

Introducing the

# THRIVING IMMIGRANT CONGREGATIONS INITIATIVE

**(2021-2023)**

Revised 4/29/21



THE PAUL G.  
**HIEBERT CENTER**  
FOR WORLD CHRISTIANITY AND GLOBAL THEOLOGY  
TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL  
TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## President's Welcome



It is an honor for Trinity International University to partner with The Paul G. Hiebert Center for World Christianity and Global Theology, along with the recently launched Thriving Immigrant Congregations Initiative (TICI). Founded in 1897, Trinity has historical roots in the Swedish immigrant free church movement. As an institution, we stand on the shoulders of those who came to the United States as Scandinavians, started immigrant churches, and then raised their American-born children in those churches. How challenging those dynamics must have been. And how much more challenging, with the increasingly rapid changes in culture, those challenges must be in today's world! Since its founding, Trinity's mission has been to educate men and women to engage in God's redemptive work in the world. As immigrant congregations guided by this initiative learn how to forge greater unity between first-generation and second-generation church members and leaders, we are excited for opportunities to collaborate with our partners in this critical work.

Nicholas Perrin, PhD  
President, Trinity International University

[WWW.TIU.EDU](http://WWW.TIU.EDU)

## Director's Welcome



Immigrant and diaspora congregations constitute important expressions of Christian faith and life in the United States of America. They make significant contributions to the vitality of American Christianity. The development of partnership networks with these congregations is a key objective of The Paul G. Hiebert Center for World Christianity and Global Theology. Through these partnership networks the Hiebert Center aims to contribute to the growth of theological, missiological and pastoral resources necessary sustaining the health and vitality of immigrant congregations.

The Thriving Immigrant Congregations Initiative aligns with the mission of The Paul G. Hiebert Center for World Christianity and Global Theology as it seeks to develop networks of collaboration for the advancement of God's gospel in the world.

Tite Tiénou, PhD

Director, The Paul G. Hiebert Center for World Christianity and Global Theology



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### The TICI Team



**Peter Cha, PhD**  
TICI Director

Before he began teaching at Trinity in 1997, Professor Cha served for many years as a Youth Pastor and as an English Ministry Pastor in Korean immigrant churches. Trained in theology and sociology, Professor Cha has researched and written about immigrant church experiences in the U.S. and has mentored many younger immigrant church pastors over the years.



**Gabriel J. Catanus, PhD**  
Associate Director

Prior to joining the TICI team, “Dr. Jay” completed his doctoral studies, researching and writing on the contributions of Filipino American churches to U.S. Christianity and theology. For twelve years, he has served as a lead pastor to U.S. Filipino immigrants and young, urban professionals. Currently, he is the Lead Pastor of Garden City Covenant Church, a church plant in Chicago.



**Angelica Barahona, M.A.**  
Administrative Coordinator

Angelica is a leader with ministry experiences in both South American and U.S. church contexts. She has served as a Director of Communications and Creative Arts in Valencia, Venezuela where she grew up, and as a Mission Strategist in the Chicago suburbs. Currently, Angelica is the Program Manager for The Asylum Project of World Relief Chicagoland. She and her husband Jeremy are in the process of relocating to West Palm Beach, Florida to plant a new church.



## THRIVING IMMIGRANT CONGREGATIONS INITIATIVE (TICI) The Learning Journey of the First Cohort (2021-23)

### I. Why: The Purpose of TICI

Today, many immigrant congregations in the U.S. wrestle with a critical challenge that undermines, and even threatens, their current and future ministries – the conflicts and tensions between foreign-born, “first-generation” (FG) leaders/members and their U.S.-born, “second-generation” (SG) counterparts.<sup>1</sup> Primarily due to this challenge, a large number of second-generation young people have left their immigrant congregations in frustration, and the “silent exodus” continues. During recent years, however, due to the current cultural, political, and racial climate of our society, a growing number of SG adults are choosing to stay in their ethnic congregations while some who had left earlier are returning. Given these developments, many immigrant congregations have a renewed desire to learn how to reshape their congregational culture and ministries so that a healthy partnership between FG and SG leaders/members might be forged, thus strengthening their current ministries and fostering a hope for a shared future. The Thriving Immigrant Congregations Initiative (TICI) of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) aims to assist and collaborate with these congregations in addressing these key challenges and issues.

