

IRB #: United-25-26-104
Title: Through the Great Ordeal
Creation Date: 3-3-2026
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: David Hull-Frye
Review Board: United IRB
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Expedited	Decision	Approved
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Key Study Contacts

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1- Getting Started

About United IRB

United HSR/IRB utilizes Cayuse, an interactive web application. As you answer questions, new sections relevant to the type of research being conducted will appear on the left-hand side. Therefore not all numbered sections may appear. You do not have to finish the application in one sitting. All information can be saved.

Additional information has been added throughout the form for guidance and clarity. That additional information can be found by clicking the question mark in the top-right corner of each section.

For more information contact hsr@united.edu.

Getting Started

Throughout the submission, you will be required to provide the following:

- Detailed Project Information
- Informed Consent Forms
- Project Recruitment Documents
- Other Documents As Needed

United HSR/IRB

- You cannot begin any human subjects research until a formal approval letter from the chair of United HSR/IRB has been received.

*required

I have read the information above and I am ready to begin my submission.

✓ Yes

2- Submission Information

*required

Are other institutions involved in this study?

☒ Yes

☐ No

*required

List other institutions involved in this study.

Effective Counseling Solutions, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

*required

Does the other institution require an IRB review?

☐ Yes

☒ No

3- Project Information

Study Personnel:

Note: If you cannot find a person in the people finder, please contact the IRB Office immediately.

*required

Principal Investigator for the study

Provide the name of the Principal Investigator of this study.

Name: David Hull-Frye

Organization: COHORT-000590

Address: 2443 17th Street , Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223

Phone:

Email: dfrye1@united.edu

*required

Primary Contact

Provide the name of the Primary Contact of this study.

Name: David Hull-Frye

Organization: COHORT-000590

Address: 2443 17th Street , Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223

Phone:

Email: dfrye1@united.edu

*required

What is your status at United?

✓ Doctoral Student

*required

Faculty Mentor(s)

Provide the name of the Faculty Mentor(s) advising this study.

Name: Warren Freed

Organization: COHORT-000590

Address: 4501 Denlinger Road , Dayton, OH 45426

Phone:
Email: wfreed1@united.edu

*required

Faculty Consultant

Provide the name of the Faculty Consultant for this study.

Name: Peter Bellini

Organization: COHORT-000555

Address: 4501 Denlinger Rd. , Dayton, OH 45426-0000

Phone:

Email: pbellini@united.edu

Faculty

*required

Project Site

Please select the location of the study.

United Main Campus

✓ Project Site(s) - not United

*required

Please provide the name and contact information for the project site(s).

Include physical addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers.

Grandview United Methodist Church

2315 Phelps Ave.

Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223

(330) 923-2442

church@grandviewumc.com

*required

Project Dates

Please provide the project start and end dates.

*required

Start Date

09/05/2026

*required

End Date

10/10/2026

*required

Problem Statement

In one or two sentences, what is the problem statement of your project?

Example 1:

The problem I hope to resolve is the inability of Christians to discern God's voice. If Christians are unable to discern God's voice they are less likely to discern his blessings and more likely to be deceived.

Example 2:

The problem of my context is Christians thinking Jesus is not divine. If Christians don't acknowledge Jesus' divinity, they are less likely to practice the faith extensively.

2315 Phelps Ave in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio is home to three ethnically diverse congregations isolated from one another by lack of joint fellowship opportunities.

*required

Hypothesis

In one sentence, what is your project hypothesis? Use a brief and focused if-then statement.

Example 1:

If participants receive training and practice in hearing God's voice, then they will be able to discern God's voice.

Example 2:

If participants listen to my sermons and participate in my small group study, then they will have a deeper understanding of Christ's divinity.

If select members from each congregation participate in a six week focus group, this researcher will obtain data necessary to create a model of multi-ethnic inter congregational joint fellowship (koinonia).

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Detailed Project Outline

Use the below example as your template to give a step-by-step **outline** of your project. Keep it thorough yet concise. Identify any invited speakers by the session they will lead.

Example 1:

Week 1

10 minutes to take Pre-surveys

15 minutes to create a journal entry on When you expect to hear God's voice or How God's voice is different than your normal thoughts whatever other prompts.

35 minutes for participants to voluntarily share entries and for researcher to provide feedback

Week 2

50 minute lesson on Hearing God in the Old Testament

10 minute break

45 minute group discussion on how the lesson can be applied

15 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling

Week 3

50 minute lesson on Hearing God in the New Testament, Dr. David Watson

10 minute break

45 minute group discussion on how the lesson can be applied

15 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling

Week 4

50 minute lesson on Hearing God in the Christian Tradition, Dr. Madeline Hennes

10 minute break

45 minute group discussion on how the lesson can be applied

15 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling

Week 5

60 minute lesson on Mark Virkler's 4 Keys to Hearing God's Voice

10 minute break

30 minute group discussion on how the lesson can be applied

20 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling

Week 6

10 minutes to collect journals

10 minutes to take post-survey

40 minutes to discuss next steps participants would like to see

Week 1: Project Orientation & Covenant of Fellowship

- **30 Minutes | Orientation:** The "Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How." Full review of Participant Rights and PI Responsibilities. Collection of final Informed Consent forms.
- **10 Minutes: Break**

