

## **Report of the 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth**

Communities in Mission / Communautés en Mission  
The United Church of Canada / L'Église Unie du Canada

Adele Halliday  
Program Coordinator: Intercultural Engagement & Education

The United Church of Canada / l'Eglise Unie du Canada  
3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 300, Toronto, ON, M8X 2Y4

Toll free: 1 800 268-3781 ext. 4187  
Local phone: (416) 231-7680 ext. 4187  
Fax: (416) 231-3103 (attn: Adele)  
[icdc@united-church.ca](mailto:icdc@united-church.ca)  
[www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)

## Contents

<b>1. Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Background</b>	<b>4</b>
What was the 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth?	4
What does “racialized” mean?	4
Why a consultation only for racialized youth?	5
How were youth selected to participate?	5
Where and when did the consultation take place?	6
How many people were there, and where did they come from?	6
Why did the youth want to come?	7
<b>3. Processes</b>	<b>9</b>
What were the goals of the consultation?	9
What processes were used to facilitate conversation?	9
What activities took place?	10
What covenant did participants commit to?	11
<b>4. Content</b>	<b>12</b>
What common threads were heard?	12
What did the racialized youth have to say to the church?	12
<b>5. Implications</b>	<b>17</b>
How was the 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth evaluated?	17
Will there be another consultation?	17
Where will this report go?	17
What are the next steps?	17



## 1. Summary

This report of the United Church's 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth summarizes what happened at the event, and collects the voices of the young people who gathered.

There were 22 participants at the event, ranging in age from 13 to 20. They lived in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario and came from diverse racial and linguistic groups.

Participants shared

- their vision of being church
- their thoughts on culture and identity
- their ideas about what could happen at youth events and church gatherings in general

The consultation was set up to foster prayer, learning, sharing, and enjoyment. The young people participated in conversation, recreation, worship, and free time.

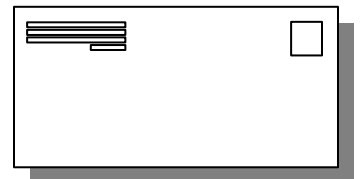
Some participants had attended Conference and national gatherings before, and some expressed feelings of isolation at these gatherings because of their racial and cultural identities. Several young people shared that it was rare to find a space where they could be their "full self" and express their culture without feeling rejected. This Consultation for Racialized Youth was one of the first youth gatherings where these participants really felt "safe."

Participants clearly expressed that in any upcoming youth event, racial and cultural diversity should be ensured. These events must create a safe space where cultural differences are openly honoured and respected. Such diversity should be reflected in the leadership and throughout the event itself.

Dear Mardi,

I think the United Church is soooo amazing! I love its ideas and the seasonal calendar that is brought to my own church. I especially appreciate how much has gone into supporting and helping the cultural minorities in church such as my own, Amazing Grace U.C. I would love to see the United Church grow and expand over the next few years. From this 2009 Youth Consultation I not only met a lot of new friends I also learned a lot about myself, my culture and many other cultures around me. I would love to continue to attend these kinds of events and help encourage other youth to come out. I still find it hard to fit in as a cultural minority in large groups and would like to be encouraged and advised as to how I can be more brave or strong to be able to attend these regional / national events without feeling left out or uncomfortable. Please keep in touch with us so we can all work together to help the United Church that I love.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Tsai



## 2. Background

### What was the 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth?

In fall 2009, The United Church of Canada held a consultation for racialized youth in the United Church. It was designed to be a one-time consultation, to gather together diverse voices and hear thoughts on who we are as church.

This was the first Consultation for Racialized Youth in The United Church of Canada.

Previously, there had been camps designed for racialized youth, and some related gatherings in the United Church, organized through the Ethnic Ministries Unit in the mid-1990s.

In 2007, there was a Leadership Circle organized through the Youth Connections Project of the Congregational, Educational, and Community Ministries Unit, which took place in June of that year. That particular gathering pulled together 22 participants for a five-day residential event, and it included people from across Canada and two global partners. This was a racially diverse space with leadership from the Black, Aboriginal, Asian/South Asian, and United Church communities. It was also an intentionally interchurch and interfaith gathering that focused on youth leaders.

