

Article

Toward the Vision of Revelation: Multicultural Worship in a Korean Context

Hwarang Moon 

Korea Theological Seminary, Kosin University, Cheonan 31071, Korea; blauw100@daum.net

Abstract: From the end of the 1980s, when foreign workers poured into Korea, until 1995, when there was a significant increase in international marriages, a multicultural situation has slowly been developing in Korea. However, because the traditional emphasis has been on a single-race nation, the Korean Church has not shown much concern for the multicultural situation. Apart from some megachurches and missionary groups, the Korean Church has not been concerned with inviting immigrants and receiving them as full church members. Recently, due to a rapidly aging Korean society and the influx of immigrants entering the workforce, Korea has abruptly changed into a multicultural society. Catching up with this change, the church has started to study building a multicultural church and shifting a congregation to a multicultural church; however, almost all of these studies focus on mission strategy, leadership, or working through conflicts in the church. Currently, there are a lack of studies on worship, specifically, how to facilitate worship among people from different cultural backgrounds and how worship can draw a multicultural congregation together as one body. This chapter will study how a multicultural church can plan its Sunday public worship from a liturgical and theological perspective. Additionally, I will research how a congregation made up of people whose cultural and theological backgrounds are different can become one body in worship. For this purpose, I will examine a multicultural church in Korea, mainly focusing on how the order and elements of worship can develop understanding and unity among the people. Based on this study, I will suggest some liturgical ideas and valuable strategies for multicultural worship in Korea with a sample liturgy of multicultural worship.



Citation: Moon, Hwarang. 2022. Toward the Vision of Revelation: Multicultural Worship in a Korean Context. *Religions* 13: 171. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020171>

Academic Editor: Eunjoo Mary Kim

Received: 31 December 2021

Accepted: 10 February 2022

Published: 16 February 2022

Publisher's Note: MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2022 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Keywords: multicultural worship; liturgy; inculturation; worship and culture; Korean church

1. Introduction

In the Book of Revelation, there is a very emotional scene: “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Rev. 7: 9–10).

The vision which John the apostle saw—God’s people from all of the world worshipping and praising God in one voice—leaves a deep impression and a challenge. Let us think about this scene: multitudes praising God before His throne, transcending nationality, race, gender, and social status. Is not it impressive? In Korea, a gospel song, inspired by this text, has been loved by many church people for a long time.¹

However, when I see the reality of worship in Korea, there are invisible walls between people. There are not only racial conflicts, but also intergenerational conflicts, sharp oppositions in political positions, and conflicts among regions. Even though they are Christians who believe in one God, they do not enjoy unity. I studied in the United States for about 8 years and visited many American churches. It was not easy to find churches which embody true multicultural worship there. The same is true for Korea. Korea is a country that prides itself on being composed of a single ethnic group.² Although people

from many ethnic groups and many countries have come to Korea, it is not easy to find a multicultural church. My denomination (Kosin) has about 2100 churches with a long history and tradition, but only one multicultural church.³ The situation of other denominations in Korea is not much different. Some mega churches offer special worship services conducted in another language, but in a strict sense, they are not multicultural churches.⁴

Is the vision in the Book of Revelation just an eschatological picture? The reality and the ideal are different; therefore, should we just wait for the day of the Lord's second coming in the tension between the already and the not-yet? Perhaps one of the chief characteristics of the image of worship in the Bible is inclusiveness (Vanderwell 2008, pp. 22–23). All generations, all abilities, and anyone can come to God. As an example, Acts 2 shows how the dispersion and scattering of language caused by the Tower of Babel incident in Genesis 11 is restored by God's grace.

While some ask if multicultural worship is necessary, I believe unity must be emphasized in our worship. Even if we have different national and cultural backgrounds, we should seek unity where we can worship God together with one faith, believing in one Bible.

In this respect, multicultural worship is a monumental task for the 21st century. In particular, Korea, which is rapidly transforming into a multicultural society due to migration and an increase in Korean marriages to foreigners, must be able to present a healthy theology and vision for a multicultural Korean church.

In this paper, the situation of multicultural churches in Korea will briefly be reviewed through case studies. Even though there are several multicultural worship services offered, they are operated by non-native Koreans. Therefore, in this paper, I will focus on mapping a proposal for a church in which both Koreans and non-Koreans participate in worship together and share leadership of multi-cultural congregations. Reflecting on various theological and practical issues related to multicultural worship, I will discuss how members from various backgrounds can be united in worship and in the life of the church, actively and positively participating in worship. Furthermore, through sample liturgy, I will present worship ideas that can be practiced in the multicultural context.

2. Case Study: City Center Church in Ulsan

Ulsan City Center Church⁵ was established on 6 January 2019 in Ulsan. Koreans who split from the Ulsan Church, including English-speaking believers and various workers from Asia, gathered together to worship and start the new church. In the early days, senior Pastor Shin Chi-heon led the worship service twice, once for the Korean-speaking congregation and once for the English-speaking congregation. However, because the congregations were separated according to language, it did not represent true multi-cultural worship.