- **30 Minutes | Assessment & Q&A:** Answering participant concerns and administering **Pre-Project Questionnaires**.
- **5 Minutes: Break**
- **30 Minutes | Sacrament of Holy Communion and Fellowship:** Establishing a liturgical "Safe Container" and a spiritual baseline of equality at the Table. This ritualizes the commitment to *Koinonia* before the difficult work of addressing trauma begins.
- *10 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling*

Week 2: Foundations of Collective Trauma

- **45 Minutes | Foundations:** *Thlipsis* and the "Great Ordeal." Defining collective trauma.
- **10 Minutes: Break**
- **30 Minutes | Dialogue:** Discussing current barriers to fellowship.
- **15 Minutes | Somatic Inquiry:** "Where do you feel safety in your body when you walk into this building?"
- *10 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling*

Week 3: The Four Pillars & Obstacle Analysis

- **10 Minutes | Journal Review:** Sharing initial insights on congregational obstacles.
- **5 Minutes: Break**
- **45 Minutes | Butcher Paper Activity:** Mapping systemic and relational barriers between the three congregations.
- **10 Minutes: Break**
- **25 Minutes | Shared Lament:** Moving from "identifying problems" to "feeling the shared weight" of our history.
- **30 Minutes | Probing:** Discussing the "unspoken rules" of our common spaces.
- *10 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling*

Week 4: Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Principles

- **45 Minutes | The 6 Principles:** Deep dive into Safety, Trust, Peer Support, Collaboration, Empowerment, and Cultural context.
- **10 Minutes: Break**
- **45 Minutes | Practical Application:** Group audit of the current building/ministry culture using TIC lenses.
- **5 Minutes: Break**
- **30 Minutes | Voice & Choice:** "What would need to change for you to feel truly comfortable sharing ministry ideas?"
- *10 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling*

Week 5: The Beloved Community & Revelation 7

- **45 Minutes | Historical Context and Hermeneutical Shift::** Beloved Community from Josiah Royce and Dr. King to the present multi-ethnic reality and exploring the "Great Multitude" of survivors in Revelation 7.
- **10 Minutes: Break**
- **30 Minutes | Group Discussion and World Café:** "What does your 'white robe' of survival look like in this neighborhood today?"
- *10 minute summary on the lesson and discussion along with prompts for journaling*

Week 6: Synthesis, Action, and Post-Evaluation

- **45 Minutes | Theology of Koinonia:** Shifting from proximity (being in the same building) to "joint participation."
- **10 Minutes: Break**
- **30 Minutes | Strategic Action Plan:** Identifying one concrete joint partnership for 2026.
- **5 Minutes: Break**
- **15 Minutes | Data Collection:** Final collection of journals and **Post-Project Questionnaires**.
- **30 Minutes | Closing:** Celebration of Holy Communion

*required

Invited Speakers

Will you invite speakers or teachers to lead one or more sessions?

Yes

☒ No

*required

Group Discussion Leaders

Will you be using group leaders to facilitate discussion?

Yes

☒ No

*required

Tracking Change in Participants

What cognitive, affective, or conative change do you expect participants to experience? In 6 weeks, realistically, you can only hope to affect one of these areas. If you list more than one, you must justify doing so.

- Cognitive: Change in thinking

- Affective: Change in feeling or attitude
- Conative: Change in action

Example:

The affective change I hope to measure in participants' hearing God's voice is an increase in new experiences or encounters with God, as noted in their journals or interviews.

OR

I hope there will be a conative change as evidenced by a stronger commitment to prayer, measured by a percentage increase from their pre- to post-survey.

I hope there will be conative change as evidenced by increased joint participation opportunities presented among the three congregations.

*required

Data Collection Methods

Briefly describe the research methods you will use to test the hypothesis and evaluate the results (e.g. surveys, interviews).

Research Methodology and Data Collection Methods

- **Pre-Project and Post-Project Questionnaires:** These will be used as a primary data collection method to analyze whether participants experience significant cognitive or theological shifts over the course of the study.
- **Focused Group Discussions:** These sessions will gather qualitative data by monitoring various factors, including participant interaction over the six-week period, the navigation of language barriers, and levels of active engagement.
- **Participant-Generated Artifacts (Visual Data):** During Focus Group breakout sessions, participants will gather in smaller groups to record responses to specific prompts on butcher paper. These artifacts will serve as a visual record of collective thought and priority-setting.
- **SAMHSA Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit:** Aspects of this standardized toolkit will be used to collect data specifically regarding trauma and diversity. The toolkit utilizes a Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Not Applicable to My Role" to quantify organizational and cultural readiness.
- **Researcher Field Observations:** The researcher will employ an audit sheet as a structured observation protocol. Observations will be conducted both during live sessions and through subsequent video review to ensure a comprehensive analysis of group dynamics.
- **Probing Questions:** These inquiries will act as a "microscope" for the broader Focus Group and World Café discussion questions, allowing the researcher to explore deeper somatic and symbolic meanings behind participant responses.
- **Clinical Safety Logs:** Tracking somatic stress markers and de-escalation needs. *Source:* Effective Counseling Solutions. To collect quantitative and qualitative data on somatic stress markers and "Quiet Room" utilization. This provides an objective record of participant well-being that exists independently of your own pastoral observations.
- **Post-Session Researcher-Clinician Debriefs:** * *Source:* Collaborative Team. These 15-minute briefings serve as a "secondary data source" where the three professional lenses (Pastoral, Clinical, and Cultural) are aligned to identify "blind spots" in the researcher's field observations.