In 2009, the Consultation for Racialized Youth was the first space to intentionally focus on racialized youth in The United Church of Canada, and the implications of their input for the whole of the church. The youth did not have to be in leadership in church communities; rather, they were invited to come if they had ideas to share with the rest of the church.

The ideas and recommendations from this consultation will be directed through appropriate channels so that they might continue to affect the development of future programs, ministries, and policies of the church as a whole.

Those who gathered were promised an interesting, informative gathering with great spaces for conversation. It was created as a space where racialized youth could grow in faith and have fun. Youth were offered the opportunity to meet other young people in the church, make some new friends, and dialogue about issues related to racial identity and cultural communities.

In particular, racialized young people were looking to share their voice, and help shape this church, were encouraged to attend the consultation.

### What does “racialized” mean?

The term “racialized” is a more inclusive alternative to “racial minority.” In any culture, those in the majority may be oblivious of their own race. But those who are perceived as belonging to a minority often find racial labels thrust upon them.

The United Church has begun using the term “racialized” to include people who identify as racial minority, bi-racial, Aboriginal, or Métis.

## **Why a consultation only for racialized youth?**

The United Church of Canada is a diverse community that values inclusivity and is committed to racial justice. We are committed to racial justice and to becoming an intercultural church. However, the voices of racial minority, bi-racial, Aboriginal, and Métis youth in the church are often underrepresented.

This consultation was a space to carefully hear the unique perspectives of racialized youth in the United Church. The insights shared will likely help shape our church as a whole.

Of course, racialized youth are not the only voices that are underrepresented in the United Church. It is important to name that all people hold multiple identities—citizenship, gender identity, sexual identity, language group, ability, ethnicity, and socio-economic class, to name a few. Still, the focus of this particular gathering was to hear from participants who shared identities based on

- racialization (racial minority, bi-racial, Aboriginal, or Métis)
- age (14–21)
- faith identity (connection with The United Church of Canada)

These young people were not gathered on the assumption that they were the same. Rather, this group of young people had diverse experiences in the church as racialized peoples. This consultation sought to offer racialized youth and young adults in the United Church an opportunity to share their reflections in a broader context and help shape the church to which they belong.

## **How were youth selected to participate?**

The consultation was designed for youth, aged 14–21, who

- self-identify as a racialized person
- are connected to The United Church of Canada
- are open to speaking about their racial and cultural experiences in the church

Young people who fit these criteria were invited into a simple application process, to help ensure good representation from across the country. Youth were asked to each write a short paragraph sharing the following:

- how they self-identify (i.e., as racial minority, bi-racial, Aboriginal, or Métis)
- their age and gender identity
- their connection to the United Church
- why they want to be part of the consultation

Staff then carefully reviewed the applications received. In the end, all of the young people who applied were selected to be part of this consultation.

## **Where and when did the consultation take place?**

The Consultation for Racialized Youth took place at the Canterbury Hills Conference Centre near Ancaster, Ontario. It was a residential setting, and participants were housed in heated cabins, with meals provided by Canterbury Hills on-site.

The gathering was held from November 26–29, 2009.

## **How many people were there, and where did they come from?**

### *Youth Participants:*

22 youth and young adults participated (12 female, 10 male), ranging in age from 13 to 20.

Participants lived in both rural and urban areas, and from communities in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. One participant was supposed to come from Quebec; however, she had to cancel for health reasons.

The Conferences represented by the youth and young adults:

- All Native Circle
- British Columbia
- Hamilton
- Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
- Montreal and Ottawa
- Toronto

The youth and young adults self-identified in multiple ways, by racialized group:

- African Canadian (Black) of Caribbean heritage / Jamaican Canadian
- African Canadian (Black) of Liberian heritage
- Bi-racial: Chinese and Black Canadian
- Filipino Canadian
- First Nation – Heiltsuk
- First Nation – Hobbema
- First Nation – Oji-Cree
- First Nation – Shuswap
- Japanese Canadian
- Korean Canadian
- Taiwanese Canadian

Participants also spoke multiple languages, Many were adept at switching between one language spoken at home (or in their church or cultural communities), and another language spoken at school. For some, English was an additional language that they learned later in life. The consultation sought to create space where all people could participate fully without being inhibited by language barriers.

