

Multicultural Spirituality: Intentionally Becoming Multicultural in our Lives and Ministry
Reflections by Rob & Lyn Houk on a Multicultural Church Institute class with Charles Ryu



Instructor Charles Ryu

Life is more fun in Technicolor! Not from duty or responsibility, not with anger or guilt, our group came to see multiculturalism as a gift from God, enriching and strengthening our very being.



Lyn and Rob Houk

Our seminar on multicultural spirituality included a number of elements – spiritual formation, information about discrimination and intercultural sensitivity, exercises designed to foster our awareness of class privilege, and study of the multicultural nature of the early church through *lectio divina* (Acts Chapters 2, 6, 10). All these varied elements combined to create a sound preparation for multicultural ministry.

It is painful to acknowledge our reluctance to approach people who are different from us. It is painful to recognize the privileges that we take for granted as members of a dominant social group and the suffering of those on the other side of privilege. Thus, an important part of this course was the way our leader, Charles Ryu, facilitated sharing of feelings within the group. We were encouraged to think in terms of what we could do, as individuals and as church, to improve our society. We were affirmed, not judged.

Even more important, however, was the spiritual grounding we received. The more we were exposed to information that revealed our own prejudices and our own part in a society divided by class, the more important it became to open ourselves to the presence of God. Multicultural ministry can be difficult; it requires us to stretch into new behaviors and into unfamiliar, even uncomfortable, situations. Our experiences this week of various forms of contemplation provided the strong foundation needed for this new and challenging work. Moreover, these experiences are sources of strength that we can draw on when we return home. Centering prayer can be practiced anywhere, and while we may not live in a beautiful setting like Ghost Ranch, we can practice intentional awareness of God's presence in all that we encounter.

We are thankful that we had the opportunity to participate in Charles' seminar this week.

Rob and Lyn Houk