*required

Data Collection Methods Content

Insert the content of each data collection method you intend to use. List all questionnaire items, pre- and post-survey questions, interview questions, group discussion questions, journal prompts, etc. Be sure to label each set by method.

- **Pre-Project Questionnaire**

- When you hear the phrase 'collective trauma,' what images or ideas come to mind?
- Describe what you know about the history and journey of the other congregations that meet at 23rd and Phelps. What parts of their story stand out most to you?
- In your understanding of the Gospel, to what extent is the pursuit of a multiethnic and racially diverse fellowship essential to the mission of the Church?
- What Fellowship opportunities would you like to see among the three congregations?
- The Bible uses the word *Koinonia* to describe Christian fellowship. Based on your experience, how would you define the difference between just 'being in the same building' and truly 'participating together'?
- In this study, we are looking at trauma through the lens of *thlipsis*—a 'pressing' or 'crushing' weight. How does this image of being 'pressed' change or expand your personal definition of what it means to be traumatized?

Focus Group / World Café Discussion Questions

- From this week's reading, name one aspect of the readings that resonated with you.
- How should the church respond to the call to be multiethnic?
- If responding to the multiethnic calling causes us our comfort or our traditional "way of doing things," is it still a call we are willing to pursue?
- How has being part of a Multi-Cultural Christian Faith Community shaped your understanding of the trauma of others?
- How has this community nurtured your faith development?
- What ideas for ongoing fellowship do you suggest?
- As you think about the ministry at 23rd and Phelps, what is one "unspoken weight" (*thlipsis*) you've noticed we all seem to carry together?
- Can you identify collective trauma in this community at 23rd and Phelps?
- What has been your experience of changing demographics in our community?
- Share a specific insight from your journal this week about how your understanding of someone else's trauma has shifted.
- Why is now the time for the multiethnic church? (Multi-Ethnic Conversations)
- What are 3 suggestions to address these obstacles?
- What obstacles have prevented the growth of our faith community?
- What insight have you gained this week regarding Community/Collective Trauma?
- How can we create a culture of Trauma-Informed Care in our building?
- What systemic issues of race in society contribute to divisions in the church?
- Are you able to see how acts of racism are traumatic, both individually and collectively?
- Looking back over 6 weeks, what is the one 'unspoken weight' (*thlipsis*) we have named that, if removed, would most change the atmosphere of this building?"
- What TIC Practices' are still lacking here at 23rd and Phelps? How can we make them permanent?
- If we were to launch ONE joint partnership by the end of 2026 that honors the voice of all three congregations equally, what would it be and who (outside of the Pastors) would lead it?

Post-Project Questionnaire

- When you hear the phrase 'collective trauma,' what images or ideas come to mind?

- Describe what you know about the history and journey of the other congregations that meet at 23rd and Phelps. What parts of their story stand out most to you?
- In your understanding of the Gospel, to what extent is the pursuit of a multiethnic and racially diverse fellowship essential to the mission of the Church?
- What Fellowship opportunities would you like to see among the three congregations?
- The Bible uses the word *Koinonia* to describe Christian fellowship. Based on your experience, how would you define the difference between just 'being in the same building' and truly 'participating together'?
- In this study, we are looking at trauma through the lens of *thlipsis*—a 'pressing' or 'crushing' weight. How does this image of being 'pressed' change or expand your personal definition of what it means to be traumatized?

SAMHSA Toolkit Adaptation Questions

- Are the needs and concerns for your congregation heard and addressed?
- Does your congregation feel comfortable sharing ideas for ministry?
- What would need to change for you to feel more comfortable?
- Describe a time when your congregation's ideas were welcomed and put into place.
- Can you highlight an instance in which your ideas were put into action?
- Are you given opportunities to evaluate the program and offer your suggestions for improvement in anonymous and/or confidential ways?

Journal Entry Questions

- How has being part of this community shaped your understanding of the trauma of others? / Are you more aware of the traumas of people groups outside your own?
- Name three things that cause a lack of fellowship.
- What are 3 suggestions to address these obstacles?
- How can we create a culture of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) in our building?
- When you hear the phrase "Beloved Community," what comes to mind?
- What does Fellowship among the three congregations mean to you?

Probing Questions

- As you're telling us that story, where do you feel that in your body right now?
- In Revelation, survivors wear white robes to signify they've come through the ordeal. What does your 'white robe' look like today?
- When you say this is 'your' church, what is it about this physical space or these people that tells your body, 'I am safe and I belong here'?
- When you walk past a member of a congregation that speaks a different language than you, what is the 'unspoken' rule your mind follows about whether to stop or keep walking?

*required

Testing your Hypothesis

Copy and paste all items from the previous box. Question by question, explain how each item helps you to evaluate your hypothesis.

Pre-Project Questionnaire

Question: When you hear the phrase 'collective trauma,' what images or ideas come to mind?

Why is this important: This question provides a baseline assessment of collective trauma understanding.

