

The Struggle of Acceptance: Diversity & Inclusiveness

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Objective

To gain knowledge of key considerations for a diverse and inclusive church.

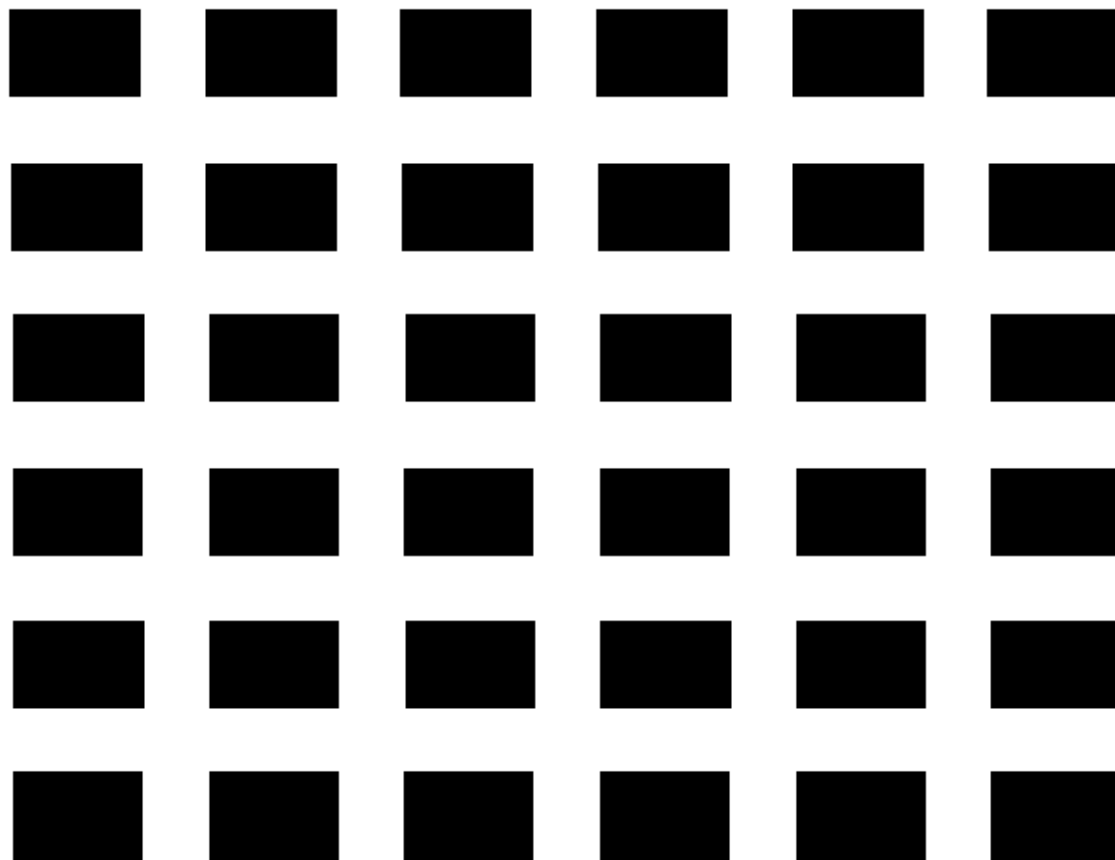
Examine & Discuss:

- Principles of diversity and inclusion
- Possible struggles of acceptance

Identify: Perceptions of diversity, inclusion, and what your church is doing

Recognize: Acceptance of others is a lifelong process

Consider: What you can do to make a difference



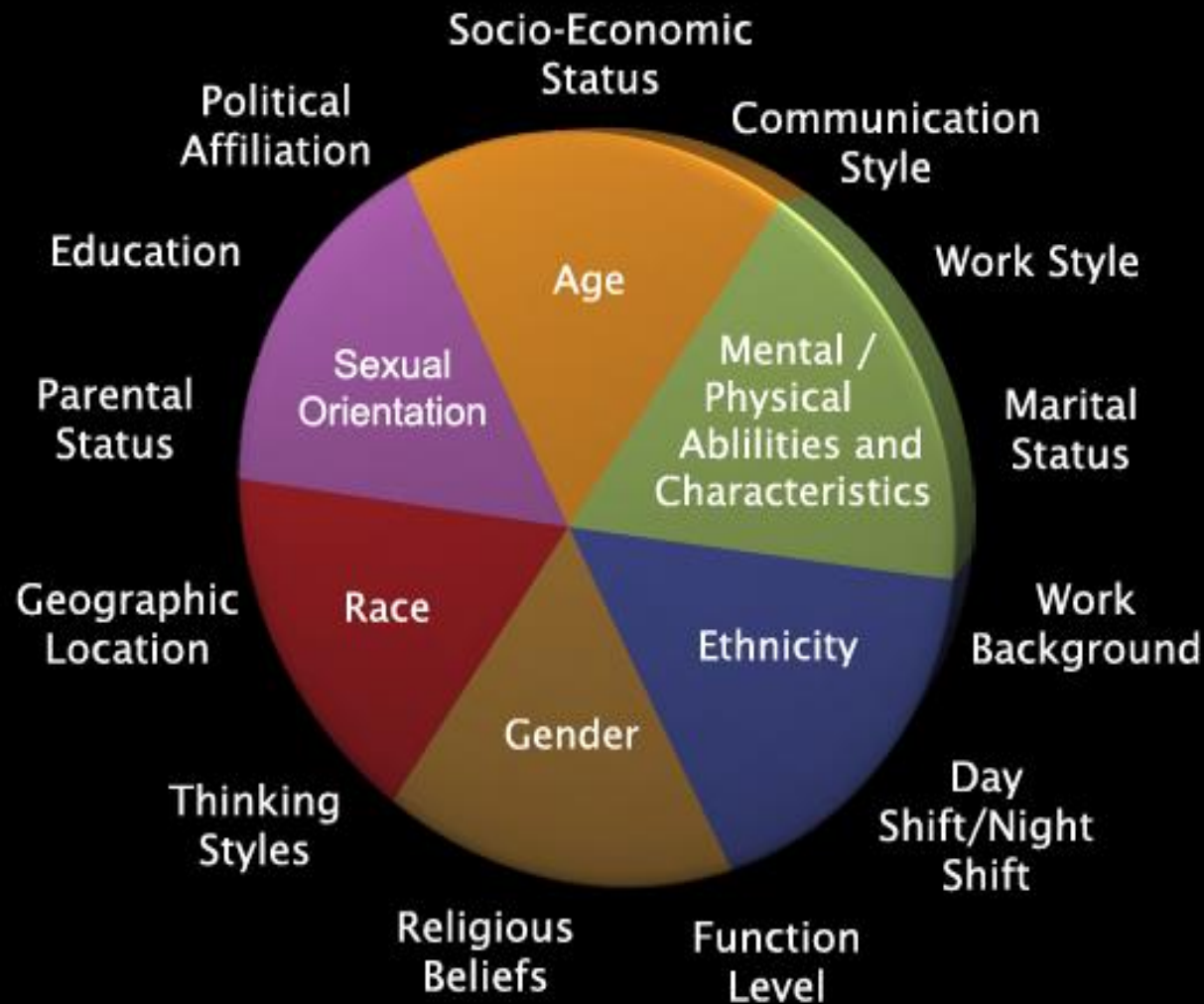


THE ENVIRONMENT

What is Diversity?



Dimensions of Diversity





What makes us who we are?

***What factors colour your
perception of the things around
you?***

What is Inclusion?

- ...about the needs of the whole community
- ...valuing other cultures
- ...understanding your church community
- ...celebrating diversity and individuality
- ...knowing and understanding the needs of people
- ...not just about access
- ...everybody's responsibility
- ...valuing everyone
- ...not an “add on” or an afterthought
- ...changing the way things are organized so everyone feels welcome
- ...more than just a policy

Inclusion ensures that...

- Everyone counts
- Everyone knows they count
- Everyone knows they can count on each other



Diversity and Inclusion Definitions

DIVERSITY

A range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. *(Ferris State University)*

Any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion. But it's more than this. We all bring with us diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles and cultures. As a source and driver of innovation, diversity is a "big idea" in business and in society. *(RBC)*

INCLUSION

Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. Eg. An inclusive university promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members. *(Ferris State University)*

Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. It's about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential. Inclusion should be reflected in an organization's culture, practices and relationships that are in place to support a diverse workforce. *(RBC)*

**In simple terms, diversity is being invited to the party;
inclusion is being asked to dance.**

Before the term - diversity & inclusion

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. *(NIV)*

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. *(KJV)*

Now, in Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek. There is no difference between slaves and free men. There is no difference between male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus.
(International Children's Bible)

Questions to ponder?

