future. The research project report and the data collected during this research may also be published in professional journals or presented at conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality.
9. I understand that I may have access to the full research project report or summary of findings.
10. I understand that in spite of the researcher's involvement in the congregation and the size of the pool of volunteers involved with The Peoples Church, the researcher will ensure complete anonymity of the information collected and that protocols will be in place to protect my privacy and to maintain confidentiality.
11. I understand that any questions that I may have regarding this research project may be directed to Solange Belluz at _____. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the Tyndale Research Ethics Board at reb@tyndale.ca.

I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research project:

YES

NO

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX F: Newcomers Survey

Evaluating Congregant Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

1. Describe your experience at The Peoples Church - In which particular area have you been involved?

- ESL Classes - ESL Bible Study
- English Conversation Group
- International Student Ministry
- Refugee House
- Receiving mentoring
- Employment Cafe
- Health Fair
- Immigration counseling - Legal Clinic
- Cultural Fellowship
- Kitchen - Food Preparation
- Special Events (Apple Picking, AGO Visit, etc.)
- Children's Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Young Adults Ministry
- Life Groups

2. How many times per week do you participate in a church activity or in a program offered by The Peoples Newcomers Network?

- Several times each week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Every 3 months
- Once a year
- Very irregularly

3. How welcoming do you think The Peoples Church is towards newcomers and refugees?

- Extremely welcoming
- Very welcoming
- Somewhat welcoming
- Not so welcoming
- Not at all welcoming

4. More particularly, how welcoming is The Peoples Church Newcomers Network towards newcomers and refugees?

- Extremely welcoming
- Very welcoming
- Somewhat welcoming
- Not so welcoming
- Not at all welcoming

5. Based on your observation and experience, what newcomers and refugees' needs are being currently met by The Peoples Church Newcomers Network/Ministry?

- Academic support
- English Language learning
- Social interaction
- Emotional support
- Spiritual needs
- Mentorship
- Financial aid
- Immigration support
- Trauma counselling
- A sense of belonging
- A safe community
- Other

6. How can The Peoples Church demonstrate radical hospitality with newcomers and refugees? What do you think newcomers and refugees would appreciate based on your experience and observation?

- Being intentional about creating safe spaces where members can meet with strangers
- Listening to their voices and learn their stories
- Praying for their needs
- Demonstrating love and compassion in tangible ways
- Offering a tour of the city or other similar activity to help newcomers and refugees become familiar with the environment
- Communicating with them regularly through email or a newsletter
- Inviting newcomers or refugees to share lunch or a one-to-one meeting
- Offering to make a house visit (if culturally appropriate)
- Hosting seasonal newcomers' gatherings
- Welcoming newcomers and refugees into low-commitment small groups
- Offering access to simple volunteer opportunities for newcomers
- Establishing other ways to engage newcomers

- Other
- I don't know

7. As a newcomer to Canada, what type of hospitality and support have YOU personally received from a member of The Peoples Church, whether now, most recently or in the past?

- I was taken out shopping
- I was invited to a sporting or entertainment event
- I was brought to church or taught the Word of God
- I was Invited to someone's home
- I was mentored
- I received trauma counselling
- I was helped in finding long-term housing
- I was taken out for coffee, lunch or dinner
- I was Invited to a place of work or business
- I received intercultural training
- I was invited to some family special events (Thanksgiving or Christmas)
- I was accompanied them to my refugee or PR hearing
- I was taken to a vacation or retreat
- I was invited to live with a member of The Peoples Church
- I was treated like a member of the family and felt like I belonged
- Other
- I am NOT currently involved with members of The Peoples Church

8. What is your greatest need right now to feel welcome at The Peoples Church or in Canada?

9. What can The Peoples Church do to engage an increasing number of members of the congregation into active hospitality with newcomers and refugees? Please provide as many innovative ideas as possible.

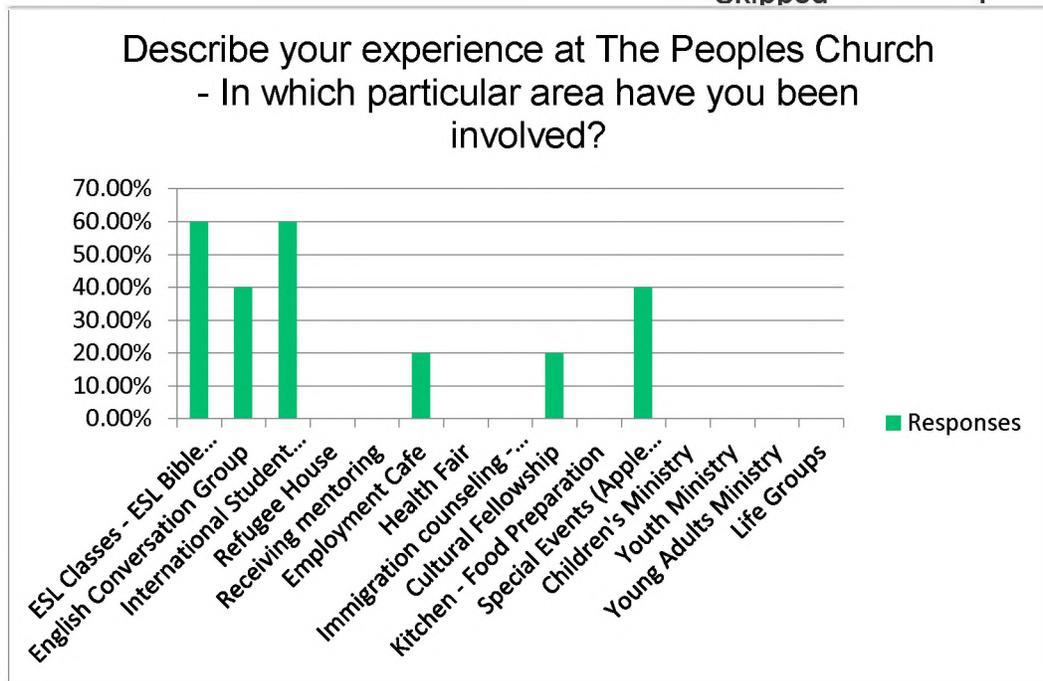
10. What other information would you like to share with me about your experience at The Peoples Church which may help the church connect with and welcome newcomers and refugees well?