Question: Describe what you know about the history and journey of the other congregations that meet at 23rd and Phelps. What parts of their story stand out most to you?

Why is this important: This question focuses on the Community of Memory (Royce). It further indicates if participants have knowledge of the other congregations.

Question: In your understanding of the Gospel, to what extent is the pursuit of a multiethnic and racially diverse fellowship essential to the mission of the Church?

Why is this important: This question assesses if multiethnic ministry is viewed as an essential theological mandate.

Question: What Fellowship opportunities would you like to see among the three congregations?

Why is this important: This question assesses TIC Principle #5: Empowerment, Voice and Choice. It gives participants the opportunity to share their ideas on what this community could look like.

Question: The Bible uses the word *Koinonia* to describe Christian fellowship. Based on your experience, how would you define the difference between just 'being in the same building' and truly 'participating together'?

Why is this important: This question assesses TIC Principles #1: Safety, #2: Collaboration and Mutuality, and #5: Empowerment, Voice and Choice.

Question: In this study, we are looking at trauma through the lens of *thlipsis*—a 'pressing' or 'crushing' weight and a "great ordeal" or trauma. How does this image of being 'pressed' change or expand your personal definition of what it means to be traumatized?

Why is this important: This question evaluates potential for Shared Lament among the congregations.

Focus Group / World Café Discussion Questions

Question: From this week's reading, name one aspect of the readings that resonated with you.

Why is this important: This question evaluates engagement levels with the required readings.

Question: How should the church respond to the call to be multiethnic?

Why is this important: This question measures participants' response to a multiethnic church calling.

Question: If responding to the multiethnic calling causes us our comfort or our traditional "way of doing things," is it still a call we are willing to pursue?

Why is this important: This question measures group uneasiness and safety in responding.

Question: How has being part of a Multi-Cultural Christian Faith Community shaped your understanding of the trauma of others?

Why is this important: This question gives an assessment of community engagement.

Question: How has this community nurtured your faith development?

Why is this important: This question measures the impact of diversity on spiritual growth.

Question: What ideas for ongoing fellowship do you suggest?

Why is this important: This question gauges participants as co-workers in a shared ministry.

Question: As you think about the ministry at 23rd and Phelps, what is one "unspoken weight" (*thlipsis*) you've noticed we all seem to carry together?

Why is this important: This question establishes TIC Principle #3: Peer Support.

Question: Can you identify collective trauma in this community at 23rd and Phelps?

Why is this important: This question provides a Safety assessment related to TIC core principle #1.

Question: What has been your experience of changing demographics in our community?

Why is this important: This question provides for racial experience variance among participants.

Question: Share a specific insight from your journal this week about how your understanding of someone else's trauma has shifted.

Why is this important: This question demonstrates empathy and shifting awareness regarding the trauma

of others.

Question: Why is now the time for the multiethnic church?

Why is this important: Poses urgency.

Question: What are 3 suggestions to address these obstacles?

Why is this important: Engages participants as co-researchers.

Question: What obstacles have prevented the growth of our faith community?

Why is this important: Comparing "Host" (White) vs. "Guest" (Black/Nepali) perspectives.

Question: What insight have you gained this week regarding Community/Collective Trauma?

Why is this important: Movement toward a Community of Memory.

Question: How can we create a culture of Trauma-Informed Care in our building?

Why is this important: Moves participants into practice.

Question: What systemic issues of race in society contribute to divisions in the church?

Why is this important: Assesses participant awareness of external sociological pressures on the faith community.

Question: Are you able to see how acts of racism are traumatic, both individually and collectively?

Why is this important: Establishes the link between systemic racism and trauma-informed theology.

Question: Looking back over 6 weeks, what is the one 'unspoken weight' (*thlipsis*) we have named that, if removed, would most change the atmosphere of this building?"

Why is this important: Give participants opportunities to use all 6 TIC principles and a sense of conclusion to the project.

Question: What TIC Practices' are still lacking here at 23rd and Phelps? How can we make them permanent?

Why is this important: Identifies TIC that are lacking through the eyes of all three congregations, not just the White host congregation.

Question: If we were to launch ONE joint partnership by the end of 2026 that honors the voice of all three congregations equally, what would it be and who (outside of the Pastors) would lead it?

Why is this important: Assess is joint participation in possible. Following the Acts 6 Protocol of empowering a diversity of leaders to address ministry needed and opportunities.

Post-Project Questionnaire

Question: When you hear the phrase 'collective trauma,' what images or ideas come to mind?

Why is this important: Conceptual Integration.

Question: Describe what you know about the history and journey of the other congregations. What parts of their story stand out most to you?

Why is this important: Actualization of the Community of Memory.

Question: In your understanding of the Gospel, to what extent is the pursuit of a multiethnic and racially diverse fellowship essential to the mission of the Church?

Why is this important: Theological transformation assessment.

Question: What Fellowship opportunities would you like to see among the three congregations?

Why is this important: Voice and Choice.

Question: The Bible uses the word *Koinonia* to describe Christian fellowship. How would you define the difference between 'being in the same building' and 'participating together'?

Why is this important: TIC Principle #1: Safety.

Question: How does the image of being 'pressed' (*thlipsis*) change or expand your definition of being traumatized?

Why is this important: Shared Lament.