- ❖ How do you define diversity & inclusion?
- ❖ What does diversity & inclusion look like in your church?
- ❖ Building connections requires recognition of people's skills, knowledge and abilities, how do you build connections?
- ❖ How do you treat visitors that attend your church?



Do You Struggle Accepting Others?

- Biases and assumptions
 - “You don’t look like me”
 - “You don’t speak like me”
 - “Your not from my community”
 - “You won’t ‘fit’ with the committee” (where fit implies being “like us”)

- Identify an interpersonal challenge:
 - You “just don’t get” them
 - They “just don’t get you”
 - Someone who frustrates you... and/or you frustrate them



The Church

- Past - cornerstone of communities
- Present – the church is in the community
- Equip communities with the education tools to understand and to explain the social, political and economic pain that they experience.
- Historically, the church was the one place African Nova Scotian's had autonomy.



Today's Church



From Typing to Texting
Letters to Emails

What is a Generation?

In addition to coincidence of birth year grouping, a generation is also defined by common tastes, attitudes, and experience....

Those times encompass a myriad of circumstances – economic, social, sociological, and, of course, demographic.

Each generation has different:

- Expectations
- Values
- Behaviour
- Attitudes
- Motivations
- How they interact with others

Learning how to communicate can mean the difference between success and failure for the organization.

Generations Attending Church

Veterans or Traditionalists
(1900-1945)



Baby Boomers
(1946-1964)

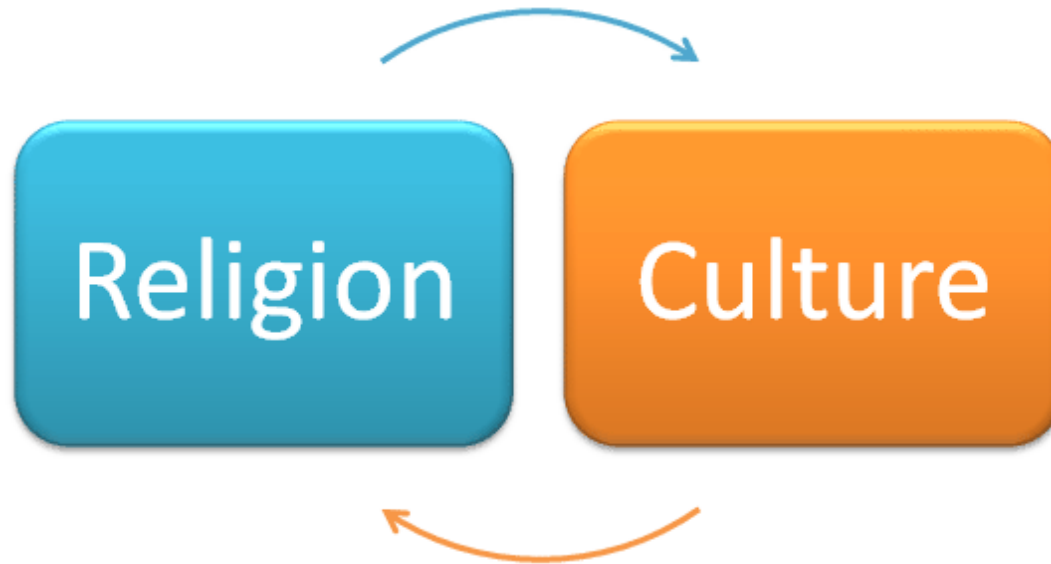


Generation X
(1965-1980)



Generation Next or
Millennials
(1981-1999)