Fully bilingual pastor Kim Jeong-won took office in July 2019 and began to consolidate all worship services. All people, regardless of their nationality or language, gathered in one place to worship. As Pastor Shin gave the sermon in Korean, Pastor Kim translated it into English simultaneously. Although it was an advantage that all the congregation could attend one worship service, there was also the disadvantage because the preaching time was doubled. Additionally, the translating interrupted the flow of the sermon and made it difficult for people to concentrate.

Thus, in May 2020, worship was again divided into an English-speaking service and a worship service for Korean-speaking members of the congregation. However, they still wanted to promote the idea that all belonged to one church and were one body. To that end, a united worship and sacrament service were held on the first week of every month. Once a month, they could see each other face to face and worship together, and through the sacrament of sharing the body and blood of the Lord, they were able to confirm that they were one and reaffirm that everyone was a member of Center City Church.

In general, churches in Korea practice the Zwingli style of passing the elements, but this church seeks a more visible oneness as everyone comes forward and breaks bread. After

the service, everyone shares a potluck meal. By eating, drinking, and socializing together, their mutual understanding grows despite differences in culture and language. Above all, the Lord's Supper and the fellowship meal presents a picture of how a relationship with God leads to unity among His people.

In this overall worship structure, they seek to harmoniously blend various cultures into one service via the order and elements of worship. One area where this can be seen is in the praise music. In the case of united worship, the leader of the praise team selects a Korean praise song as well as an English praise song. Many Korean hymns are foreign adaptations. Songs composed in Korea can also easily be translated into English. Modern technology has made it easy to see the lyrics in English or Korean on a large screen. Ideally, under the guidance of the praise team, the members participate in the singing of hymns and praise songs in their language without any trouble.

For the sermons in a united worship service, the pastor delivers the sermons in Korean and an English translation is displayed on the screen. For the remaining three weeks, the pastor preaches the same text in Korean in the morning and in English in the afternoon. In other words, they are doing their best to become a multicultural church in the truest sense possible.

3. Theology of Multicultural Worship

It is not easy for congregations containing diverse languages and diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to truly unify in one church service and to feel a sense of belonging as one family. Many large churches in Korea have separate worship services and meetings with members who speak English, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Mongolian, but there is little fellowship among the groups—only event meetings (Cho et al. 2012, p. 144). A multicultural church in the true sense includes meeting together for worship and fellowship. Then, what theological considerations are needed for multicultural worship to be successfully established in the church? Before discussing the contents and forms of worship, we should carefully consider the following questions.

3.1. *How Can We View the Relationship between Worship and Culture in the Context of the Korean Church?*

Examining the relationship between worship and culture is an essential task for understanding the past path of church worship and forecasting future needs. Above all else, the "Nairobi Statement", presented at the Lutheran World Federation, offers a deep insight into the relationship between worship and culture, setting out four categories for this relationship: "transcultural worship", "multicultural worship", "contextual worship", and "intercultural worship" (Lutheran World Federation 2014, pp. 137–42). When worship is transcultural, we find common orders and texts throughout the whole church. When worship is contextual, cultural or indigenous symbols are incorporated in worship. When worship is countercultural, it contrasts biblical and worldly perspectives. When worship is cross-cultural, it uses various culture's hymn and expression. The Korean Church's worship has developed and expressed all four of these characteristics. Even though people tend to adhere to traditional texts or orders, worship will evolve while considering the epoch's culture and people's thought.

There are four factors to consider. First, it is necessary to examine the context of the Korean Church. Multicultural churches exist everywhere in the world, but they are greatly influenced by location and culture. Korean society is generally kind to guests from overseas, but because of the strong pride of being a single ethnicity, they are not used to fully accepting foreigners as members of the community. Statistics showing that there are few multicultural churches in each denomination prove this clearly (Kim 2021, pp. 112–28).

Korean conservative churches, which constitute the majority of all churches in Korea, have a very narrow theological views about contact with other denominations' cultures, except those of Reformed and Presbyterian churches of the Western tradition. In particular, there is an implicit fear that the influx of various cultures may result in syncretism.⁶

Therefore, in order for a multicultural church to take root in the Korean church, it is necessary to first analyze the boundary between worship and culture through biblical and theological studies.

Next, it should be made clear that various forms of worship have existed throughout the history of Christianity, and worship can still evolve. In general, for Korean church members, the standard for proper worship tends to be limited to the worship they have experienced in the past and the form taught by the theologian or pastor whom they respect (Moon 2020b, p. 38). However, new forms of worship can emerge, and some practices can be excluded if they do not fit the cultural code of the day. Therefore, we must guard against the fallacy of hasty generalizations that limit the ideal model to the thoughts of the Reformers from the 16th century or for only certain types of churches.

Third, the theology of multicultural worship should incorporate praise and worship practices of other countries and churches with an open mind and be able to utilize the things that are necessary and useful for their context and circumstances. For example, various praise songs from overseas churches have a great influence on the worship music of Korean churches. In particular, various modern praises, starting with the “praise and worship movement”, have been loved by Korean churches across denominations. Additionally, the Korean church needs to take a broader interest in the music of Third World churches and the singing of the Psalms. In addition, it is necessary to learn and study various forms of prayer of the liturgical church, ways to commemorate rites of passage, and traditions related to seasonal worship in order to create indigenous types of ceremonies (Moon 2020a, pp. 116–46).