SAMHSA Toolkit Adaptations

Topic: Needs and Concerns SAMHSA Format: Your needs and concerns are addressed in community meetings.

Project Adaptation: The needs and concerns for your congregation are heard and addressed.

Why is this important: Moves from a consumer-centric focus to a Congregational-centric focus. Addresses power dynamics necessary for the "Beloved Community."

Topic: Leadership and Comfort SAMHSA Format: The program provides opportunities for you to lead community meetings if interested.

Project Adaptation: Does your congregation feel comfortable sharing ideas for ministry? What would need to change for you to feel more comfortable? Describe a time when your congregations were welcomed and suggestions were put into place.

Why is this important: Addresses if TIC Principle #1 (Safety) has been established.

Topic: Program Development SAMHSA Format: You are involved in the development of program activities.

Project Adaptation: Can you highlight an instance in which your ideas were put into action?

Why is this important: Identifies specific instances of implemented suggestions and actualized empowerment.

Topic: Evaluation and Feedback SAMHSA Format: You are given opportunities to evaluate the program and offer suggestions for improvement in anonymous and/or confidential ways.

Why is this important: Highlights the presence or absence of Feedback Loops.

Probing Questions (Somatic & Symbolic)

Somatic: Where do you feel that in your body right now?

Why is this important: Assesses whether trauma is "stored" or "processed."

Symbolic: What does your 'white robe' look like today?

Why is this important: Survivor vs. Victim identity.

Environment: What about this space tells your body, 'I am safe and I belong here'?

Why is this important: TIC Principle #1: Safety.

Barriers: What 'unspoken' rule do you follow when walking past a member who speaks a different language?

Why is this important: Assesses hidden prejudices and social barriers.

Weekly Journal Reflection Questions

Question: How has being part of this community shaped your understanding of the trauma of others? / Are you more aware of the traumas of people groups outside your own?

Why is this important: This question measures the growth of empathy and the expansion of the participant's "Community of Memory" beyond their own ethnic silo.

Question: Name three things that cause a lack of fellowship.

Why is this important: This identifies the specific "Hurdles" (per DeYmaz) or systemic barriers currently existing within the 23rd and Phelps context.

Question: What are 3 suggestions to address these obstacles?

Why is this important: This empowers the participant as a co-creator of the solution, moving from passive observation to active *Koinonia*.

Question: How can we create a culture of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) in our building?

Why is this important: This question focuses on the practical application of the TIC framework within the shared physical space of the congregations.

Question: When you hear the phrase "Beloved Community," what comes to mind?

Why is this important: This assesses the participant's alignment with the theological vision of Dr. King and Josiah Royce, providing a qualitative metric for spiritual hope.

Question: What does fellowship among the three congregations mean to you?

Why is this important: This allows the participant to define success in their own words, ensuring the research remains grounded in the actual needs of the congregants.

*required

Other Project Data Collection Method(s)

Will your project utilize any predesigned instrument(s), such as personality scales (e.g. Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator), questionnaires, evaluation blanks, etc.

✓ Yes

No

*required

Describe this project data collection method(s). Include references to the sources for each of the instruments you will utilize. When possible, insert content directly into the box, avoiding hyperlinks.

1. Quantitative Instruments (Baseline and Outcome Metrics)

- **Instrument: Pre-Project and Post-Project Fellowship Questionnaires**
 - **Source:** Adapted from the **SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach (2014)**.
 - **Application:** These 10-question Likert-scale surveys measure perceived levels of safety, trust, and frequency of cross-congregational interaction. They are used to identify the "Before and After" shift in participant attitudes regarding joint partnership.

2. Qualitative Instruments (Discourse and Reflection)

- **Instrument: Weekly Reflection Journals**
 - **Source:** Original instrument based on **Shelly Rambo's "Theology of Remaining" (2010)** and the **"Trauma-Theological Discourse Analysis" (TTDA)** framework.
 - **Application:** Participants respond to three prompts weekly. These prompts are coded to identify shifts from "Friday" (Trauma/Lament) to "Saturday" (Persistence/Witnessing) to "Sunday" (Integration/Koinonia).
- **Instrument: World Café "Harvest" Sheets (The Loom of Koinonia)**
 - **Source:** Adapted from **The World Café Community Foundation (Brown & Isaacs, 2005)**.
 - **Application:** Large-format butcher paper is used during the Week 6 Synthesis. These capture collective "harvested" data regarding systemic barriers and proposed joint partnerships.

3. Observation and Safety Monitoring

- **Instrument: Clinical Safety Log**
 - **Source:** Developed jointly by this researcher and **Meredith Budowanec, LPCC-S (Effective Counseling Solutions)**.
 - **Application:** An observational tool used by the Clinical Lead to monitor group regulation and the "Window of Tolerance." This data is used to ensure the ethical safety of the study and to correlate somatic regulation with the quality of theological dialogue.

4. Structured Probing Questions

- **Source:** Derived from **Mark DeYmaz's "Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church" (2007)** and **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Beloved Community"** framework.
- **Application:** Used during the 45-minute dialogue portions of the World Café to elicit specific data regarding the "Great Ordeal" and to identify the "unspoken weights" (*thlipsis*) that prevent joint stewardship.

*required

Will your data collection methods record any information that can identify the participants or third parties?