APPENDIX G: Newcomers Survey Results

Evaluating Congregant Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

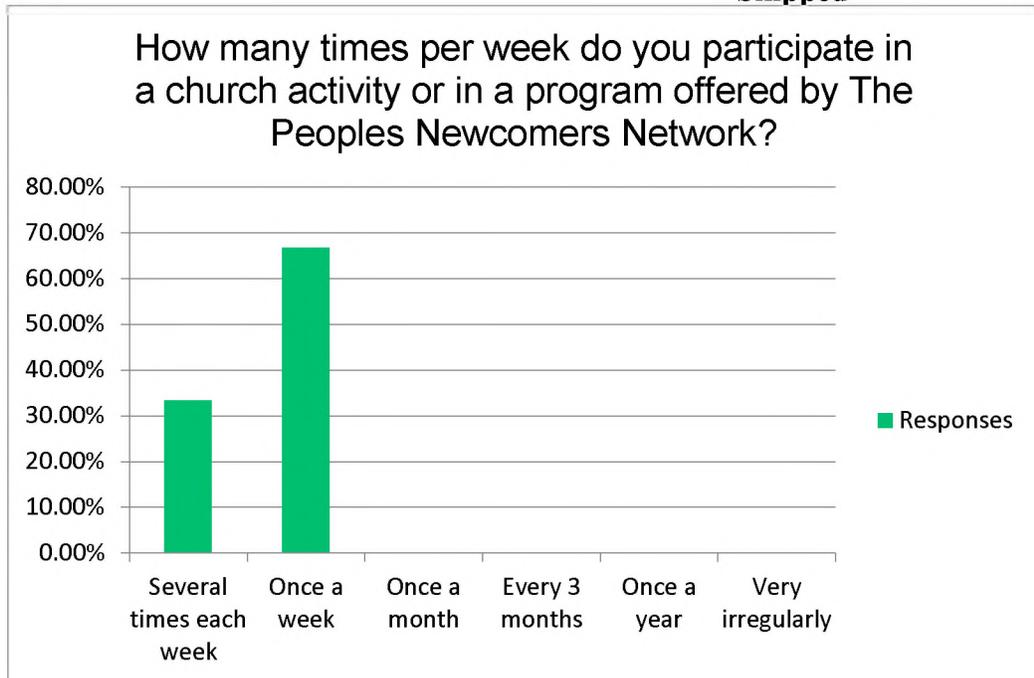
1. Describe your experience at The Peoples Church - In which particular area have you been involved?

Answer Choices	Responses
ESL Classes - ESL Bible Study	60.00% 3
English Conversation Group	40.00% 2
International Student Ministry	60.00% 3
Refugee House	0.00% 0
Receiving mentoring	0.00% 0
Employment Cafe	20.00% 1
Health Fair	0.00% 0
Immigration counseling - Legal Clinic	0.00% 0
Cultural Fellowship	20.00% 1
Kitchen - Food Preparation	0.00% 0
Special Events (Apple Picking, AGO Visit, etc.)	40.00% 2
Children's Ministry	0.00% 0
Youth Ministry	0.00% 0
Young Adults Ministry	0.00% 0
Life Groups	0.00% 0
	Answered 5
	Skipped 1



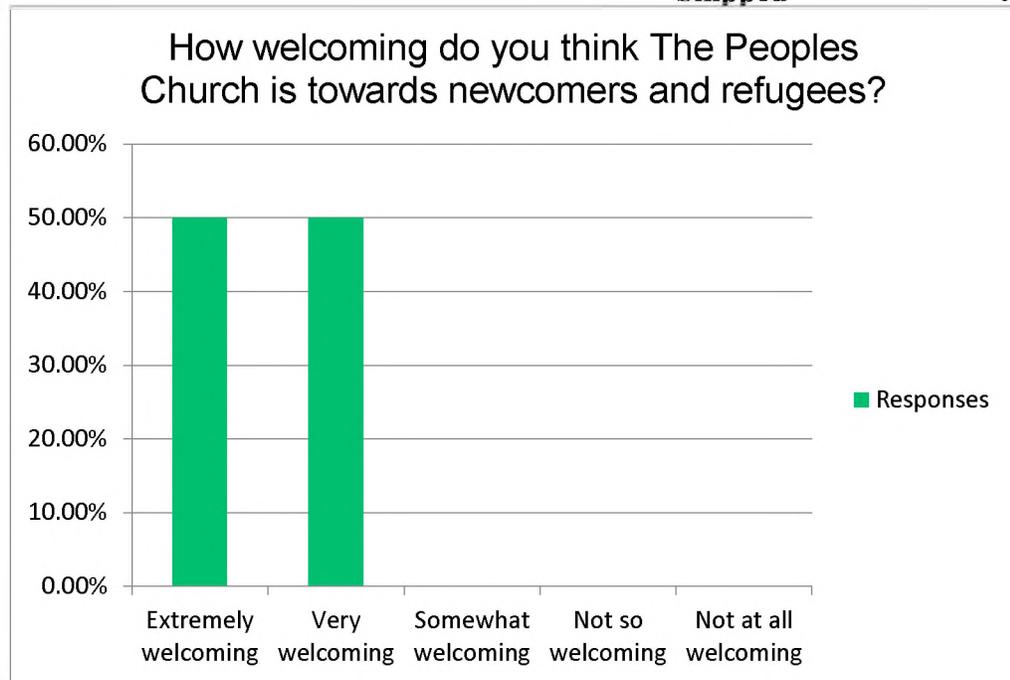
Q2: How many times per week do you participate in a church activity or in a program offered by The Peoples Newcomers Network?

Answer Choices	Responses
Several times each week	33.33% 2
Once a week	66.67% 4
Once a month	0.00% 0
Every 3 months	0.00% 0
Once a year	0.00% 0
Very irregularly	0.00% 0
Answered	6
Skipped	0



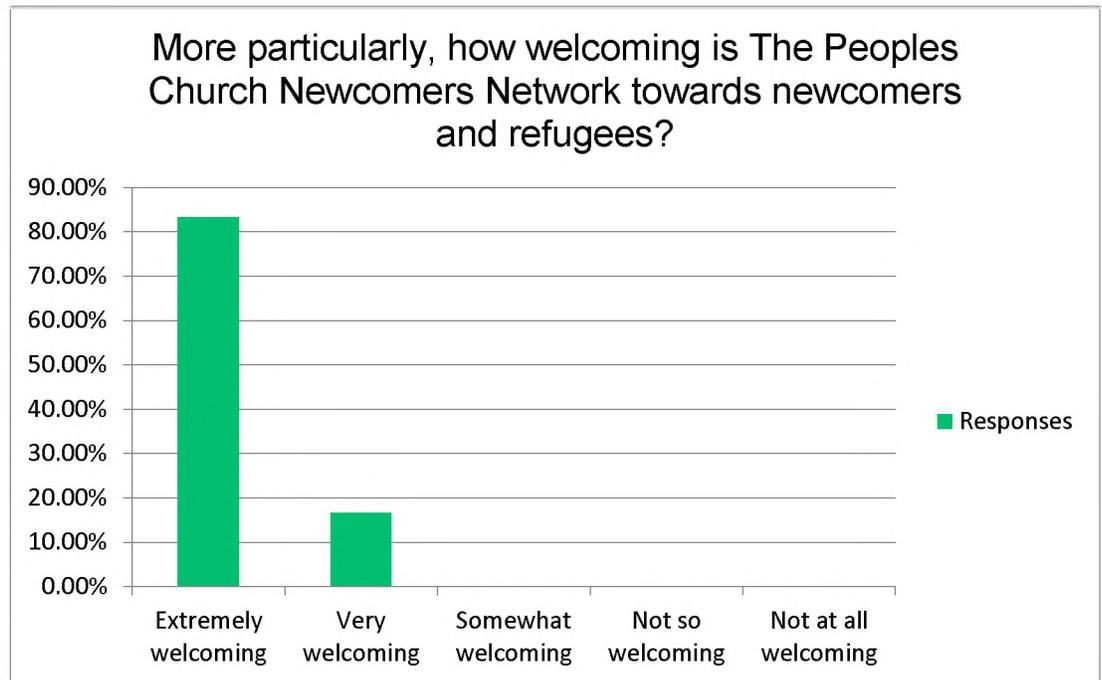
Q3: How welcoming do you think The Peoples Church is towards newcomers and refugees?