Finally, tolerating and pursuing diversity does not mean to simply create another form of worship. Above all, we need to realize that true worship has a transcultural character and pursue the development of worship from a universal church perspective (Witvliet 2003, pp. 119–22). There are common elements in various worship services, such as the Word and the Lord’s Supper as the center of worship; one profession of faith, one Bible, and one faith; and the confession of a Triune God. Being concerned about the transcultural character of worship while respecting cultural diversity will reflect the fact that all Christians are brothers and sisters in God.

3.2. Theological Reflections for Multicultural Worship

To build a theological foundation for multicultural worship, the following questions should be considered.

3.2.1. How Can the Cultural Conflict Problem That Occurs in the Context of Inculturation Be Solved?

For example, when a Korean congregation, an English-speaking congregation, and an Asian congregation gather, at least three cultures collide. In other congregations, the traditional church culture of Korea and the culture of young people collide. How can we wisely harmonize the various aspects of the relationship between worship and culture?

In multicultural worship, the cultures of the participants merge. Through this meeting, cultures are fused, although sometimes there is friction. Multicultural worship is not only a meeting of culture and culture, but more complex communication takes place (Kim 2017, pp. 111–12), i.e., differences in language, race, gender, generational gaps occur simultaneously in one place and time.

The success or failure of multicultural worship depends on how this conflict is handled. The clash of ideas about worship according to cultural differences is inevitable in some way. Even in the worship of a single ethnic church rather than a multi-ethnic church, there is a serious generational gap (Allen and Ross 2012, pp. 248–49). Worship with people from different countries, however, is more complex. How can we lead these types of conflict into creative fusion?

The leadership must manage conflicts within the congregation. The leadership can help solve theological issues and support the laity who share their thoughts with the leader.

Therefore, for the successful inculturation of worship, the worship team, including a lead pastor as well as an associate pastor or lay leader representing each language congregation, must develop multicultural worship through constant dialogue and experimentation (Duck 2013, pp. 51–55).

3.2.2. As at the Heart of the Sacrosanctum Concilium, How Will the Worship Be Properly Structured for “Active” and “Positive” Participation of the Congregation?

Sacrosanctum Concilium, the main document of the Second Vatican Council, emphasized the “active, active and full participation” of the congregation (Flannery 1975, pp. 16–17). This spirit has led the worship renewal movement since the 1960s and has had a profound impact on the worship in churches around the world. This spirit should be equally embodied in multicultural worship.

Multicultural worship does not happen automatically by simply placing different congregations in the same space. If two people are in the same room and do not have real relationship, there is no communion. However, if two people are in a different space, they can have a sense of unity regard of their physical location (Baillie 1957, p. 99). Above all, the worship service must be carefully planned so that the hearts and minds of the participants will be awakened to actively participate in worship. Consider these attributes of the congregation: What is the composition of the church?; What percentage of people speak each language?; What worship traditions are represented?; What are their thoughts on traditional and modern culture? Factors such as these should be sufficiently taken into account.

Furthermore, among the elements of worship, there should be various elements in which the members can directly move their bodies and open their mouths to participate. Instead of lip syncing, people need to offer praise with their voice. People should be able to hear their own voice and the voices of others when they sing together, and the appropriate ratio of familiar praise to unfamiliar praise should be considered.⁷

In addition, all the members of the church should be able to actually participate in the various elements of worship such as confessions of faith, prayers of penance, declarations of forgiveness, united prayer, reading, and offering. This requires the flexibility to break the mold of traditional thinking. In general, in Korea, those who majored in systematic and historical theology judge worship based on which practices are right (while focused on biblical and historical warranties based on their theological tendency) and which are wrong. However, a liturgical theological approach is different. Liturgical theologians tend to be interested in how to enrich worship by recognizing that various liturgies have existed through diachronic and synchronic studies (Senn 2012, pp. 17–41).

For active and positive participation in worship, it is necessary to look at the problem of worship from a liturgical theological point of view. Additionally, instead of simply following tradition, we must grasp the thoughts and characteristics of people living together in the same era and in the same region.

3.2.3. Because Worship Forms the Faith of the People, by What Criteria Will Worship Be Structured in a Congregation with Diverse Theological and Practical Backgrounds?

The last thing to consider is the principles that will guide worship in multicultural churches. It is by no means easy to plan a worship service for a congregation with diverse language, culture, and faith backgrounds. The various religious traditions and experiences of each individual can be thought of as like a beautiful pearl. The question is how to sew it into a beautiful necklace.

The problem is that there is no guarantee that multicultural worship will be successful by just accepting all the worship practices into one worship service. Of course, an open attitude toward everything is essential. However, it is necessary to seriously consider how to connect the elements rather than just having them parallel.