### II. How: The TICI Learning Community

The complexity and enduring nature of FG-SG conflicts make it clear that this challenge cannot be solved by a single solution such as hiring a SG pastor nor by seeking one universal solution that would work for all immigrant churches. Rather, this challenge requires a response that is contextualized for each congregation and that involves a well-designed process of learning and change for the entire congregation that leads to responses that are effective. Therefore, the TICI will form a learning community that consists of twelve (12) immigrant congregations from the Midwest and the East Coast regions of the U.S. that would learn from and with one another, guided by the TICI leadership team members (see below). The selection criteria for this learning community will include (1) the congregation’s demonstrated commitment to cultivate a healthy partnership between its FG and SG ministries, (2) the congregation’s ability to form a team of four participants (consisting of FG and SG pastors and lay leaders) who feel comfortable communicating in English and will commit to participate in the two-year learning community journey (see below), and (3) the congregation’s proven commitment to exploring and learning new, innovative ministry approaches that would strengthen its intergenerational partnership and its outreach ministry. Those immigrant congregations that desire to participate in the first-cohort group of this unique learning community need to submit the [TICI Intent Form](#) by May 31<sup>st</sup>. The completed [online applications](#) are due on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and the Hiebert Center will announce the selected fifteen congregations by August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

<sup>1</sup> “First-generation” immigrants refer to those who were born and raised overseas and immigrated to the U.S. as adults and “second-generation” individuals refer to those members of immigrant communities who were born in the U.S.

### III. **When: The Timeline of TICI**

Beginning in fall of 2021, the TICI' multiethnic learning community will gather twice each year, in the spring and in the fall. Each gathering will be a three-day/ two-night event, and will be held on the Trinity campus (Deerfield, IL) or at one of the participating congregation's facility. All of the expenses of participants (traveling, food, and lodging) will be covered by the Hiebert Center's TICI grant.<sup>2</sup> Our two-year learning journey (2021-23) will have two primary goals. The first goal is to enable each congregation to form a healthy partnership between first- and second-generation ministries and the second is to empower each congregation to employ its intergenerational partnership to serve its surrounding communities more effectively.<sup>3</sup>

### IV. **What: The Anticipated Benefits/Results of TICI**

By participating in the TICI learning journey, each congregation and its team members will have an opportunity to:

- Develop and deepen a healthy partnership between its FG and SG leaders,
- Learn from and with those congregations that have gone further along on this journey of building a healthy intergenerational partnership,
- Carefully study its own congregational context and develop creative action steps that would be effective in its particular context,
- Having resources to develop your congregation's unique, intergenerational pilot project,
- Grow your congregation's ability to do its outreach ministry beyond its ethnic boundary,
- Learn from and with resourced by scholars and other experts who have been studying U.S. immigrant congregations, intergenerational partnerships, congregational cultures, etc.,
- Develop a growing relationship with other immigrant pastors and lay leaders who have been wrestling with the same challenge over the years, and
- Be refreshed by the TICI's spring/fall gatherings, through their uplifting worship and supportive fellowship experiences, and the generous hospitality of the TICI team.

<sup>2</sup> TICI is supported by a generous fund from the Lilly Endowment.

<sup>3</sup> After the completion of the learning journey of the first cohort group, the Hiebert Center plans to form the second cohort group of immigrant congregations and begin another cycle of the learning journey in 2024.

**V. Who: The Leaders/Facilitators of TICI**

- Rev. Peter Cha, PhD, Director of TICI, Professor of Pastoral Theology at TEDS, pastoral experiences in Korean immigrant churches
- Rev. Gabriel J. Catanus, PhD, Associate Director of TICI, Adjunct Professor of theology at Northern Seminary, pastoral experiences in Filipino immigrant churches
- Ms. Angelica Barahona, M.A., Administrative Coordinator of TICI, Program Manager for The Asylum Project of World Relief Chicagoland
- Rev. Paul Kim, Congregational Consultant of TICI, Lead Pastor (FG) of Open Door Presbyterian Church in Herndon, Virginia
- Rev. John Cha, Congregational Consultant of TICI, Lead Pastor (SG) of Open Door EC (English-speaking Church) in Herndon, Virginia
- Rev. Tite Tienou, PhD, Project Consultant of TICI, Research Professor of Theology of Mission at TEDS, Director of The Paul G. Hiebert Center for World Christianity and Global Theology
- Deborah A. Colwill, PhD, Project Consultant of TICI, Associate Professor of Educational and Leadership Studies at TEDS.

*If you have any questions about the TICI project or would like to apply for it, please contact Dr. Peter ([pcha@tiu.edu](mailto:pcha@tiu.edu)) or Dr. Gabriel J. Catanus ([gjcatanus@tiu.edu](mailto:gjcatanus@tiu.edu)).*



## **Thriving Immigrant Congregations Initiative (TICI)**

### **Intent Form ([Submit Online](#))**

**Due no later than May 31, 2021**

**Please communicate your intent to apply to TICI through our [online Intent Form](#) with the following information:**

Your Name:

Your Email:

The Name of Your Church:

The Name of Your Pastor(s):

Your Church's Website or Social Media Pages [Give URL; Platform(s) & @Username(s)]:

Your Church's Ethnic Composition:

Approximate Number of Second-Generation Members Who Are 20 Years Old and Above:

Please list the name, role, and contact information of a Christian leader who can recommend your church's participation. The person might be your denominational leader, a leader in your church network, or a leader in mission or non-profit ministry. Please choose a person who is familiar with your church's ministry but does not belong to your church.