Answer Choices	Responses
Extremely welcoming	50.00% 3
Very welcoming	50.00% 3
Somewhat welcoming	0.00% 0
Not so welcoming	0.00% 0
Not at all welcoming	0.00% 0
Answered 6	
Skipped 0	



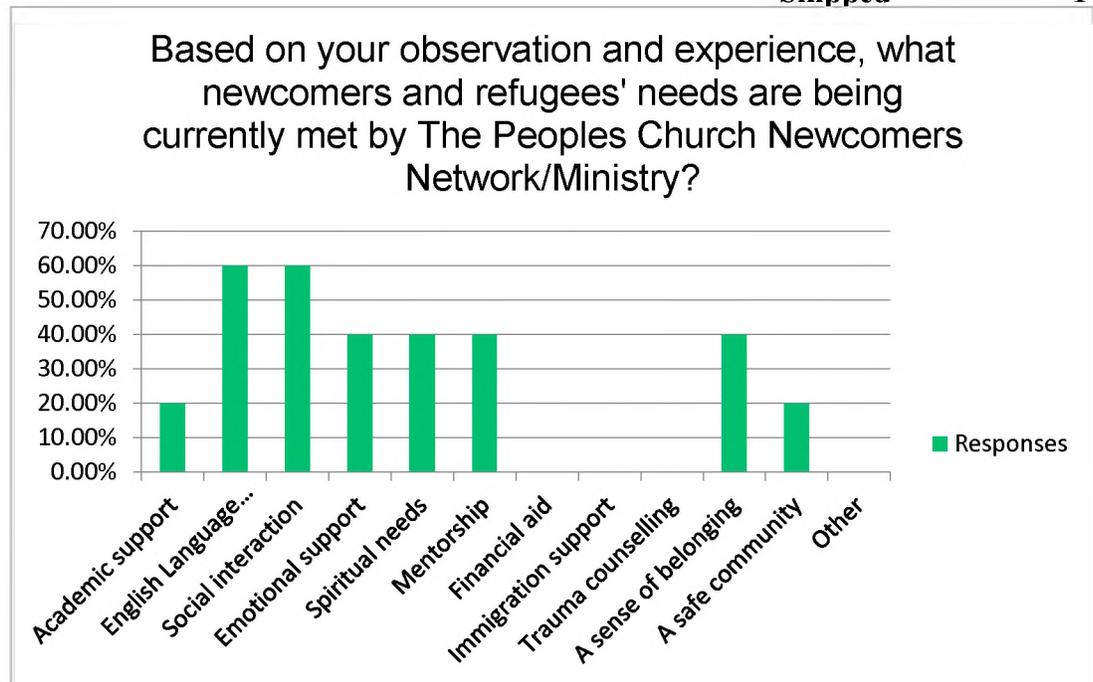
Q4: More particularly, how welcoming is The Peoples Church Newcomers Network towards newcomers and refugees?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely welcoming	83.33%	5
Very welcoming	16.67%	1
Somewhat welcoming	0.00%	0
Not so welcoming	0.00%	0
Not at all welcoming	0.00%	0
Answered		6



Q5: Based on your observation and experience, what newcomers and refugees' needs are being currently met by The Peoples Church Newcomers Network/Ministry?

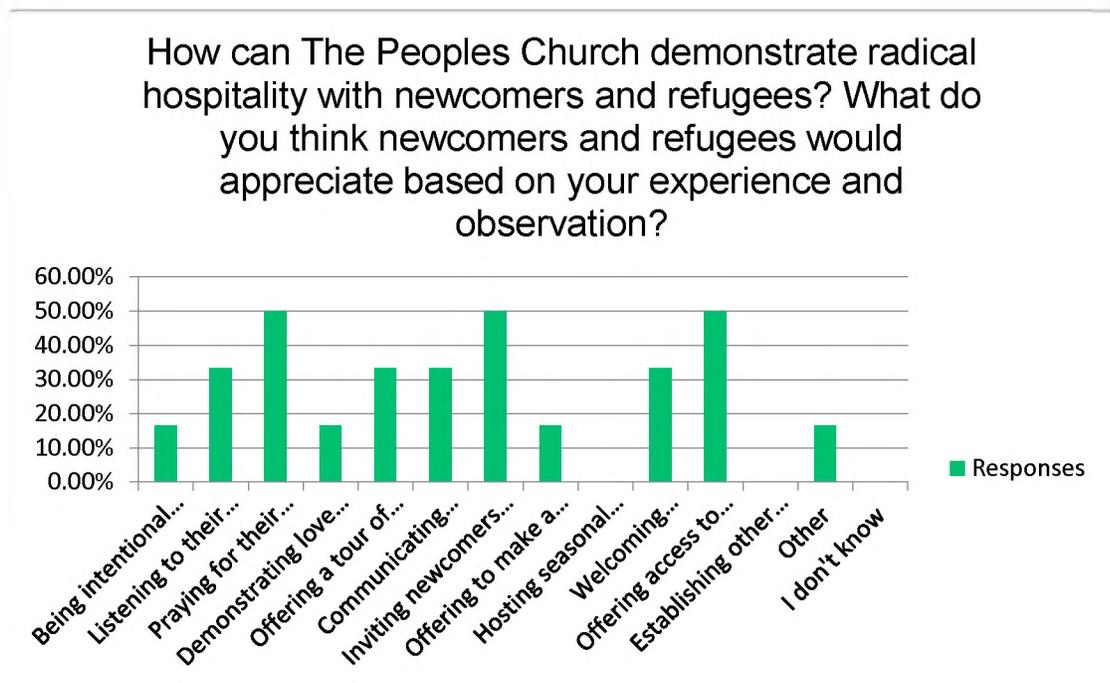
Answer Choices	Responses
Academic support	20.00% 1
English Language learning	60.00% 3
Social interaction	60.00% 3
Emotional support	40.00% 2
Spiritual needs	40.00% 2
Mentorship	40.00% 2
Financial aid	0.00% 0
Immigration support	0.00% 0
Trauma counselling	0.00% 0
A sense of belonging	40.00% 2
A safe community	20.00% 1
Other	0.00% 0
Answered	5
Skipped	1



Q6: How can The Peoples Church demonstrate radical hospitality towards newcomers and refugees? What do you think newcomers and refugees would appreciate based on your experience and observation?