### *Leadership:*

There were five adult leaders (three female and two male). Two were General Council Office staff, one a candidate in ministry from Toronto Conference, one ministry personnel from London Conference, and one diaconal minister from British Columbia Conference.

The adults broadly self-identified as African Canadian, Aboriginal, Euro-Canadian, and bi-racial (Japanese Canadian and European background).

### **Why did the youth want to come?**

Leading into the Consultation for Racialized Youth, each young person was asked to write a paragraph, sharing why they were interested in coming. The young people shared the following:

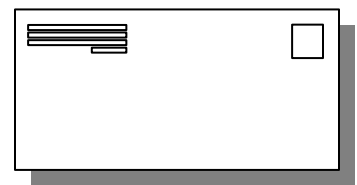
- “I want to be part of the consultation because I do not feel comfortable going or getting involved in the White community.”
- “I would wish to join this event to help with the cause of voicing minority issues to help the church. This is a chance for me to voice not only my concerns, but the concerns of all the minority youth in the youth group at church. Our youth group is predominantly composed of visible minority youth and I welcome the opportunity to represent the concerns that are unique to our United Church experience.”
- “I want to be a part of the consultation to further expand my knowledge of The United Church of Canada particularly pertaining to the youth group and I want to share my culture and upbringing and how it has impacted me spiritually.”
- “I’d like to participate in the consultation and speak for the minority in Canada as I’m also the one who experienced some kind of discrimination in Canada. I’d like to learn how other young Christians see different races in Canada and the intercultural community as a whole. I really think the consultation will be a good opportunity for all of us in the United Church to speak and share our faith and experience.”
- “I identify as a racial minority, and that is the main reason that I want to be part of the consultation; to meet people who are in a similar situation as I and share each other’s story.”
- “I would love to attend this youth consultation not only to meet new people from different places but also to understand other minorities dealing with similar problems I may encounter. I would love to discuss my cultural identity and listen to what others have to say. It is an event I’m very excited for and I’m wishing to gain a lot of experience out of this consultation.”
- “I would like to attend this Youth Consultation to learn what the other youth have to share, and I would also like to share of what I know to other youth that are going to be attending this consultation! I would like to meet new people, new youth my age that have the same interest as me. I could like to come back to my home and share with them what I learned from this consultation.”
- “I believe that it would be a very good learning experience for me to be part of the consultation because it would give me an opportunity to meet other young people like myself and hear their view and experiences.”

- “I would like to be part of the youth conference and learn about how other people experience racism. I would like to meet people. I can share about racism in my experience.”
- “I am interested in this event because I have slight familiarity with talking out about racial and culture experience. Talking with different United Churches and youth about these discussions puts more than one perspective on the plate.”
- “I believe that it is a chance for youth to get together from different parts of the province to discuss our own experiences with racism and discrimination as well as share our view on the broad topic. At the same time, this experience will allow me to open up my mind to various opinions of others and make new friends.”
- “For many individuals, [my church] may seem like a small, tight-knit community church, but it’s so much more than that. Behind those wooden doors lies a culturally rich and divertic community. As a youth I would love for other youth to come out to church more often. And since our church is located in a very multi-cultural neighbourhood, you would expect children of different race attend service regularly and better yet at all. I am anxious to add to our limited youth group and know with this Youth Consultation I can learn from other youth (who are of a different race) how they encouraged other children or peers to come to church.”
- “As a racial minority, I have accepted the invitation not only to represent my local church but also because I got interested in what this Youth Consultation is all about. I think it’s going to be a great experience for me—meeting other youth in the church, making new friends, and possibly contributing something towards the goal of this Youth Consultation.”
- “I want to be part of this Consultation because I want to meet other First Nations youth who actually have an interest in the church. I would also love to experience the diversity of meeting people from other races who are involved in the church.”
- “I would like to know what other youth in my age group feel about subjects directly related to our age group and specifically minorities. This would be a great opportunity to meet youth in a similar situation as myself and make some new friends.”
- “I have a passion for interculturalism among youth in The United Church of Canada. I am also part of a diverse community where youth from different backgrounds are encouraged to share their gifts and abilities as we affirm our oneness in Christ. ... I wish to participate in this conference, as I enjoy meeting with youth my own age and establishing a rapport with teens from different backgrounds. ... I see myself as an advocate or ambassador for the intercultural movement among youth in our church and community.”

