

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

All Tribes, People, And Languages In Indianapolis Indianapolis, Indiana



The demographics of northwest Indianapolis are in flux and Lamb of God Lutheran Church rejoices in that. Lamb of God was originally conceived as an African American congregation. But as **Pastor James Capers, Lamb of God's mission developer, knocked on doors, he found a multicultural neighborhood.**

His wife and partner in ministry, Barbara Capers, says, "It's not a black and white world."

James and Barbara took their development marching orders from Revelation 7:9, "And there was a great multitude ... from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." **Lamb of God welcomes everyone, including Lutherans, but non-Lutherans make up the bulk of the congregation, which now averages 40-50 people each Sunday.**

Barbara says, "We haven't achieved multicultural paradise, but Lamb of God is what heaven will look like." Lamb of God draws people from Haiti, Spain, Tanzania, Liberia, the Middle East, and other places. Different languages are used in worship and the people are greeted with a "hello" in their native language. But in the end, it's English that holds everything together. **Barbara says that multiculturalism is their strength and that people are attracted to Lamb of God through the richness of its diversity.**

This is the second mission start for the Capers, who most recently started an African American ELCA congregation in Savannah, Ga. But serving a multicultural congregation has challenges. Not everyone speaks or understands English well. There are different expectations for worship style, music, and message.

As demographics evolve throughout the United States, Lamb of God will be an example of how a mission congregation can reach out to everyone and make worship meaningful in a multicultural setting. **Lamb of God is already getting visits from other ELCA congregations hoping to learn from their example.**

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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