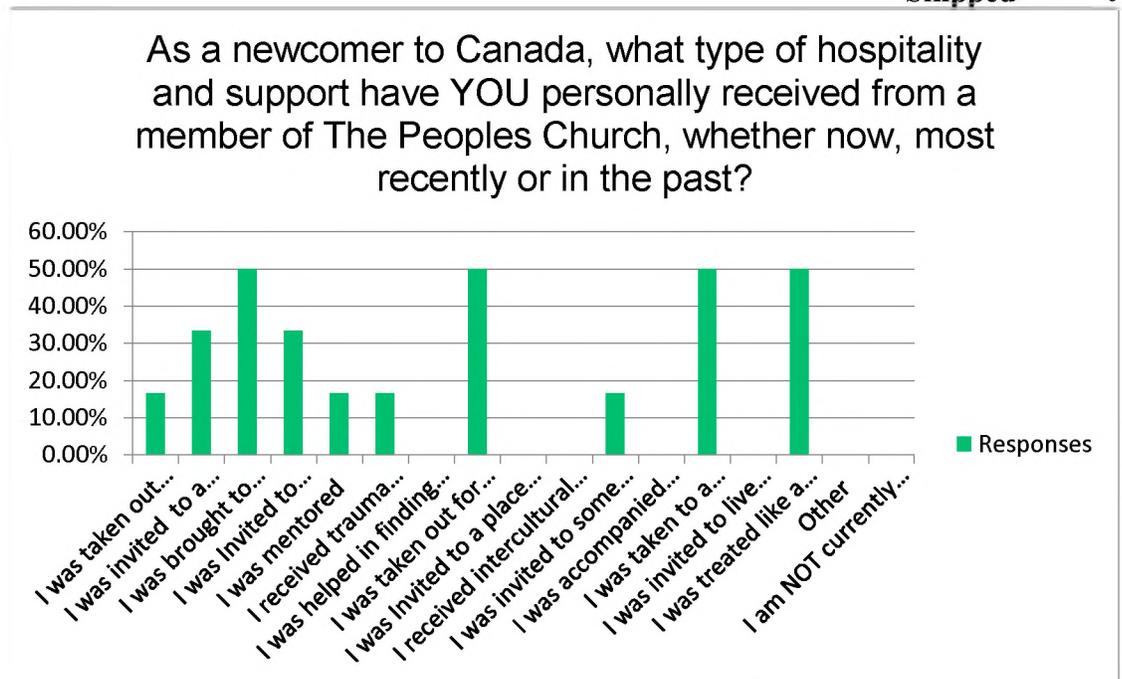
Answer Choices	Responses
Being intentional about creating safe spaces where members can meet with strangers	16.67%
Listening to their voices and learn their stories	33.33%
Praying for their needs	50.00%
Demonstrating love and compassion in tangible ways	16.67%
Offering a tour of the city or other similar activity to help newcomers and refugees become familiar with the environment	33.33%
Communicating with them regularly through email or a newsletter	33.33%
Inviting newcomers or refugees to share lunch or a one-to-one meeting	50.00%
Offering to make a house visit (if culturally appropriate)	16.67%
Hosting seasonal newcomers gatherings	0.00%
Welcoming newcomers and refugees into low-commitment small groups	33.33%
Offering access to simple volunteer opportunities for newcomers	50.00%
Establishing other ways to engage newcomers	0.00%
Other	16.67%
I don't know	0.00%

Answered



Q7: As a newcomer to Canada, what type of hospitality and support have YOU personally received from a member of The Peoples Church, whether now, most recently or in the past?

Answer Choices	Responses	
I was taken out shopping	16.67%	1
I was invited to a sporting or entertainment event	33.33%	2
I was brought to church or taught the Word of God	50.00%	3
I was Invited to someone's home	33.33%	2
I was mentored	16.67%	1
I received trauma counselling	16.67%	1
I was helped in finding long-term housing	0.00%	0
I was taken out for coffee, lunch or dinner	50.00%	3
I was Invited to a place of work or business	0.00%	0
I received intercultural training	0.00%	0
I was invited to some family special events (Thanksgiving or Christmas)	16.67%	1
I was accompanied them to my refugee or PR hearing	0.00%	0
I was taken to a vacation or retreat	50.00%	3
I was invited to live with a member of The Peoples Church	0.00%	0
I was treated like a member of the family and felt like I belonged	50.00%	3
Other	0.00%	0
I am NOT currently involved with members of The Peoples Church	0.00%	0
	Answered	6
	Skipped	0



APPENDIX H: Newcomers Volunteer Survey

Assessing Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

1. Describe your experience at The Peoples Church - In which particular area do you or did you serve?

- ESL Instruction - ESL Bible Study
- English Conversation Group
- International Student Ministry
- Refugee House
- Mentoring Newcomers
- Employment Cafe
- Health Fair
- Immigration counseling - Legal Clinic
- Cultural Fellowship
- Kitchen - Food Preparation
- Small Group Discipleship
- Administration
- Special Events
- Children's Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Young Adults Ministry
- Life Groups

2. How many times per week do you serve?

- Several times each week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Every 3 months
- Once a year
- Very irregularly

3. How welcoming do you think The Peoples Church is towards newcomers and refugees?

- Extremely welcoming
- Very welcoming
- Somewhat welcoming
- Not so welcoming
- Not at all welcoming

4. More particularly, how welcoming is The Peoples Church Newcomers Network towards newcomers and refugees?

- Extremely welcoming
- Very welcoming
- Somewhat welcoming
- Not so welcoming
- Not at all welcoming

5. Based on your observation and experience, what newcomers and refugees' needs are being currently met by The Peoples Church Newcomers Network/Ministry?

- Academic support
- English Language learning
- Social interaction
- Emotional support
- Spiritual needs
- Mentorship
- Financial aid
- Immigration support
- Trauma counselling
- A sense of belonging
- A safe community
- Other

6. How can The Peoples Church demonstrate radical hospitality with newcomers and refugees? What do you think newcomers and refugees would appreciate based on your experience and observation?