Dear the Moderator

I want the United Church to be more diverse. The United Church I go to has a large congregation, although the majority is old White people. In the youth group, I am the only ethnic minority. I will do my best to build The United Church of Canada as a community. With everyone’s help and support, please let’s change the UCC.

Thank you.



### 3. Processes

#### What were the goals of the consultation?

The youth who gathered affirmed the goals that had already been named:

- Gather diverse voices together.
- Hear thoughts on who we are as church.
- Generate ideas and recommendations that will directly affect the development of future programs, ministries, and policies.

In addition, participants offered the following goals:

- Take what we've learned here and bring it back to our congregations.
- Learn about ourselves and others.
- Make recommendations for the church as a whole.
- Explore what it means to live in a community that acknowledges and respects all of the diversity that is part of that community.
- Bring ideas into the 2011 national youth gathering, and see what kinds of things would make it appealing to people from a wide range of cultural communities.
- Help the church to new understandings of church, from non-European backgrounds.
- Speak, and share answers about the church community for its future.
- Share ideas! Be creative!

#### What processes were used to facilitate conversation?

There was a broad mix of educational processes. The consultation included individual reflection time, opportunities to work with partners, small group conversation, and large group discussions in a circle.

At various times, participants were invited to form groups randomly by numbering off, to choose who they wanted to be in a group with, or to enter into conversation with the person sitting next to them in the circle. For one morning, we created groups by how people identified: First Nations, first-generation Canadian, and second- or third-generation Canadian.

The young people engaged in letter writing, drawing, quiet contemplation, loud interactions, and conversations about identity and origins.

## What activities took place?

The schedule for the consultation was as follows:

### Thursday, November 26:

- Gathering and arrivals
- Dinner
- Introductions
- Community building
- Putting ourselves on the map
- Worship / teaching
- Creating a covenant
- Why are we here: purpose and goals
- Questions and conversation
- Logistics for Friday morning
- Evening prayers

### Friday, November 27:

- Breakfast
- Introductions & singing
- Worship / teaching
- Community sharing
- Reviewing the covenant
- Reviewing the goals and purpose
- Exploring identity
- The story of my name
- Singing
  
- Lunch
  
- Free time
- World Café model
- Report back from World Café and debrief
- What we need to be our full selves

- Dinner
- Weaving common threads
- Pictionary game
- Evening prayers

### Saturday, November 28

- Breakfast
- Worship / teaching
- Reviewing the covenant
- Group work
  - Youth programs and church
  - What we need to be our full selves
  - When youth gather together
  - Our visions of an ideal church
- Lunch
- Learnings & what we want to say to the church
- Free time / outdoor recreation
- Dinner
- Weaving common threads
- Advent Jeopardy
- Wheel of Blessing
- Evening prayers

### Sunday, November 29

- Worship / teaching
- What happens next?
- Letters to the Moderator
- Evaluation of the consultation
- Closing prayers
- Goodbyes and travel

## **What covenant did participants commit to?**

### *Covenant of the 2009 Youth Consultation*

We, the members of the 2009 Youth Consultation, commit ourselves to:

- Voice
  - o Respect others when they are speaking
  - o Speak when the opportunity arises, without interrupting others
  - o Not putting down others
  - o Not speaking about others without their knowledge
  - o Speaking our own truth and listening for the truth of others.
  