Recommender's Name:

Recommender's Email:

The Recommender's Relationship with Your Church:





## **Thriving Immigrant Congregations Initiative (TICI) Learning Journey Application (2021-2023) [[Submit Online](#)]**

Thank you for your interest in joining the TICI Learning Journey! For the first cohort of this initiative, we are looking for immigrant congregations with the following traits or qualities:

- (1) a demonstrated commitment to cultivating healthy partnerships between its first-generation (FG) and second-generation (SG) members,
- (2) the ability to form a team of four participants (consisting of FG and SG pastors and lay leaders) who are comfortable communicating in English and able to commit to the Two-Year TICI Learning Journey (see below), and
- (3) a proven commitment to exploring and learning new, innovative ministry approaches that would strengthen its intergenerational partnership and outreach.

Completed applications are due no later than June 30, 2021 via [online form](#). Please do **NOT** submit typed or handwritten responses.

### **I. Tell Us About You & Your Church.**

- A. Your Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Your role or position at church:  
How long you have served there:
- B. Church's full name:  
Church address:  
Denomination:  
Church website or social media pages [Give URL; Platform(s) & @Username(s)]  
Tell us about your church's ethnic composition. (50-100 words)

### **II. Tell Us About Your Second-Generation (SG) Experiences.**

- A. How does your church reach out to and serve SG young adults and adults? (150 words or less)
- B. Approximately how many SG young adults and adults are involved in your church? What is their average age? (50 words or less)
- C. Do many SG individuals serve as leaders of your church? If your church has a separate ministry for English-dominant/speaking SG individuals and their families, please describe its leadership structure and how it relates to the FG leadership. (100 words or less)
- D. How would you describe the current relationship between FG and SG leaders/members in your church? (100 words or less)
- E. Tell us about a recent ministry event in which FG and SG members collaborated effectively. (100 words or less)
- F. Tell us about a recent incident that demonstrates the challenge(s) your FG-SG partnership faces. How did your church address this challenge(s)? (100 words or less)

### III. **Tell Us About Your Commitment to the Two-Year TICI Learning Journey (2021-2023):**

To participate, your church must commit to sending a Learning Journey Team (LJT) of **four (4) individuals** to each Learning Journey gathering. At **every** Learning Journey gathering, your LJT must include the Senior or Lead Pastor of the FG members **AND** a Pastor or staff member who visibly leads the church's SG members. Note: The TICI Team will pay for participation-related expenses of the first cohort of LJT's.

A. List the members of your LJT:

1. FG pastor  
Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Years Served at Church:
2. FG lay leader  
Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Years Served at Church:
3. SG pastor  
Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Years Served at Church:
4. SG lay leader  
Name:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Years Served at Church:

- B. Besides representing your church, your LJT will play a key role in designing and developing your church's intergenerational ministries as a result of TICI. Thus, your church's participation in TICI requires a significant commitment, including in-person participation in gatherings held **twice per year** (Spring and Fall), beginning with a retreat in November 2021 and ending with a conference in Fall 2023.
1. Can your church and LJT commit to participating in these ways? (Yes or No)
  2. What challenges might your church face in fulfilling this commitment, if any? (50 words or less)
  3. How might your church address this or other challenges to your participation? (50 words or less)

**IV. Tell Us About Your Church's Relationships With Others.**

- A. In what way(s) is our church connected with other churches near you? (50-100 words or less)
- B. Tell us about your church's outreach to your own ethnic community **AND** to the broader community. (Up to 200 words or less)
- C. If you have not already done so through the Intent Form, please list the name, role, and contact information (official, work or ministry email, phone) of a Christian leader who can recommend your church's participation. (They should be a denominational leader, a leader in your church network, or a leader in mission or non-profit ministry **outside your own church.**)

**V. Some Things You Should Know:**

- A. Apply by submitting responses through our [online form](#). Please do NOT submit typed or handwritten responses.
- B. The TICI Team may request a conversation via Zoom with your prospective LJT during early or mid-July.
- C. The TICI Team will contact and announce the first cohort of participating churches by August 15, 2021.

**VI. Ask Us a Question OR Tell Us Anything That Might Be Helpful For Us To Know About You.**