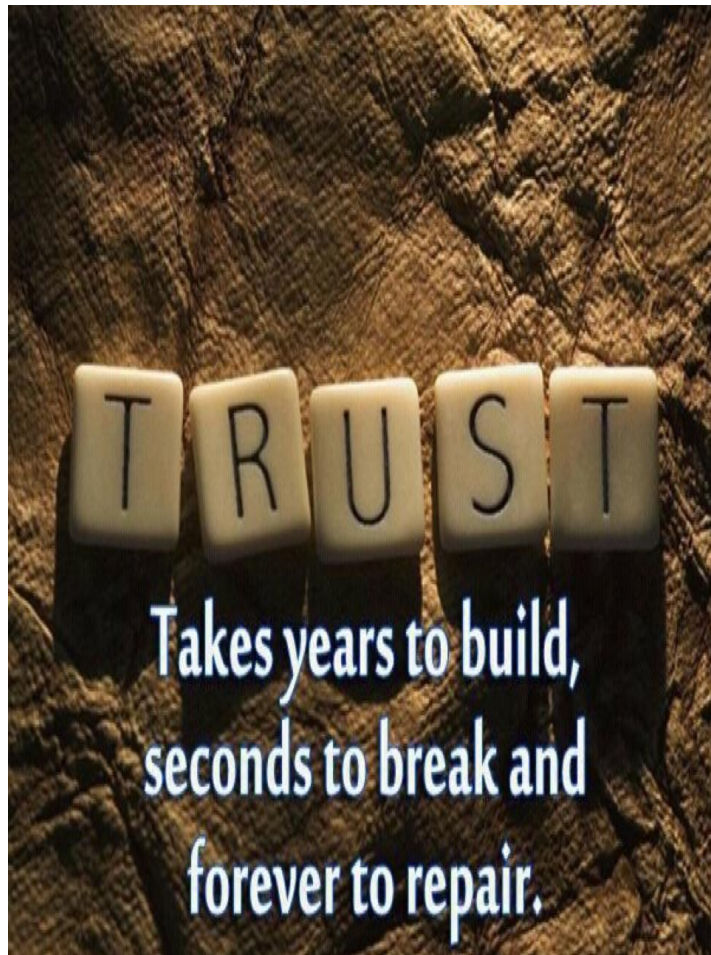
- Spirituals
- Gospel Music
- Praise & Worship
- Prayer
- Scripture

- Sermons
- Preaching Styles
- Fellowship
- Hip Hop Culture
- Social Media

Struggles arise when...

- There is lack of communication
- Fight or flight response to conflict
- Gossip and innuendo are tolerated
- Memory and unhealed wounds
- Limited understanding of diversity
- Confusing equity (treated fairly) and equality (treated the same)
- Lack of mechanism for complaints/conflict resolution
- Adversarial approach to addressing problems

Overcoming Struggles



Ways to Increase Inclusiveness

Call Call on people by name	Team – up Committees & Ministries should demonstrate team work	<i>Express</i> Let people express themselves in their own way
Mix Mix it up. Mix up people on various committees	Praise Praise people for their efforts	<i>Comfort</i> Create a comfortable environment for all to participate
Remove Remove obstacles to participation	Zip-it Be still and let others speak	Silence Silence negativity
Move Sit next to someone you don't know	Get to Know Get to know one another	<i>Assist</i> Help out where/when you can

Check List

- We welcome and embrace all who enter.
- All members of the congregation with appropriate skills and interests have the opportunity to share their gifts in the church's ministries and committees as members and/or leaders.
- Everyone is welcome to work in positions that fit their gifts without limiting them to the stereotypical roles. For example, men can staff the kitchen; women can manage and count the money.
- We respond to the needs of our members by providing child care (Sunday school) and accessible facilities.
- We host opportunities on a regular basis for socializing, networking, worship, mission work and celebration with persons from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.
- We participate in community-building opportunities. For example working on a community project together.
- We advocate for the dignity and rights of all persons in the community.
- We support and/or participate mission trips to/in another country.
- Our leaders strive to demonstrate by words and actions that they regard all persons equally.

Check List (cont'd)

- We welcome and embrace women and men as pastors and guest speakers regardless of their ethnicity, culture and gender. Women are not invited solely to speak on Mother's Day, but at other times as well.
- Our leaders and the congregation receive training on diversity and inclusion on a regular basis.
- We acknowledge the reality that sexual abuse, racial/gender harassment can happen, even in the church. Therefore, we welcome resources and education about sexual abuse and develop effective policies and procedures to help the church prevent and address sexual misconduct.
- Our leaders receive physiological health and safety training to help address present day issues.
- Our church leaders know and teach that the congregation is connected to the larger church body (AUBA).
- As a congregation, we strive to be an inclusive church and community and recognize that we all have a part to play in the growth of the church and it's not only the work of a few persons.

WHAT'S MISSING

Personal Responsibility

we all have a role to play!

THANK YOU!