- Positivity
  - o Be positive!
  - o Support and encourage one another in celebration and struggle
  - o Offer help when needed
  
- Respect
  - o Respect God, others and self
  - o Respect the site
  - o Respect the purpose of this gathering
  - o “To respect” is not the same as “to like”
  - o No bullying or pressuring people
  - o Respect for the sacred circle
  
- Self Care
  - o Take care of your own needs
  - o Get rest
  - o Hygiene is important for yourself and for the group
  
- Remain Engaged
  - o Full group participation
  - o Ask questions if something is not clear
  - o Stick with the group
  - o Be inclusive in discussions and activities
  - o Work cooperatively with others (teamwork!)
  - o Listen carefully
  - o Be a leader, not a follower
  
- The Golden Rule
  - o Treat others the way you would want to be treated
  - o Don't try to be someone you're not
  
- Fun
  - o Be open to daring to having fun!
  - o Keep a sense of humour

## 4. Content

### What common threads were heard?

Throughout the consultation, the staff wove together common threads that were heard and offered them back to the young participants. The youth affirmed the following key themes that emerged during their time together”

- Who we are:
  - Full of stories (where we came from)
  - Named, intentionally
  - Part of community
  - From diverse cultural backgrounds
  
- What we believe:
  - Different ideas about God
  - Vision of an ideal church

### What did the racialized youth have to say to the church?

For some of the young people gathered, this consultation was their first time away from home. But something about this gathering captured their imagination. They were willing to get on a plane for the first time, and travel halfway across the country to meet, interact with, and share experiences with other racialized youth.

It was named repeatedly that this consultation was a safe space where people could share freely about their backgrounds, without fear. In sharing, they were also keen to learn. Though the young people came from very different cultural communities, there was a sense that they shared some common experiences because of their racialization. Yet, within the broad category of “race,” the young people had diverse experiences.

Because this was perceived to be a safe space, a strong sense of community quickly developed. Many participants shared that they had not experienced this sense of safety before in other diverse settings or at other youth gatherings. On reflection, we recognized that some of this safety came from the covenant that we co-created together, but much of it came from the knowledge of shared experiences, and being removed from a context dominated by the racial majority.

The diversity in this group of young people was seen as a gift. Participants valued being able to share some of their experiences of race and culture without being rejected, knowing that other young people would share in return. For some, it meant they could step out of their usual role of being a “teacher” about culture to being a “learner.” There was a mutual gifting that enhanced large group conversations and informal chats over meals.

The young people also thoughtfully shared what they needed to be their “full selves.” Early in the conversation, many of the young people shared that in other contexts, they had to hide

aspects of their racial and cultural identities or they felt isolated because of these aspects of their identities.

When asked, “What do you need to be your full self?” the young people responded as follows:

- Love (x10)
- Friends (x9)
- God (x7)
- Confidence (x7)
- Courage (x7)
- Family (x7)
- Support (x6)
- Encouragement (x5)
- Happiness (x5)
- Health (x5)
- Inspiration (x5)
- Community (x4)
- Respect (x4)

This list could be broadly applicable to many different cultural communities—not just to a community of racialized youth!

In coming together, participants were excited at the thought that the church was listening to them. The young people were invited to share their visions of their ideal church. After brainstorming individually and in groups, they offered the following:

- Responsive
- Interactive
- Diverse
- Accepting of different cultures
- Community, not a gathering place

Throughout the gathering, the young people shared that the single most reason that would draw them to a gathering is diversity: having a diverse group of youth there from multiple backgrounds. It wasn't even as important to have youth all from the same racial background as them; it was more important to have youth who were not all representing the dominant White culture.

They wanted to have their leaders also represent the diversity of communities that they come from. Again, it is not necessary to have people all from their same background, but it would be helpful to have more leaders from non-White backgrounds.

Several shared that they wanted to have a gathering like this one again. Several felt skeptical about other youth gatherings: would the gatherings really be as diverse as they would hope? Some had been to other youth gatherings, and had felt quite alienated because of race and culture.