✓ Yes

No

*required

Explain how your data collection methods will record identifiable information. What uses will be made of recorded material?

Example 1: I plan to record my Zoom sessions for reference. This will identify comments by participant. However, I will not use the recordings for any purpose other than reviewing data. The recordings will not be shown in the future, and participants will be notified in the consent form prior to participating.

Example 2: I plan to audio record discussions from each table through an audio recorder. Participants may be identified by their voice. However, I will not use these audio recordings for any purpose other than data processing. They will not be shared in the future and participants will be notified in the consent form prior to participating.

I will video record each in-person session using Zoom. This will provide me various angles of the session to gauge cross congregational engagement later. It also allows me to review video and audio separately at a later time. I will not use the recordings for any purpose other than reviewing data.

*required

Describe all information you will gather and the means for collecting, recording, securely storing, and disposing of the information.

Data Collection, Storage, and Disposition Plan

1. Comprehensive Data Collection The researcher will collect data through the following specific means:

- **Written Qualitative Data:** This includes physical weekly journal entries, completed pre-printed handouts from the World Café sessions, and "Butcher Paper" artifacts generated during group brainstorming activities. These will be collected at the end of each session and stored in an accordion file specific to this project.
- **Survey Data:** Hard-copy Pre-Project and Post-Project Questionnaires administered in Week 1 and Week 6. These will be collected immediately upon completion and stored in an accordion file specific to this project.
- **Audio-Visual Data:** Digital video and audio recordings of all six sessions captured via Zoom/digital recorder to analyze somatic indicators and linguistic shifts.
- **Researcher Observations:** Hand-written or typed Field Data Audit Sheets recorded by the researcher during and after sessions.

2. Secure Storage and Confidentiality To prevent the unintended disclosure of data to third parties, the following security protocols will be enforced:

- **Physical Security:** All hard-copy materials (journals, handouts, surveys, and field notes) will be stored in a **locked filing cabinet** located within the researcher's private, locked office.
- **Digital Security:** All video and audio files, along with digital transcriptions, will be stored on a **password-protected, encrypted external hard drive**. These files will *not* be stored on unsecured cloud platforms or shared drives. An external hard drive will be purchased solely for use of this project. Video and Audio recordings will be directly saved to this hard drive.
- **Anonymization:** A master "Key Code" linking participant names to pseudonyms will be created and stored in a separate, encrypted digital file. All final reports and the dissertation will use pseudonyms only.

3. Data Retention Period

- In accordance with federal regulations and institutional requirements, all research data—both physical and digital—will be **retained for four years** following the successful completion and defense of the doctoral project.

4. Final Disposition of Data Once the three-year retention period has ended, the data will be destroyed using the following methods:

- **Physical Media:** All paper-based data (journals, surveys, handouts) will be destroyed via **professional cross-cut shredding**.
- **Digital Media:** All audio/video recordings and digital files will be **permanently deleted** using digital "wiping" software to ensure that the data is unrecoverable from the hard drive.

Additional information and guidance can be found by clicking the question mark in the top-right corner of each section.

*required

Total Human Subject Participants

Please enter the total number of participants to be enrolled at all project sites. A range is acceptable.

Examples: 8?12, 10?15, 15?20

12-18

*required

Participant Selection

Explain why and how you will select participants for your project.

Participant Recruitment and Selection Protocol

I. Participant Eligibility and Selection Criteria

To ensure the data accurately reflects the multiethnic dynamics of the 23rd and Phelps community, participants will be selected based on the following:

- **Affiliation:** Must be an active member or participant in one of the three resident congregations (Grandview UMC, Shalom Victory Church, or Bridging the Gap Ministries).
- **Age:** Participants must be 18 years of age or older, according to legal U.S. documentation. This is required since often Refugees do not know their age or have relevant documents to prove date of birth. They are assigned an age and birth date up one entry into the United States and given documentation with that information.
- **Commitment Level:** Selection is contingent upon a participant's willingness to engage fully in the six-week initiative, including:
 - Completion of Pre- and Post-Project Questionnaires.
 - Active attendance at weekly sessions and World Café dialogues.
 - Consistency in weekly journaling.

II. Identification of Potential Participants

The researcher will utilize a multi-congregational approach to identify a representative sample:

- **Pastoral Consultation:** The researcher will collaborate with the Lead Pastors of Shalom Victory and Bridging the Gap to secure a list of potential participants who represent their respective faith traditions.
- **Internal Recommendations:** For Grandview UMC, the researcher will consult with **Contextual Associates** to identify individuals who demonstrate an interest in cross-cultural fellowship.
- **Direct Outreach:** The researcher will personally reach out to identified individuals via telephone to explain the project's mission, followed by a detailed email summarizing the study's logistics.
- **Direct Telephone Outreach:** Once names are provided by the pastors, I will call each individual personally.
 - *Script Focus:* I will explain the project's mission, emphasize its doctoral research nature, and invite them to an Information Session.
- **Follow-up Email:** Immediately following the call, a formal "Letter of Invitation" will be emailed. This will include the dates, the role of the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), and a summary of the *thlipsis* (trauma-informed) framework.