- Being intentional about creating safe spaces where members can meet with strangers
- Listening to their voices and learn their stories
- Praying for their needs
- Demonstrating love and compassion in tangible ways
- Offering a tour of the city or other similar activity to help newcomers and refugees become familiar with the environment
- Communicating with them regularly through email or a newsletter
- Inviting newcomers or refugees to share lunch or a one-to-one meeting
- Offering to make a house visit (if culturally appropriate)
- Hosting seasonal newcomers' gatherings
- Welcoming newcomers and refugees into low-commitment small groups
- Offering access to simple volunteer opportunities for newcomers
- Establishing other ways to engage newcomers

7. What type of hospitality and support have YOU personally provided to a newcomer or refugee lately?

- Taking them shopping
- Taking them to a sporting or entertainment event
- Brought them to church or shared the gospel with them
- Invited them to my house
- Served as a mentor
- provided trauma counselling
- Helped them find long-term housing
- Took them out for coffee, lunch or dinner
- Invited them to my place of work or business
- Provided intercultural training
- Invited them to some of my family special events (Thanksgiving or Christmas)
- Accompanied them to their refugee or PR hearing
- Took a vacation with them
- I live with them. They are my tenants
- Just walked alongside them
- Other
- I am NOT currently involved with newcomers and refugees

8. How can The Peoples Church empower you to serve better and welcome well?

- Spiritual direction
- Theological training
- Leadership Training
- Intercultural education
- Financial incentives
- Recognition and empowerment
- Ministry training
- Other

9. What can The Peoples Church do to engage an increasing number of members of the congregation into active hospitality with newcomers and refugees? Please provide as many innovative ideas as possible.

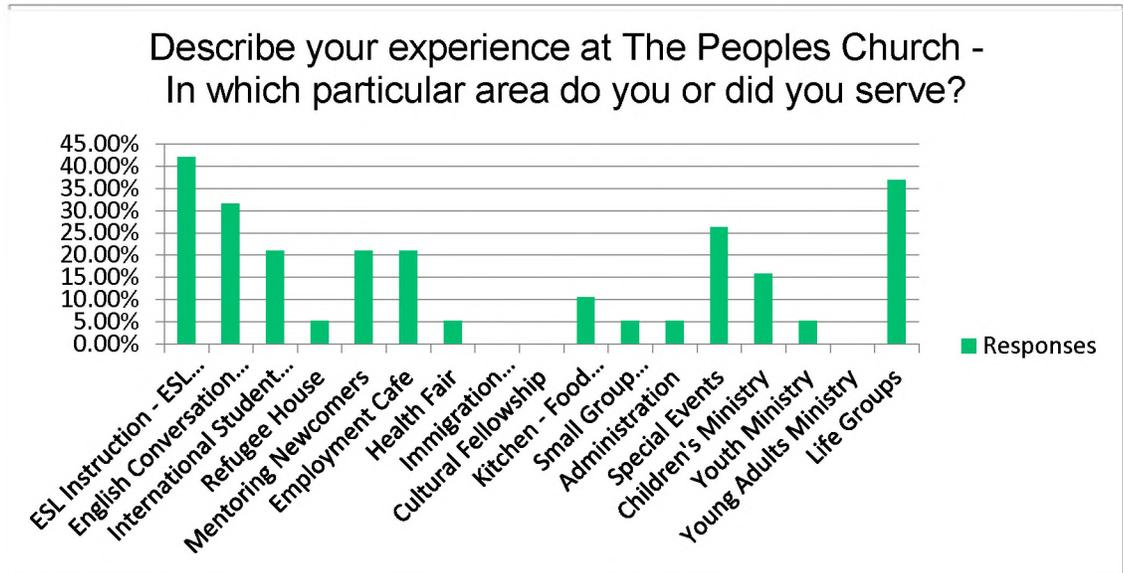
10. What other information would you like to share with me about your experience at The Peoples Church which may help the church connect with and welcome newcomers and refugees well?

APPENDIX I: Newcomers Volunteer Survey Results

Assessing Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees at The Peoples Church

**Q1: Describe your experience at The Peoples Church -
In which particular area do you or did you serve?**

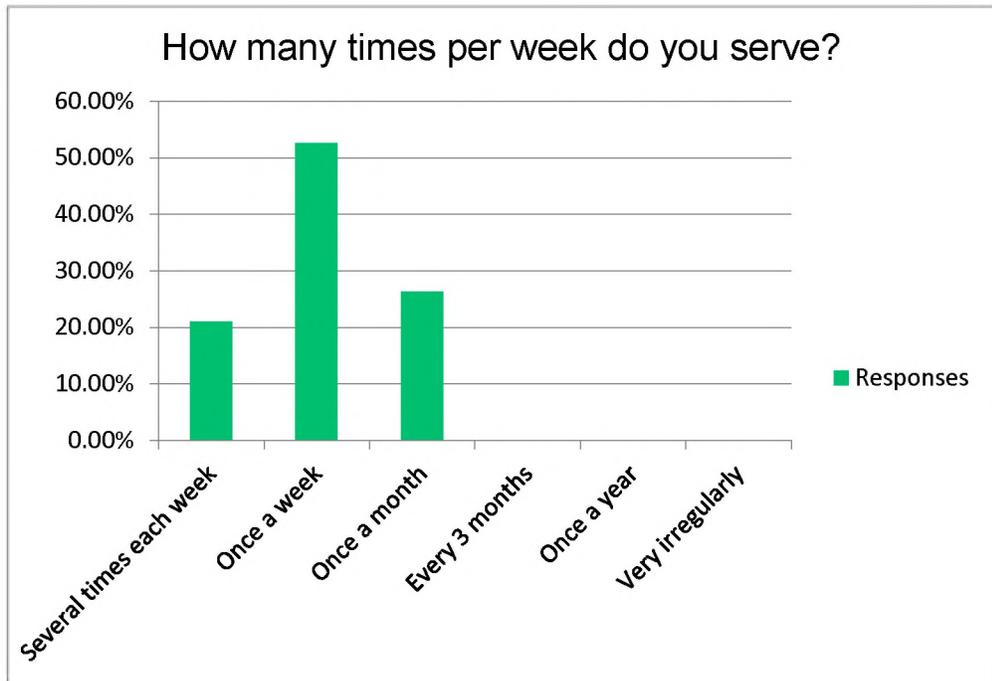
Answer Choices	Responses	
ESL Instruction - ESL Bible Study	42.11%	8
English Conversation Group	31.58%	6
International Student Ministry	21.05%	4
Refugee House	5.26%	1
Mentoring Newcomers	21.05%	4
Employment Cafés	21.05%	4
Health Fair	5.26%	1
Immigration counseling - Legal Clinic	0.00%	0
Cultural Fellowship	0.00%	0
Kitchen - Food Preparation	10.53%	2
Small Group Discipleship	5.26%	1
Administration	5.26%	1
Special Events	26.32%	5
Children's Ministry	15.79%	3
Youth Ministry	5.26%	1
Young Adults Ministry	0.00%	0
Life Groups	36.84%	7
Answered		19



Q2: How many times per week do you serve?