Programs such as a cultural party at a youth gathering are important. Participants expressed a desire to share a bit about who they were, and learn about other cultures. Others reflected that often they feel the need to hide part of who they are, in particular, their cultural identity. Some felt that part of their cultural community had assimilated, and there were some concerns about that.

Some participants shared that they felt “caught” between themselves and their parents and/or church. Some attended a church that represented their cultural community (for example, a Korean United Church, or a Taiwanese church or an Aboriginal church); others were a shared that they were a numerical minority in terms of racialization in their congregations.

Of course, the young people who gathered were also excited about talking about other things, and doing things other than talk about race and culture. At the consultation itself—which built in time for fun and recreation—they were keen to have fun! One thing that came up several times was the desire to have a national basketball championship; several felt that this would bring youth together across cultures, and they would have fun doing it.

And in sharing their visions of church, in addition to conversations about culture and identity, they also stated that at many church gatherings, they would want to have fun, do Bible studies, outside recreation, meet new people, play basketball and play games.

Food was also an important of conversation. Some shared that they needed to have rice to feel like they have really eaten. This was a cultural aspect of identity that does not always get taken into consideration.

At one point during the consultation, the young people met in specific groupings: whether they considered themselves to be First Nations, first-generation (they were born outside of Canada), or second- or third-generation (their parents and/or grandparents were born outside of Canada).

Within these groupings, there were rich and animated conversations. There were debates about what kinds of things were really “cultural.” There was much laughter and much learning. This conversation was among the liveliest and energetic that took place throughout the whole consultation.

With regards to elders and adults in their communities, the First Nations youth shared:

- Some of their elders were very traditional, and they felt that they were all about rules.
- Elders and adults were also curious about young people’s opinions, relaxed and listening, nice, caring, and helpful.

About the same question, first-generation Canadians shared:

- Their elders were accepting of change; and their elders were lenient on change.

Also on the same question, second- and third-generation Canadians shared:

- Things are run by the run by an “originals council” (“lifers”).
- In some cases, it would be good to involve some new people through a change of leadership.

- Some adults and elders try to be involved with the youth; others give a great deal to the church.
- Their church have many separate groups (youth, young adults, UCW, AOTS, men's breakfast, friendship club, woodworkers).

Across the board, participants shared that their church communities were not very diverse (but in some cases they felt they community would be open to diversity). For example, in some First Nations communities, the church is composed of predominantly all First Nations peoples. While it is not diverse in terms of its cultural make-up, it does reflect the community around it, and the church members are open to diversity. But the young people were quick to name that if they do go to a church that reflects their cultural community, that their church also does things related to their cultural community; therefore, when at other youth gatherings, they also want to do cultural things, but want to learn from other cultures too. It was interesting to note that in many churches, people don't want to talk about race! They are keen to talk about culture, though.

The young people spent some time exploring the question "If you don't have a youth program, what would you want to happen at church?"

They shared the following:

- Diversity
- More youth please!
- Lots of people / or consistent / community building
- Move involvement with the church
- Games and physical activities; lively, fun activities (i.e., sports, camping)
- Volunteering, being involved with charity events
- Mission trips
- Fundraising – raise money for mission work and youth group
- Travel – fun, get to see new places, new food (old food: rice)
- Learning – learn about God, feed the soul
- Music, weekly jam session

Consistently, the youth named that diversity is the number one thing that they want! It came up in many different ways, and in different questions and conversations. For example, when asked what their ideal church looked like, several responded with: my ideal church is diverse, and everyone is welcomed and no one is afraid to speak up.

Other responses to the question around what their ideal church included the following:

- My ideal church is diverse, many people participate, eager Sunday school students.
- My ideal church is a place of welcoming, rejoicing, healing, and the ability to be with God and in a space in which I am myself is my home because I feel free to be myself and a place where I can think and reflect on life and the many possibilities there are.
- My ideal church is diverse, and everyone is welcomed and no one is afraid to speak up. The space that I can be myself is where my family and friends gather because they always listen to my opinions and encourage me all the time.