Standards will depend on the theology of the denomination, the traditions of the church, and the characteristics of the congregations of the newly formed multicultural church. However, the Word and the sacraments are the core components of worship. Wor-

ship is a two-way movement in which God comes to us, and we meet and fellowship with God; this will be the unchanging criteria for the structure and content of worship.⁸

The theology of multicultural worship will be derived from the field of multicultural worship. At the same time, the theology of multicultural worship will influence the practice of multicultural worship because practice and theology are closely interrelated (Anderson 2003, pp. 24–28). The theology of worship and the practice of worship shape the believer's faith. By participating in worship, the believer receives the message and meaning contained in the worship service. Additionally, that meaning accumulates in the mind of the believer and forms the character of the believer's faith (Anderson 2003, p. 58).

Therefore, multicultural churches must constantly engage in theological thinking and theological work. This is not just the work of academic scholars. The reflection on multicultural worship can be considered by everyone who attends the worship.⁹ What they experience and feel should be shared and communicated with those who are constantly planning worship, and should become an important principle for guiding the worship of the church.

4. Practice of Multicultural Worship

Practice and theory are closely related, like a Möbius strip. A theory emerges from the practice, but the theory also changes the practice while correcting the process and making it anew. Practice itself has a formative power (Moon 2015b, pp. 19–21). We need to look at and envision the core practices of multicultural worship that play an essential role in forming a multicultural church.

4.1. Presenting Creative Liturgical Ideas

As we have seen so far, multicultural worship cannot have a uniform recipe. This is because each church has its own context, variety of languages, ethnic groups, and cultural environment. Of course, the structure of worship has similarities across cultures and times; however, the details of worship can be planned creatively. Creativity seems to be the most necessary element for the successful implementation of multicultural worship. How can the liturgy be both biblical and acceptable to members of the church? Can worship successfully be re-created while balancing between the context of this era and rooted in tradition?¹⁰

In this section, I will suggest some liturgical ideas which can impact on the formation of multicultural worship. All elements of worship and ideas will be aimed at the theme of unity of the congregation.

a. Welcome and Passing the Peace

The welcoming message of the host, proclaimed at the beginning of the worship service, should make everyone present feel that the Triune God is welcoming them. Furthermore, a handshake or a light hug among the members of the congregation visibly demonstrates God's acceptance and unity, which must be continually proclaimed and practiced (Witvliet 2005, pp. 10–11).

b. In the Lord's Supper

Rather than utilizing the distribution method of communicants passing the sacramental elements to one another, which is common in evangelical, free church, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches, the Lord's Supper should allow members to come to the front and see each other's faces, and possibly choose the method of intinction. As they look at each other's faces and share the bread and the cup, the members can feel the sense of unity physically and symbolically.

c. Hymn and Praise

The importance of praise has been emphasized in contemporary worship. While impacted by the praise and worship movement, the Korean Church's music in worship is considered as important as the sermon in a public worship (Duck 2013, p. 44). A hymn is sometimes called a tuneful prayer. The lyrics of the hymn and the act of singing together

can be a very important factor in unity. Therefore, careful consideration is required in the selection of songs. In addition, proper sound adjustment is necessary so that the members can participate fully in the singing and not merely be an audience, and it must be a true congregational hymn. The lyrics of the hymn should be clearly visible on the screen, and it is also necessary to organize the list of hymns that whole congregations know well.

d. Offering

Offering is not just a donation, but part of offering our whole self to God (Bradshaw 2002, p. 336). Although the method varies according to the church, the spirit of unity can be expressed in the act of dedication. Many Korean churches set the offering box in front of the sanctuary gate. However, it will be better to have an offering sequence in the worship service, to emphasize the unity.

The office of usher can allow people from various countries to form groups to serve. The people who serve in the worship service should be diverse, and it is necessary to demonstrate through the team of ushers that everyone can participate.

e. Prayer

There are many different prayer patterns. Among them, Korean tongsung kido, a vocalized form of group prayer with enthusiastic shouting or glossolalia, has received worldwide attention (Joo and Kim 2006, p. 486). During the regular prayer time, under the guidance of the moderator, various prayer topics are prayed out loud and fervently. As shown in Acts 2, if congregations who speak different languages pray aloud concerning the same topic, it is very special to feel one heart and one accord. Above all, because there are some people who sometimes speak a glossolalia, that time can be special that transcends many different languages. In addition, it is important that the order of intercessory prayer is provided and prayer topics are presented in the bulletin or on the screen, so that the members can know the prayer topics of the other members and feel unity while praying together.

f. Reading the Bible

Bible reading is not simply reading the text for preaching, but a reverent and holy moment in which God's will is proclaimed (Duck 2013, p. 65). Following the Reformed and the Korean church tradition, preachers and clergy usually perform the reading, but in multicultural worship, it is good for people of various backgrounds and age groups, such as children, young people, and older people, to participate through the reading of the Word.¹¹ Through this, we can show that our public worship is a group of people of all generations and of all abilities, and we can feel a sense of unity.