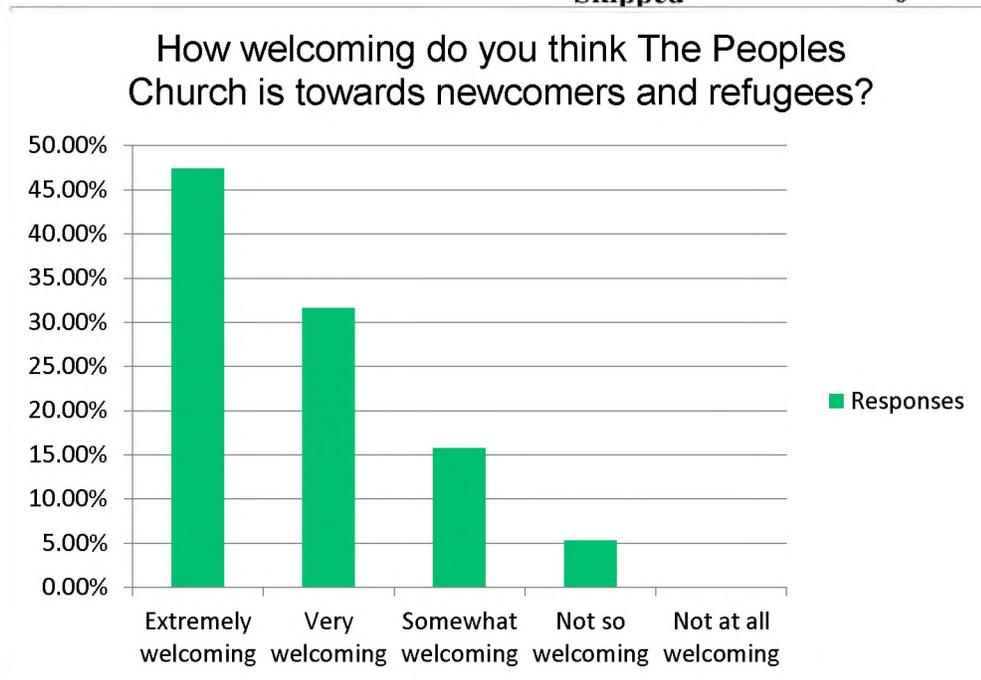
Answer Choices	Responses
Several times each week	21.05% 4
Once a week	52.63% 10
Once a month	26.32% 5
Every 3 months	0.00% 0
Once a year	0.00% 0
Very irregularly	0.00% 0

Answered 19



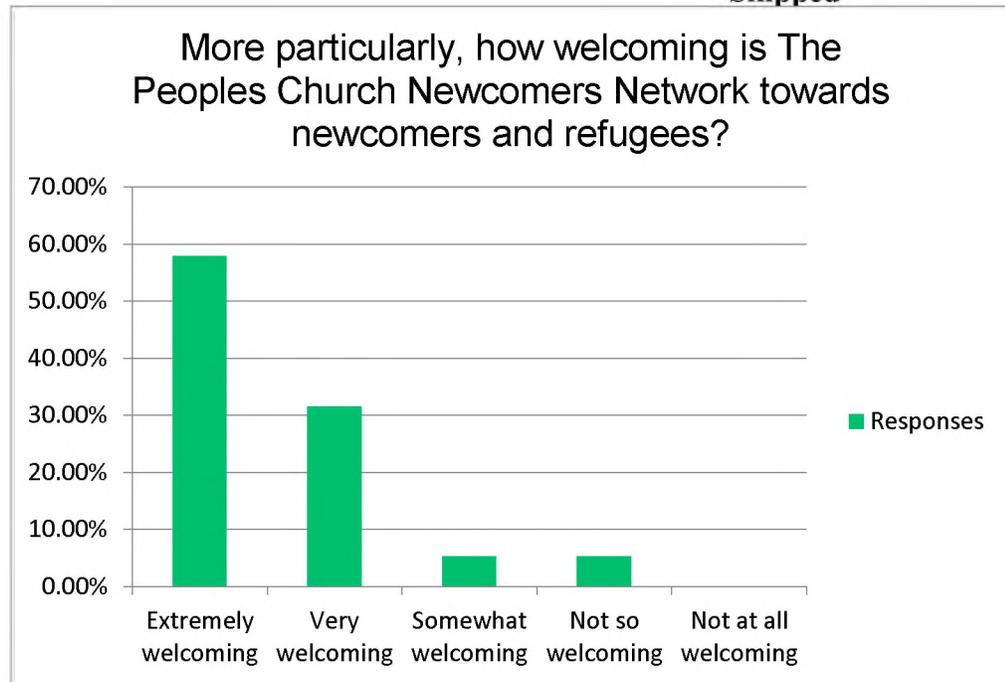
Q3: How welcoming do you think The Peoples Church is towards newcomers and refugees?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely welcoming	47.37%	9
Very welcoming	31.58%	6
Somewhat welcoming	15.79%	3
Not so welcoming	5.26%	1
Not at all welcoming	0.00%	0
	Answered	19
	Skipped	0



Q4: More particularly, how welcoming is The Peoples Church Newcomers Network towards newcomers and refugees?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely welcoming	57.89%	11
Very welcoming	31.58%	6
Somewhat welcoming	5.26%	1
Not so welcoming	5.26%	1
Not at all welcoming	0.00%	0
	Answered	19
	Skipped	0

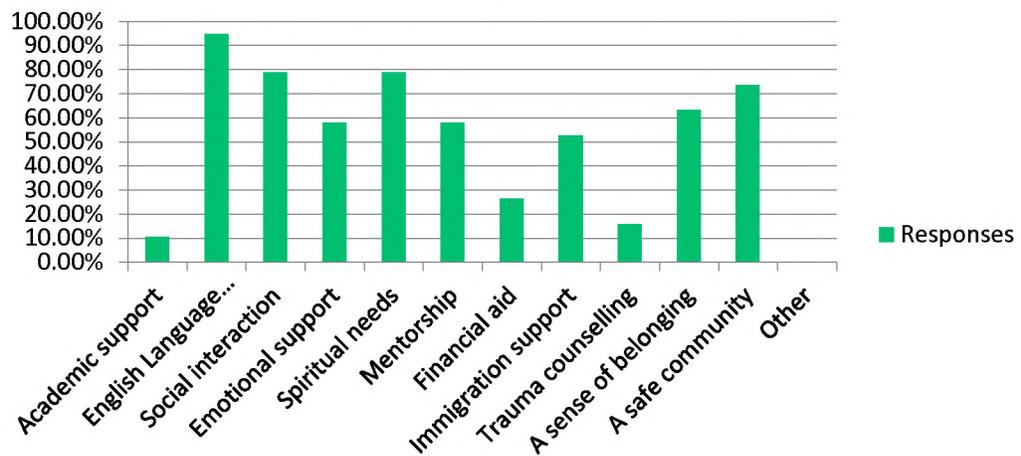


Q5: Based on your observation and experience, what newcomers and refugees’

needs are being currently met by The Peoples Church Newcomers Network/Ministry?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Academic support	10.53%	2
English Language learning	94.74%	18
Social interaction	78.95%	15
Emotional support	57.89%	11
Spiritual needs	78.95%	15
Mentorship	57.89%	11
Financial aid	26.32%	5
Immigration support	52.63%	10
Trauma counselling	15.79%	3
A sense of belonging	63.16%	12
A safe community	73.68%	14
Other	0.00%	0
	Answered	19
	Skipped	0