- My ideal church sings, has many youth, is diverse and is a community not just church. There is no space for me. I'm always comfortable with myself in front of people.
- My ideal church I would like to have a Sunday school for all ages and make church fun.

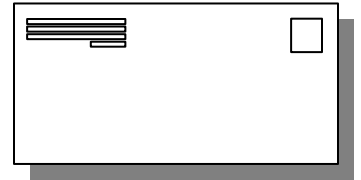
One creative person even made up a song based on one from the *Sound of Music*:

Doe – for all things the church needs to buy  
 Ray – a golden drop of God  
 Me – I'll help to support the community  
 Fa – I'd really like to be (away)  
 So – a quilt of common thread  
 La – a voice that's been heard  
 Ti – a gathering time  
 And that brings us back to doe!

Dear Mardi Tindal,

Coming to this consultation has changed me in a lot of different ways. It made me also realize a lot of things. I feel that not only I'm just a youth, but I'm being heard at the United Church. I would like to have more of this consultation and conference. I strongly believe that the United Church needs to be more diverse and in so doing, I need to set up and make some change.

Korlu



## 5. Implications

### How was the 2009 Consultation for Racialized Youth evaluated?

In evaluating the consultation, the young people were asked to reflect on four questions: what I liked, what I didn't like, what I learned, and what I would want to change.

Overwhelmingly, the youth really enjoyed the consultation. They shared that they had learned a great deal about themselves and others. They appreciated the chance to explore identity and culture. The setting was perfect to help create home (although they would have appreciated better food!). They were excited that they could share their voice with the church, and had much to say. They were also thankful to the leaders (both in their home communities, and the leaders at the consultation). They were appreciative of all of the people who helped them get here. Some wondered about having even more diversity in the leadership. Many named their desire to have another consultation like this one.

### Will there be another consultation?

This was intended to be a one-time consultation, but the youth said that they really want to have another one. They shared that it was a rare space where they could come together and really feel safe and comfortable.

Currently, there are no plans to have another gathering like this one, even though the attendees would like one! Still, the plans remain to take what happened at this consultation, and to integrate the learnings and insights into other learning circles. Staff and elected members will strategize more about what next steps would be helpful.

### Where will this report go?

- Task Group on Intercultural Ministries
- Intercultural and Diverse Communities in Ministry Unit-Wide Committee
- Racial Justice Advisory Committee
- Youth Advisory Group
- Moderator (since they wrote letters to her)

### What are the next steps?

- To circulate this report to several different communities for their learning and insights.
- To continue doing social networking—some of the youth from the consultation are already connected on Facebook, and some have regular conversations about life and many other things.
- To offer opportunities for leadership. Several young people shared that this consultation was a real learning space for them, and an opportunity to practice leadership. Already, some of the people from the consultation are being pulled into other things: three are on the design team for the national “Behold!” intercultural conference that will take place in 2011.
- For staff and elected members to take the content of this report. In particular, the response and the thinking of implications for next steps will be shaped by staff, the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries and the Racial Justice Advisory Committee. These groups will consider the questions “What are we hearing?” and “How does what we are hearing affect our work?”

Dear Moderator Mardi Tindal

First of all I would just like to say I have enjoyed my time here at Canterbury Hills! I've enjoyed the discussion, spiritual motivation, the teachings of the medicine wheel and the beautiful music.

I sincerely hope that there will be more events like this incredible youth consultation in the near future. Please keep in mind when you're planning events as this one that we as youths love to socialize so more group activities.

To continue on my experiences here I really enjoyed brainstorming and putting out ideas to make myself and my church better. I've learned that we all have potential, we just need that extra push, this was like an extra push, it has now encouraged me to invite more youths to attend church and find their peace as I have.

Well I should end it now probably due to the fact that you have a bunch more to read.

Blessings all around,  
Happy camper 😊

P.S. – I hope at the next consultation, you'll be able to attend!

