



 **CONVERGE**

# DIVERSITY ASSESSMENT

## Why Is Diversity Important?

Diversity is about honoring the differences each of us brings to the table. By addressing diversity issues and personal biases, church leaders will improve their relationships with church members, thereby enhancing their success. Participating in diversity initiatives improves communication and teamwork and improves one's ability to work effectively on behalf of the church. This diversity assessment will set the foundation for inclusive practices, and help Converge leaders make sure everyone feels included, respected and able to fully contribute to the success of the church.

## Why Does Diversity Matter So Much to Converge?

The plan of God in the Great Commission is that all nations be reached with the gospel. This was seen in the first days at Pentecost and will be true in our future days in heaven, where every tongue, tribe, people and nation will worship together. God has invited us to experience a bit of heaven here on earth!

Our diversity makes us stronger and more strategic. In order to reach the nations, we will need leaders from all nations. Our diversity is the only route to a clearer picture of God. If God is the God of all nations, then no one culture can "corner the market" on how to view/worship our multicultural God.

Finally, valuing our diversity helps us grow personally, relationally and corporately. If the only circles we engage are those who are like us—those who hold to our attitudes, preferences, values, beliefs, practices and behaviors—we can't possibly experience all that God has for us.

## What Is a Diversity Assessment?

It is a quantitative and qualitative examination of an organization's cultural characteristics, including its norms, practices, attitudes and values to determine whether they help or hinder its vision and mission. This examination informs the organization whether its culture supports diversity and inclusion.

## Why Is an Assessment Needed?

The church is facing unprecedented challenges involving diversity and inclusion. The face of America is changing and the changing demographics in the U.S. will impact its churches in profound ways.

- More than 50% of U.S. children are children of color. It's easy to predict who the church's future members will be. Will Converge be ready to serve them?
- We have an aging and declining white population and a rapidly increasing Latino population. How is Converge positioned to handle this change?
- Churches are increasingly asked to respond to racism and privilege.

Converge needs to know if its organization is prepared to meet these challenges. It needs to know if its culture supports diversity and inclusion and what cultural competencies are needed. Churches must compete for members just like other organizations. Churches with robust initiatives for managing diversity will be more effective at attracting, developing, serving and retaining a diverse membership. To that end, a diversity assessment is needed.

### How Will the Assessment Be Conducted?

Dr. Chuck Taylor, president of Roar Enterprises, or a member of his team will personally facilitate the assessment at the national office and in each of the 11 districts. The assessment facilitator will spend two days in each district conducting the assessment. Interviews, focus groups and a review of documents will provide us with a snapshot of how we're doing. We will then have the information we need to create a path forward.

### Will Local Churches Be Assessed?

No, but every pastor in each of our 11 districts is asked to complete the national pastor's survey. In order for us to obtain the data we need to guide us forward, we need to know where our pastors stand in terms of diversity and inclusion. We need to know where our best practices are and what type of training may be needed. That's why it's essential that every pastor take 15 to 20 minutes to complete the survey. You will not be identified in any way, and all responses are confidential. Your district executive minister will let you know when the survey is open in your district.

### When Is My Assessment Scheduled?

The assessment officially gets underway with an assessment of the national office scheduled for March 9-10, 2016. Then each district will be assessed based on the schedule the district works out with Dr. Robin Holland, our national director of Diversity. Please contact him: [Robin.Holland@converge.org](mailto:Robin.Holland@converge.org) to schedule your diversity Assessment.

### Additional Information and Resources

In March a page on the Converge website will be launched that will be a onestop source for everything you need to know about the assessment. It will include lots of good resources for you to use. Progress and latest news about the assessment will be shared via the website so members of the Converge family can learn about effective diversity initiatives and share in the diversity assessment journey.

If you have questions or need additional information about the diversity assessment please contact our national director of Diversity: [Robin.Holland@converge.org](mailto:Robin.Holland@converge.org).

## What Happens at an Assessment?



### District Assessment

- District executive minister interviewed
- Pastors complete online survey
- Focus group with staff
- Focus group with influential pastors



- Focus group with governing board
- Tour of district office
- Documents and website review
- Follow up as needed



### National Assessment

- National president interviewed
- Focus group with executive ministers
- Focus group with national staff



- Focus group with governing board
- Tour of national office
- Documents and website review
- Follow up as needed

### During the visit, the assessor will require a private location where the following can be reviewed:

- Annual reports (back 5 years)
- Website content and home page
- District policies
- Hiring guidelines, practices, turnover and number of people hired in past 5 years
- Newsletters (electronic and paper)
- Press releases