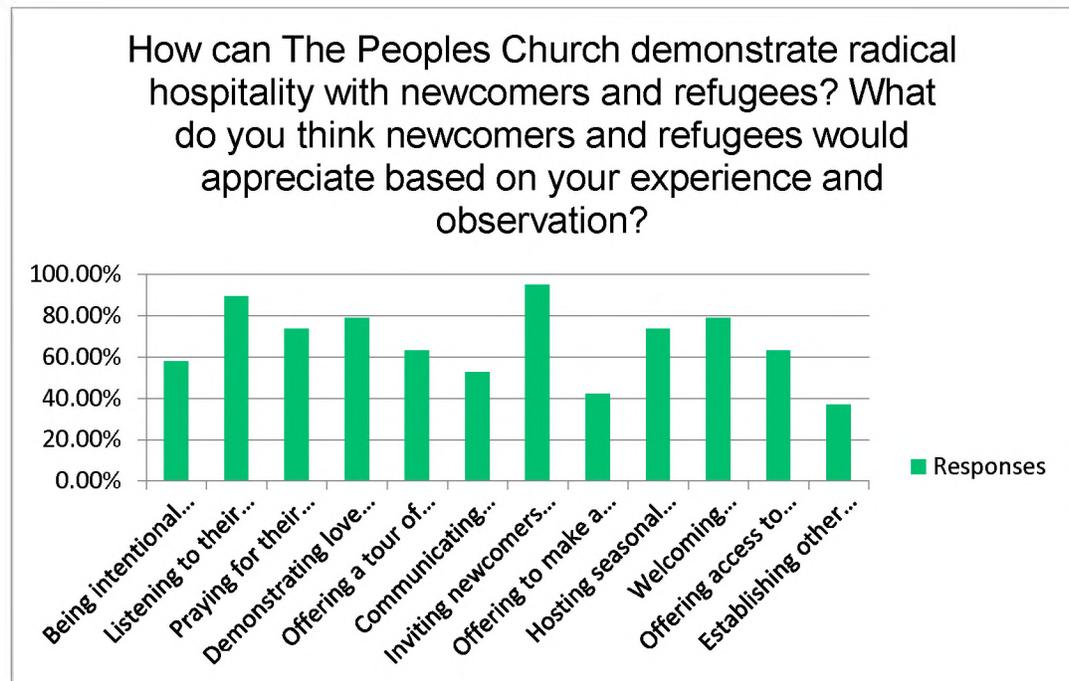
Based on your observation and experience, what newcomers and refugees' needs are being currently met by The Peoples Church Newcomers Network/Ministry?



Q6: How can The Peoples Church demonstrate radical hospitality with newcomers and refugees?

What do you think newcomers and refugees would appreciate based on your experience and observation?

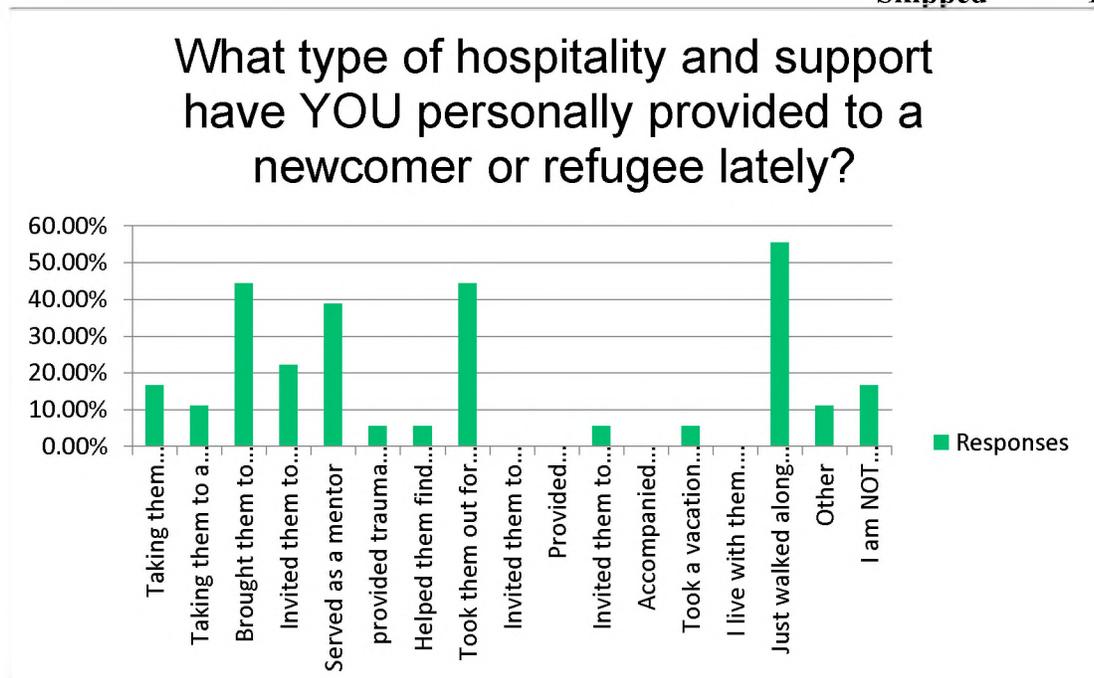
Answer Choices	Responses	
Being intentional about creating safe spaces where members can meet with strangers	57.89%	11
Listening to their voices and learn their stories	89.47%	17
Praying for their needs	73.68%	14
Demonstrating love and compassion in tangible ways	78.95%	15
Offering a tour of the city or other similar activity to help newcomers and refugees become familiar with the environment	63.16%	12
Communicating with them regularly through email or a newsletter	52.63%	10
Inviting newcomers or refugees to share lunch or a one-to-one meeting	94.74%	18
Offering to make a house visit (if culturally appropriate)	42.11%	8
Hosting seasonal newcomers' gatherings	73.68%	14
Welcoming newcomers and refugees into low-commitment small groups	78.95%	15
Offering access to simple volunteer opportunities for newcomers	63.16%	12
Establishing other ways to engage newcomers	36.84%	7
	Answered	19
		0



