

## HYMNS THAT CELEBRATE AND STRENGTHEN THE INTERCULTURAL CHURCH

### From Voices United:

- 183 We Meet You, O Christ  
205 Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song  
268 Bring Many Names  
326 O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing  
331 The Church's One Foundation  
395 Come In, Come In and Sit Down  
402 We are One  
437 The Day You Gave Us, God, Is Ended  
467 One Bread, One Body  
579 The Church Is Wherever God's People  
595 The Servant Song  
600 When I Needed a Neighbour  
606 In Christ There Is No East or West  
627 Now There Is No Male or Female  
677 O God of Every Nation  
679 Let There Be Light  
691 Though Ancient Walls  
697 O for a World  
713 I See a New Heaven

### From More Voices:

- 1 Let Us Build a House (All Are Welcome)  
2 Come All You People (Uyai Mose)  
62 There Is Room for All (Chacun a sa place)  
138 My Love Colours Outside the Lines  
154 Deep in Our Hearts

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For more information on Canadian Multiculturalism Day and the contributions different cultural communities have made see [www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/multi\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/multi_e.cfm) or [www.pch.gc.ca](http://www.pch.gc.ca) (choose "Diversity and Multiculturalism" on the subjects menu). On the United Church website, go to [www.united-church.ca/planning/seasons/cultural](http://www.united-church.ca/planning/seasons/cultural).



In 2002, then-Governor General Adrienne Clarkson proclaimed June 27 each year as Canadian Multiculturalism Day to celebrate the contributions that Canadians of all cultural backgrounds have made to Canadian society. These worship suggestions could be used on the Sunday closest to June 27, or at another time.

### WELCOME

We are diverse peoples in Canada. The First Nations have been here for millennia. French people have been here since the early 1600s, and Black people began arriving shortly thereafter. British people began arriving in Canada in the early 1700s; Chinese people began arriving in the late 1700s. Our diasporic Canadian communities come from many different places and spaces—from all corners of the world. Let us affirm this diverse heritage with joy: one God, Creator of many peoples!

### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The time comes to gather all nations and languages;  
**All: They shall gather and see God's glory.**  
One: From east and west, north and south they will come  
**All: And will sit at table together  
in the peaceable realm of God.**

### OPENING PRAYER

God of history and God of all nations,  
you have called us to be in relationship with one another  
and promised to dwell wherever two or three are gathered.  
In Canada we are diverse people;  
called to live together  
from many different places and cultures.  
We are amazed by your wondrous deeds  
in creating different cultures, languages, and faces.  
Open our hearts that we may boldly search out  
and celebrate the treasures of diversity among us.  
In the name of Jesus, lover of all, we pray. Amen.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One, Source of Love, we confess that it is not always easy to live out our beliefs.

Sometimes our prejudices, our fears about difference, get in the way.

If we have rushed in, thinking we have all the answers, and ignored another's wisdom, forgive us.

If we have used the church's structure and regulations in a way to limit one another, forgive us.

If we have used our worship traditions in a way that limited another's access to you, forgive us.

Stretch us beyond our limitations, beyond our own imaginations of what could be.

Open us to the mystery and wonder of your creation that we might catch a glimpse of you.

Amen.

## CHILDREN'S TIME

Recommended reading: *In God's Name* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Jewish Lights, 1994). (The book is available through United Church Resource Distribution.)

All the people of the world set out to find God's name, and each of the many diverse seekers are sure that they alone have found the right name. Finally, they come together and learn God is more than any specific name.

## LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

One: God of a thousand names, we thought we knew you,

**All: as the strong father watching over us and holding us.**

One: Then we saw you as a mother, bending over to feed us.

**All: Then we found you as a friend walking our road with us.**

One: God of a thousand names, we thought we knew you,

**All: but you kept appearing in our lives  
through the people we met as:**

One: food for the hungry, water for the parched,

**All: rest for the weary, shock to the comfortable,**

One: healing to the suffering, liberation to the exploited,

**All: peace to the restless, home to the traveller,**

One: revelation to the seeking, love for the lonely.

**All: In all these experiences, we learned more about you.**

One: God of a thousand names, we thought we knew you,

**All: but these names could not contain you,  
the images were too small.**

One: Your love fills creation far beyond our naming or defining.

**All: Great Living God, always more and always there,  
praise you for your creation  
wondrously and fearfully made!**

## SERMON STARTERS

How does the multicultural face of God emerge in our congregation?

In our church? In our community? What are we doing and what can we do to address and celebrate the diversity of Canadian culture?

How can we become more welcoming of all? What challenges prevent all of God's people from full participation in our church?

- Genesis 22:1–14—What are we willing to sacrifice of our treasured traditions in order to allow something new and intercultural to develop? Note that it doesn't mean we will have to let go of everything—but that we must be willing to do so.
- Psalm 13—We've been separated by fear and arrogance for too long. We're ready for life together.
- Psalm 89:1–4, 15–18—Praise to God, the Creator of all.
- Romans 6:12–23—We are called to die to the old ways of exclusivity and be resurrected into a new life of hospitality and inclusivity.
- Matthew 10:40–42—We are intimately linked together in this work of God.

The United Church of Canada has committed itself to becoming an intercultural church. The United Church intentionally chose "intercultural" instead of "multicultural" to describe our vision of beloved community. Multiculturalism can be a simple celebration of food, fun, and festivals of different cultures while being relatively unchanged. Interculturalism, however, is a deep commitment to dialogue and power shifts among and between cultural groups, interactions, engagement, and transformation of all of God's peoples. On Multiculturalism Sunday, and throughout the year, we can remember our commitment to becoming an intercultural church community with God's grace.