III. Recruitment Timeline and Methods

Recruitment will begin **four weeks prior** to the first session to allow for ample reflection and scheduling. The following communication channels will be utilized:

- **Building Announcements:** Verbal announcements and printed handouts will be shared during congregational gathering times.
- **Digital Engagement:**
 - **Social Media:** An invitation will be posted in the Grandview UMC private (members-only) Facebook group, which serves as a digital cross-section of all three congregations.
- **Direct Presentation:** Pending permission from congregational leaders, the researcher will present a brief "Invitation to Participate" during the service or fellowship time of each congregation.

IV. Information Sessions

Prior to the formal launch, the researcher will host three **Information Sessions**.

- **Goal:** To clarify the project's scope, gauge interest, and address any logistical or emotional concerns.
- **Objective:** To ensure a "no-pressure" environment where potential participants can explore the requirements before signing the consent form.

V. Informed Consent and Ethical Engagement

The foundation of the recruitment process is grounded in the **Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)** principle of **Transparency**:

- **Clarity of Goals:** The researcher will explicitly detail how data will be used, how anonymity will be protected, and the role of the attending Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).
- **Voluntary Participation:** All participants will be reminded that their involvement is strictly voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time during the six-week study without consequence.
- **Expectation Management:** Before final selection, the researcher will re-verify the "Engagement Expectations" to ensure participants are prepared for the depth of the discussions regarding *thlipsis* and fellowship.

- **Power Dynamics:** I will explicitly state in all invitations: *"Your standing, membership, or leadership roles within your congregation will not be affected by your decision to participate, decline, or withdraw from this study."*
- **The LPC Safety Net:** Recruitment materials will highlight that a Licensed Professional Counselor will be present at every session to provide emotional support, ensuring participants know their well-being is the priority.
- **Transparency:** Participants will receive the Informed Consent form at the Information Session to take home and review before signing, ensuring "Choice and Voice" (TIC Principle #5).

*required

Describe your recruitment procedures and any material inducements given for participation

Explain when and how participants are invited to participate in the project.

Recruitment Procedures

The recruitment will follow an **Ecumenical Collaborative** model to ensure professional boundaries and cultural respect:

1. **Pastoral Consultation:** I will first meet with the Lead Pastors of *Shalom Victory* and *Bridging the Gap* to present the project and ask for their "blessing." I will request that they suggest individuals from their congregations who they believe are emotionally resilient and interested in cross-cultural dialogue.
2. **Contextual Associate Vetting:** For *Grandview UMC*, I will work with my Contextual Associates to identify potential participants, ensuring I am not personally "hand-picking" participants in a way that creates a power imbalance.
3. **Personal Invitation:** I will reach out to these recommended individuals via a **telephone call** (if a number is provided by the pastor) or a **face-to-face invitation** during common building fellowship hours.
4. **Informational Sessions:** I will have 3 informational sessions in which members of each congregation can inquire more about the project. This reduces pastoral coercion and power dynamics.

Material Inducements

To avoid "undue influence" (buying participation), no cash payments will be made. Instead, the project offers **Hospitality-based Supports**:

- **Nutritional Support:** Light refreshments and water will be provided at every session.
- **Research Materials:** Participants will be provided with a physical journal and a copy of the required reading materials at no personal cost.
- **Clinical Safety:** Participants receive the benefit of a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) present for immediate emotional stabilization at no cost.

When and How Participants are Invited

Participants will be invited exactly **four weeks** before the project launch to allow for a "reflection period." The invitation sequence will use the following non-intrusive methods:

1. Formal Letter of Invitation (4 Weeks Prior)

Once names are suggested by congregational leaders, I will mail or hand-deliver a **Formal Letter of Invitation**.

- **Content:** This letter will detail the purpose of the study, the dates, the presence of the LPC, and the voluntary nature of the project.
- **Why this is important:** It gives the participant a physical document to review privately without the pressure of an immediate verbal response.

2. The Information Session (3 Weeks Prior)

I will host a "No-Pressure" **Information Session** in the fellowship hall at 23rd and Phelps.

- **Method:** Face-to-face group meeting.
- **Goal:** To allow potential participants to see the space, meet the researcher, and hear the safety protocols before they are ever asked to sign a consent form.

3. Informed Consent Meeting (1 Week Prior)

Only after the information session will the **Informed Consent** document be provided.

- **Method:** Individual or small-group meeting.
- **Ethical Guardrail:** For Bhutanese-Nepali participants, a community liaison will be present to ensure the nuances of the "Informed Consent" are understood without linguistic barriers.

*required

Insert the contents of any and all recruitment documents, flyers, etc. you will utilize for recruitment into the text area below.

Building Christian Community

A Six-Week Research & Fellowship Initiative

Project Overview

This is a six-week, building-wide initiative designed to cultivate deep fellowship and mutual understanding among our three congregations. Through **a Focus Group** engaging in discussion, **World Café dialogues**, and Journaling, we will explore the biblical meaning of *Koinonia* (joint fellowship) and practical ways to move from being "three congregations under one roof" to a unified "One Body in Christ."

Why Should You Participate?

- **Create Authentic Fellowship:** Move beyond sharing a building to genuine connection across our three congregations.

- **Understand Biblical Community:** Learn the New Testament's radical vision Koinonia, joint participation among Christians.
- **Share the Journey:** Gain empathetic insight into the unique histories and "unspoken weights" (thlipsis) of your brothers and sisters in Christ.
- **Shape Our Future:** Contribute your ideas to help our building become a truly **Trauma-Informed Church**.