4.2. Strategies for Multicultural Worship

Multicultural worship requires the long-term effort, patience, and cooperation of the pastor, staff, and all members of the church. Above all, wise strategies are required for successful development.

a. Make the Congregation Cohesive Through the Message

For multicultural worship to be successfully established, it is important that the hearts of the members unite as one. For this, the senior pastor needs to emphasize the importance of unity during sermons and through various biblical texts. It is necessary to continuously reveal the pastor's pastoral philosophy through his column in the weekly bulletin as well as the sermon. Furthermore, it is critical to draw attention to unity through special lectures and discussion sessions.

A single drop of water is powerless, but a continuous drop of water can provide the power to change (Moon 2015b, p. 72). Likewise, if the message of the unity of the church is delivered from a long-term perspective rather than a one-time slogan, it can have a great impact on the members over time.

b. Teamwork through Worship Teams

In order to minimize conflict among members of various cultural backgrounds, it is necessary to systematize clergy, worship teams, and leadership groups so that diverse people can work together (Duck 2013, pp. 51–55). In particular, the worship planning team should consist of people from different countries. This team can identify in advance which hymns are familiar, which hymns the congregation needs to learn, what symbols might be useful in worship, and what cultural characteristics are present. If cultural clashes and differences are prevented through the planning team, experiences of unity and grace in worship can increase (Van Opstal 2016, pp. 81–90). This will eventually play a major role in establishing multicultural worship.

c. Connection between the Lord's Supper and Communal Meal

One of the precious traditions of the Korean Church is to serve lunch after Sunday morning worship. Lunch has become an essential element because many Korean churches offer Sunday morning worship and Sunday afternoon worship consecutively. However, this lunch has a unique meaning. It is not simply to fill the stomach, but is regarded as a central activity of the church community. Although early morning prayer is known to the world as a unique aspect of the Korean Church, I believe that the communal meal is also a key activity in the Korean Church (Moon 2015a, p. 231). However, if we examine it carefully, this communal meal is closely related to the Eucharist. If the Lord's Supper teaches that reconciliation with God should lead to reconciliation with other people, the communal meal can be regarded as a unique aspect of the Korean Church that is synthesized into the practice of the church from a hermeneutic point of view. It is to put the teachings learned during public worship into practice immediately after the declaration of blessing. In multicultural worship, this is essential. Eating together demonstrates a tangible unity, as people open themselves up to each other and come together as one family.

d. Solving the Problem of Different Languages

The most difficult problem in multicultural worship is that people who speak different languages are worshipping together in one place. As evident in the Tower of Babel incident, language separation is closely related to the scattering of people (Waltke 2001, p. 182). Conversely, using the same language is essential to unity. However, one language cannot dominate in a multicultural context. Of course, this is possible for a long-term strategy, but it is necessary to gather wisdom because the church must survive in a multicultural situation.

Mega churches, such as Willow Creek Church, provide Chinese, Korean, and Spanish services through wireless devices and translation teams. Even if the pastor preaches in English, the congregation simultaneously listens to the sermon in a language with which they are familiar, and there is no sense of alienation. However, in general, small-sized multicultural churches lack the finances and manpower.

However, using several languages in parallel during one worship service can make the worship time somewhat long, which is difficult for the congregation.¹² Thankfully, the developments of modern science and technology are of great help in realizing various languages in one worship using a large screen. Churches should make good use of bulletins and screens to familiarize the members with multiculturalism.

5. A Sample Liturgy with Annotations

Based on the practical and theological aspects of multicultural worship that have been discussed so far, I will design a sample liturgy that can be implemented in the context of the Korean Church. Various worship styles exist all over the world; thus, various worship services can be planned for a Korean context. While respecting the structure of traditional worship, I will consider the cultural background of people living in the present age and help the members to actively participate in worship.

5.1. Description of the Liturgical Context, Theme, and Uniqueness of This Liturgy

In general, Korean Presbyterian churches usually do not select a Bible text according to the Christian year or lectionary; instead, they preach thematic sermons or on a topic left up to the discretion of the pastor.¹³ Public worship style is generally a mixed form of frontier tradition, evangelical worship, and Pentecostal worship, regardless of the denomination (Kim 2012, pp. 83–84). However, in a multicultural context, there are members who have experienced various worship styles; therefore, in this project, I would like to present a worship format that organically considers various things.

Assuming that there will be more multicultural churches in the future, I will present a worship plan for Second Sunday after Easter in 2024.¹⁴ The texts presented by the lectionary are Acts 4:32–35, Psalm 133, 1 John 1:1–2:2, and John 20:19–31. The reason why I chose this Sunday is because the texts emphasize “the unity of the saints”. The risen Lord has called us to the Church. We are called to be children of God. As children, we should seek unity and have a mission to embody in our life on earth.

In general, there are many English-speaking congregations and congregations from Asia in multicultural churches in Korea. Therefore, I will plan a Sunday morning service (with the Lord’s Supper) in a situation where English, Korean, and Asian languages (Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, etc.) coexist.