Assessing Hospitality with newcomers and Refugees

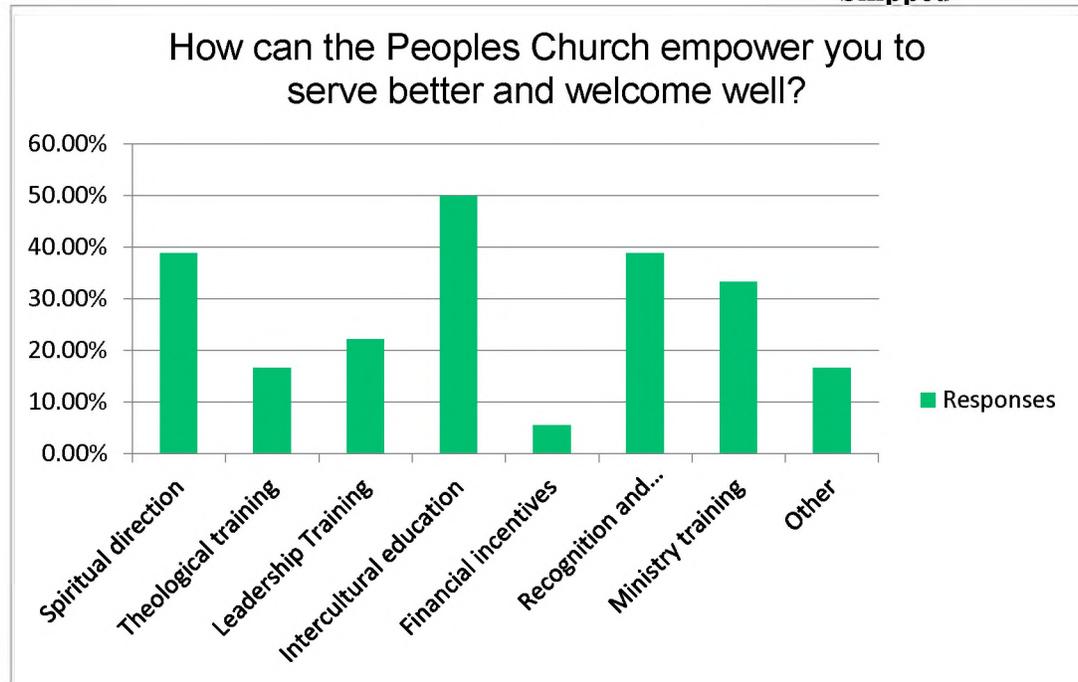
Q7: What type of hospitality and support have YOU personally provided to a newcomer or refugee lately?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Taking them shopping	16.67%	3
Taking them to a sporting or entertainment event	11.11%	2
Brought them to church or shared the gospel with them	44.44%	8
Invited them to my house	22.22%	4
Served as a mentor	38.89%	7
provided trauma counselling	5.56%	1
Helped them find long-term housing	5.56%	1
Took them out for coffee, lunch or dinner	44.44%	8
Invited them to by place of work or business	0.00%	0
Provided intercultural training	0.00%	0
Invited them to some of my family special events (Thanksgiving or Christmas)	5.56%	1
Accompanied them to their refugee or PR hearing	0.00%	0
Took a vacation with them	5.56%	1
I live with them. They are my tenants	0.00%	0
Just walked along side them	55.56%	10
Other	11.11%	2
I am NOT currently involved with newcomers and refugees	16.67%	3
	Answered	18
	Skipped	1



Q8: How can the Peoples Church empower you to serve better and welcome well?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Spiritual direction	38.89%	7
Theological training	16.67%	3
Leadership Training	22.22%	4
Intercultural education	50.00%	9
Financial incentives	5.56%	1
Recognition and empowerment	38.89%	7
Ministry training	33.33%	6
Other	16.67%	3
	Answered	18
	Skipped	1



APPENDIX J: Phases and Timetable

DATE & PHASES	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS/OUTCOMES
PHASE I	RESEARCH DESIGN - PLANNING	
November 29, 2019	1 st draft of REB Application for Ethics Review	For peer feedback
December 9, 2019	Meeting with Pastor Sandra Ryan, Global Missions Pastor to confirm evaluation parameters	The confirmation of the four areas of focus of the evaluation.
December 10, 2019	Design of Research Instruments, interview scripts and informed Consent Forms	Several instruments to be included in the REB submission.
January 20, 2020	Draft REB application for ethics review submitted to Professor	Submitted as assignment
March 30, 2021	REB Submission for Ethics Review to Tyndale REB for approval	
April 16, 2021	Tyndale REB approval	REB approval
June 13, 2021	Submission of Final Action Research Proposal	Proposal to Academic supervisor
June 15, 2021	Secure academic approval of the proposed research plan.	Research Proposal approved.
PHASE II	LITERATURE REVIEW	
June 15, 2021	Compile pertinent documents	
July 15, 2021	Prepare draft Literature review section	
PHASE III	DATA COLLECTION	
August 1, 2021	Develop a list of participants and finalize invitation to interviews and focus groups	
August 15, 2021	Draft final copies of materials to be used for recruitment	

	(e.g., flyers, advertisements, letters, telephone and other verbal scripts)	
September 1, 2021	Organize data collection process based on proposed research methods	
September 1, 2021	Finalize data collection instruments for each sample	
September 1, 2021	Select individuals to be interviewed for personal stories	
September 15, 2021	Send out surveys to congregational participants and select number of refugees	
September 30, 2021	Schedule interviews	
October 15, 2021	Organize focus groups	
October 30, 2021	Develop summary of data collected	
PHASE IV	DATA ANALYSIS	
January 12, 2022	Analyze data and validate findings	
January 12, 2022	Develop draft framework and conclusions	
January 14, 2022	Validate preliminary findings with ministry team	
January 18, 2022	Develop draft ministry model	
PHASE V	REPORT WRITING	
January 18, 2022	Write first final draft of portfolio	
January 18, 2022	Finalize Action Research Report	Submission to Dr. Chapman
January 18, 2022	Submit Action Research Report to Dr. Chapman	Feedback from Dr. Chapman expected by January 25 th

January 28, 2022	Submit 1 st draft of DMin Portfolio to Advisor for feedback	
February 4, 2022	Final Advisor's feedback on 2nd draft of DMin Portfolio	
PHASE VI	PUBLIC PRESENTATION & HEARING	
February 7, 2022	Submit DMin Portfolio to Advisor and readers	
February 8, 2022	Public presentation of Research Project at The Peoples Church	
March 3, 2022	DMin Hearing	
March 24, 2022	Complete all revisions based on feedback from hearing	
April 1, 2022	Submit Final draft of DMin Portfolio to the DMin Office	

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