5.2. The Full Manuscript of the Liturgy with Annotations That Call Attention to Distinctive Liturgical Characteristics

Opening Praise: The worship service begins with a contemporary style of praise and worship. To evoke a sense of unity and the theme of worship, it is important to incorporate songs familiar to the entire congregation. Playlists are as follows:

1. “Blessed be the Lord God Almighty” (Bob Fitts) (Key of C, 4/4); 2. “He is Our Peace” (Kandela Groves) (Key of E, 4/4); 3. “Let there be Love” (Dave Bilbrough)/“Shout to the North” (Martin Smith) (Key of F, 6/8, Medley)

These gospel songs are very familiar and have long been loved by congregations around the world. The songs are composed of simple melodies, so that various members of the congregation can easily sing with one voice. The first song is in 4/4 beat, and is a song that vigorously proclaims the reign of the Lord God Almighty.

The second song repeats the confession of ‘He is Our Peace’ in the verse and chorus, praising Jesus for breaking down barriers and becoming peace for all of us. The confession that He carries and cares for our burdens in the chorus leads to the prayer message of the next song.

The third song connects two songs in 6/8 beat as a medley. It has a bright and cheerful atmosphere, and as the song progresses from the previous to the next, the melody rises and ends with a powerful proclamation by adding rhythm (using syncopation) and accents. In the latter song, verse 1 and verse 2 can be sung alternately by male and female congregations (antiphone). The message is also clearly reinforced. The first song prays for the love of Christ to fill us and reflects the message of 1 John. The second song is a powerful praise in which brothers and sisters are united by the savior, the King, Jesus all over the land. The four songs flow as follows: doxology, confession, exhortation for each other, and praise and proclamation all together.

Confession of faith: There are several confessions, and among them the Apostle’s Creed is most famous and widely used in Korean Church. Even though people’s languages are different, the contents of faith are the same: this gives worship a transcultural character. English, Korean, and the corresponding language (Asian, for example) is displayed on the screen. All who are physically able stand and confess their faith.

Prayer for Illumination: The whole congregation reads the bulletin and the prayers on the screen together, with subtitles. Through the prayer for illumination, people pray that the Holy Spirit, the author of the Bible, will open people’s hearts and make people understand the Word. In general, prayer for illumination is the responsibility of the minister in charge of the Word. However, because all the saints pray with one voice, it can engender

a feeling of unity. In addition, people could implicitly realize that preaching is not a time for listening to human words, but a moment when God's will is revealed through the preacher.

First Reading: Acts 4:32–35: The first reading is carried out by a Filipino among the congregation. On the screen, both Korean and English subtitles should be presented so that people can grasp the meaning at the same time.

Hymn Singing: Between the first and second readings, the whole congregation sings Psalm 133, which was published by the Christian Reformed Church.¹⁵ Psalm singing between the readings comes from Church tradition. Singing Psalm 133 has several merits. First, the lyrics of the Psalm tune highlight the themes of worship. Second, while singing the Psalm, which is arranged with a modern tune, people can more vividly be immersed in the lyrics and can have enthusiasm for oneness.

Second Reading: 1 John 1:1–2:2: The second reading is carried out by a Korean from the congregation. Of course, at that time, English and Filipino subtitles should be presented on the screen.

Third Readings: John 20:10–31: The third reading is performed in English. Bible reading is a very important factor in worship. Therefore, each reader should practice, and their reading should be examined by minister before the worship service.

Sermon: The sermon delivers the message, focusing on Psalm 133. The main points are as follows: God wants a congregation to enjoy real unity; God said that it is so good and beautiful to live a faithful life with unity in the church, but, historically, church has had sinful divisions; there has been lack of real hospitality and union even though people have emphasized doctrinal correctness and theological opinion; ultimately, the whole church must fulfill the will of God, as revealed through the Word.

Lord's Supper: The overall structure of the sacrament is similar to that of any other church. However, all the members of the church come to the front of the chapel and receive bread and cups face to face. Of course, the method of intinction is also a possible choice. However, rather than passing bread and cup to one another after the deacons deliver the elements to people on the aisle from table, it will be better using a method that builds a sense of community. Above all, the order of offering is included during the Eucharist. The offering in the Eucharist is used for *diaconia*, as in the case of John Calvin, aiming to help poor people (Chapell 2009, p. 24). In particular, there are many cases of economic difficulties among multicultural families in Korea. It is stated in advance that it will be used for all members and the unbelieving families they recommend.

Congregational Hymn: At the end of the Lord's Supper, the whole congregation sings The Lord's Prayer, composed by A. H. Malotte, which is loved by Korean Church.¹⁶ As the lyrics ask the Lord for His will to be done on earth, the members come to realize that prayer is not about putting our will to God, but rather our obedience to God's will. It will be an important opportunity to respond to the message of unity revealed throughout worship.

Benediction: Based on 2 Corinthians 13:13, the service concludes with the following benediction, emphasizing one body: "May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us, and the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ, our Lord".

Procession: Committed to living a life of unity in the Lord, singing praises, the congregation moves to a place for a communal meal. The orchestra and worship team play this song until the whole congregation moves out from the sanctuary. The hymn to be sung at this time is "Come, Christians, Join to Sing".¹⁷ This bright and cheerful hymn emotionally emphasizes the joy of oneness in the presence of God. This joy is connected to praise to the God.

Communal Meal: Through the Lord's Supper, the members learn and feel that fellowship with God should lead to fellowship with neighbors. This lesson is further reinforced and embodied in the communal meal. Although the church prepares basic food, it is advertised in advance that it is a potluck, and the members should bring their own food as well. People will have the opportunity to share special foods from different countries and

to have real fellowship. A phenomenon often observed in repeated communal meals is that people have a tendency to sit with their close friends. Therefore, the worship planning team should come up with detailed ideas for each communal meal so that various congregations can be mixed and members can develop real fellowship.

5.3. Evaluation of the Liturgy with Its Benefits and Challenges

The above sample liturgy is based on the theme of the unity of all the saints, and the Word, the Lord's Supper, and various elements of worship are juxtaposed. As Gordon Lathrop talked about the effect of juxtaposition, the Word and the Lord's Supper become the central thing, and the elements of biblical worship are arranged around it, producing the following effects (Lathrop 1998, pp. 51–52). The message "God has commanded us to be one, we have a mission to realize this unity in the church gatherings and in the lives of the saints" penetrates and echoes in the hearts of the participants.

The above liturgy is a delicate balance between modern worship and traditional worship. The overall structure of worship tends to respect the traditions of the church. However, its contents have a cultural form that can reach the saints living in modern times. For example, Bible reading is a traditional form, but it emphasizes the meaning of participation while expanding readers and including various people. Additionally, the use of various praises encourages members to voluntarily open their lips and actively participate in worship. The lyrics of the hymn called tuneful prayer permeate into the body and mind of the saints in the process of utterance (Harmon 1998, pp. 271–73).

Above all, when all the saints participate in the sacrament meeting together, see each other as they receive the elements, and confirm their unity, it reflects the message of the entire worship service. Furthermore, the connection between the Lord's Supper and the communal meal is great way to move worship from an idea to a practical reality on the spot (Moon 2015a, p. 233).

However, there are also several considerations. The presence of multiple languages in one worship service and conducting various sequences in the context of a limited worship time requires more careful consideration in the overall worship planning. We need to think about how to create a sense of inclusiveness and consideration for each other without the feeling of being tedious or cumbersome when using various languages.

Additionally, it is not good for the worship team to be monopolized by a certain language-speaking congregation. It would be better if members who come from various culture could participate in evenly. Above all, it is necessary to find common denominators among these members and expand them. When combining elements of worship from other cultures unfamiliar with one culture, it is necessary to check more thoroughly in the planning stage of worship, reduce the speed of change, and observe people's reactions (Van Opstal 2016, pp. 154–57).

The use of multiple languages in worship service can be quite stressful for the congregation. Other languages and unique elements can be surprising, but they can also be a factor that makes people lose their concentration in worship. Rather than having multiple languages juxtaposed in parallel, I think it is necessary to utilize a large screen and a weekly bulletin, so that preparation for the worship service can be concentrated and effective.

6. Conclusions

As the wave of globalization affects Korea, people from many countries are coming to the country. It is time for the Korean Church to pay great attention to the many workers who have entered Korean society and to multicultural families formed through international marriages. The Church should not regard them just as objects of evangelism, but as members of one church, one body of the Lord. This thought should lead to an interest in worshipping with them.

The Korean church should transcend beyond simply supporting a meeting place for a specific language congregation and think about how all members can enjoy organic unity in one worship service. To this end, as mentioned above, theological and practical

theological considerations of worship are necessary. I think that multicultural worship is the implementation of the vision of Revelation at this time and in this place. Of course, the process of mutual dialogue and understanding is necessary because of differences in language and culture. Additionally, this will require the patience of the saints, as well as time. Nevertheless, rather than waiting for the second coming of the Lord, it should be started and developed in the Sunday worship service with various people.

Korean society prides itself on being a homogeneous nation; therefore, it is not easy for people from other countries to become true members of the church. However, if the pastor and the saints adhere to the biblical values and intentionally pursue unity, they will experience the history of “the will of the Lord being done in this place”. This begins with multicultural worship. The multicultural worship model presented by the author will be helpful to churches in multicultural scenarios.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG2BQDyyoow>, accessed on 14 September 2021.

² <https://www.dw.com/en/homogeneous-south-korea-deals-with-growing-multiculturalism/a-15858944>, accessed on 16 September 2021.

³ http://kosin.org/page_OWxV37, accessed on 17 September 2021. As of January 2022, the statistics for multicultural churches among the three major Presbyterian denominations (Kosin, Hapdong, and Tonghap) in Korea are as follows. Kosin has 1 multicultural church among its 2113 churches, Hapdong has 1 multi-cultural church among its 11,686 churches, and Tonghap has 29 multi-cultural church among its 9341 churches. These denominations have no official records of any emerging multicultural churches in South Korea. Although some multicultural centers are operated by denominations, their primary function is not for worship, but for mission and social welfare. These centers may offer worship for immigrants, but are less likely to draw participation from the native-born Korean population. For this reason, denominations do not count those meetings as a “church”. Strictly speaking, each denomination has had little concern about multicultural church growth until now.

⁴ Regarding types of Multiracial Churches, see Yancey (2003, pp. 51–70).

⁵ Regarding more detailed information on church, see <https://ulinch0229.wixsite.com/ulinch?lang=ko>, accessed 5 October 2021.

⁶ Regarding to danger and fear of syncretism, see Stauffer (2014, p. 40).

⁷ Check and organize the songs which are sung by the church every week. What songs are being sung, and how often? If you look at the hymn list, you will be able to figure out what the theological interests and characteristics of the church are. This is because a song is a melodic prayer, and the hymn influences the formation of the believer’s faith. In regard to the relationship between songs and faith formation, see Saliers (2007, p. 9).

⁸ Regarding worship and trinity, see Witvliet (2005, pp. 3–4).

⁹ Reflection on worship is not just for the work of special scholars, but possible for any participants. Kavanagh (1992, pp. 74–75).

¹⁰ Regarding liturgy and creativity, see Anderson (2017, pp. 65–90).

¹¹ <https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/reading-scripture-in-public-worship/>, accessed on 7 October 2021.

¹² It is highly necessary to take the pressure off and stay out of hastiness. Slow and steady is the best policy in making for the multicultural worship. See Davis and Lerner (2015, pp. 158–59).

¹³ <http://news.kmib.co.kr/article/view.asp?arcid=0924170069&code=23111111>, accessed on 8 October 2021.

¹⁴ <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu>, accessed on 9 October 2021.

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T62zdqo8xk>, accessed on 15 October 2021.

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkMVgKf3sC8>, accessed on 23 October 2021.

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeZLDY8fj1Y>, accessed on 11 November 2021.

References

- Allen, Holly Catterton, and Christine Lawton Ross. 2012. *Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bring the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic.
- Anderson, Ernest Byron. 2003. *Worship and Christian Identity*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Anderson, Ernest Byron. 2017. *Common Worship: Tradition, Formation, Mission*. Nashville: Foundry Books.
- Baillie, Donald M. 1957. *The Theology of the Sacraments*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Bradshaw, Paul. 2002. *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Chapell, Bryan. 2009. *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Cho, Sungdon, Minsu Shim, Jaeyoung Jung, and Jinwon Chang. 2012. *All Inclusive Multiculturalism Supported by Korean Church*. Seoul: Yeyoung.
- Davis, Josh, and Nikki Lerner. 2015. *Worship Together*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Duck, Ruth C. 2013. *Worship for the Whole People of God: Vital Worship for the 21st Century*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Flannery, Austin P. 1975. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. In *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. Edited by Austin P. Flannery. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Harmon, Kathleen. 1998. Liturgical Music as Prayer. In *Liturgy and Music*. Edited by Robin A. Leaver and Joyce Ann Zimmerman. Collegeville: The Order of St. Benedict.
- Joo, Seung-Joong, and Keyong-Jin Kim. 2006. The Reformed Tradition in Korea. In *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*. Edited by Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen Westfield Tucker. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kavanagh, Aidan. 1992. *On Liturgical Theology*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Kim, Eunjoo. 2017. *Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts: A Practical Approach*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press.
- Kim, Gloria. 2021. *Migration, Multiculture and Diversity*. Seoul: CLC.
- Kim, Kyeong-Jin. 2012. The Context, Contour and Contents of Worship of the Korean Church: Focused on the Presbyterian Church. *Korea Presbyterian Journal of Theology* 44: 65–92.
- Lathrop, Gordon W. 1998. *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Lutheran World Federation. 2014. The Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture. In *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland?* Edited by Glaucia Vasconcelos Wilkey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Moon, Hwarang. 2015a. A Liturgical Comparison of the Conservative and Liberation Churches in South Korea and their Implication on Korean Society. *Worship* 89: 214–37.
- Moon, Hwarang. 2015b. *Engraved upon the Heart*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock.
- Moon, Hwarang. 2020a. Analysis of Book of Worship of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches in North America-with an Attempt for an Application for Writing Book of Worship for Korean Presbyterian Church. *Gospel and Practical Theology* 55: 116–46.
- Moon, Hwarang. 2020b. *Mapping the Christian Worship*. Seoul: Ireseowon.
- Saliers, Don E. 2007. *Music and Theology*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Senn, Frank C. 2012. *Introduction to Christian Liturgy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Stauffer, S. Anita. 2014. Christian Worship: Toward Localization and Globalization. In *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland?* Edited by Glaucia Vasconcelos Wilkey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Van Opstal, Sandra Maria. 2016. *The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse Word*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.
- Vanderwell, Howard. 2008. *The Church of All Ages*. Herndon: Alban Institute.
- Waltke, Bruce K. 2001. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Witvliet, John D. 2003. *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Witvliet, John D. 2005. The Opening of Worship: Trinity. In *A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony*. Edited by Leanne Van Dyk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Yancey, George. 2003. *One Body One Spirit: Principles of Successful Multiracial Churches*. Downers Grove: IVP Books.