Invitation Letter

Dear Members of Grandview UMC, Bridging the Gap Ministries, and Shalom Victory Church,

How do we move from being three congregations under one roof to becoming One Body in Christ?

As part of my Doctorate of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary, I am launching a research project titled "Through the Great Ordeal: Building a Trauma-Informed Multi-Ethnic Fellowship." This initiative examines ways to create Koinonia—true, joint fellowship—by understanding collective trauma and what it means to become a Trauma-Informed Church.

Project Schedule Our sessions will be held in the Fellowship Hall every Saturday from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm for six weeks:

- Launch Date: Saturday, September 5, 2026
- Conclusion: Saturday, October 10, 2026

How to Participate

Because this is a formal research study, the following steps are required:

1. Consult Your Pastor: Please speak with your respective Lead Pastor to discuss your interest in joining the project.
2. Information Sessions: Join us for one of the following brief meetings to learn more:
 - Sunday, August 9, 2026: Noon (Narthex/Lobby)
 - Sunday, August 16, 2026: 3:00 pm (Fellowship Hall)
 - Tuesday, August 18, 2026: 6:00 pm (Via Zoom)

Unable to attend an Information Session? Contact me directly to learn more.

3. Sign an Informed Consent form, which ensures your privacy and rights are protected.
4. Complete an Emergency contact form.

Informed Consent and Emergency Contact forms are due Sunday, August 30th by 5:00 pm.

I am available prior to the launch date via email, phone, or in-person to discuss any questions you may have: dfrye1@united.edu | 740-343-9550.

I look forward to the possibility of walking this journey together as we seek to grow in grace, empathy, and unity.

In Christ,

Rev. David Hull-Frye

Doctor of Ministry Candidate, United Theological Seminary

*required

Are there any reasons you would not include a participant in your project?

✓ Yes

No

*required

Exclusion Criteria

Why would you not include these particular participants?

Rationale for Non-Inclusion

To ensure the safety of participants, the integrity of the data, and the focused scope of this doctoral project, the following individuals will be excluded from formal participation:

1. Minors (Individuals Under the Age of 18)

- **Rationale:** The methodology and theological reflection are designed specifically for adults. To remain within the project's timeline and scope, parental consent/minor assent protocols will not be pursued. While children may be physically present in the building or sessions due to cultural norms, they will not be active participants, and no data will be collected on them.

2. Individuals with Acute or Unresolved "Church Trauma"

- **Rationale:** Participants who indicate they have suffered significant trauma at the hands of previous church leaders or within prior congregational settings may be excluded. The focus of this study is on *collective* and *multiethnic* trauma; individuals in an acute stage of healing from direct clerical abuse may find the group dynamics of a church-led study re-traumatizing.

3. Individuals Unable to Fulfill the Full Participation Commitment

- **Rationale:** Success of the World Café model and the data analysis depends on longitudinal participation. Individuals who cannot commit to at least 5 of the 6 weekly sessions, the journaling requirements, or the pre/post questionnaires will be excluded to maintain the consistency of the study's findings.

4. Individuals with Significant Cognitive or Emotional Disabilities

- **Rationale:** The study requires the capacity to provide legal **Informed Consent** and the ability to engage in high-level, rapid-paced verbal and written reflection. Individuals whose cognitive or emotional impairments prevent them from actively following the discussion or expressing their own experiences within the group format will be excluded for the sake of both their comfort and the study's data integrity.

5. Individuals with Debilitating Physical Illnesses or Conditions

- **Rationale:** Participation in this study requires physical presence and the ability to engage in two-hour sessions over six weeks. Individuals suffering from acute or debilitating physical sickness that prevents consistent engagement or poses a risk to their own physical health during group activities will be excluded.

6. Individuals with a History of Criminal Convictions Involving Harm

- **Rationale:** In alignment with SAMHSA's **First Principle of Trauma-Informed Care (Safety)**, individuals with a known criminal history involving physical or emotional harm to others will be excluded. This is a critical measure to protect the somatic and psychological safety of participants who are already discussing sensitive collective trauma.

7. Individuals Demonstrating Overt Racial Bias

- **Rationale:** To protect participants from re-traumatization and to maintain the "Beloved Community" framework, any individual who has historically displayed or currently voices overt racial bias will be excluded. Their presence would directly violate the core principle of safety necessary for this multiethnic dialogue.

8. Active or Retired Pastoral/Ordained Leadership

Rationale: To mitigate "Social Desirability Bias" and minimize power dynamics, individuals serving in pastoral roles within the three congregations are excluded from data collection. While these leaders are vital to the communal life of the site, they will not sign Informed Consent Forms, nor will any data—verbal, written, or observational—be collected from them or attributed to them.

Protocol for Pastoral Presence

To maintain the cultural and spiritual "Safe Container" necessary for this multi-ethnic integration project, the pastors of the three congregations will be present during the World Café sessions. Their role is defined as **Non-Participant Observers and Process Facilitators**. To ensure the integrity of the data collection:

- **Logistical Support:** Pastors will assist with hospitality, cultural translation, and logistical support but will not be seated at the dialogue tables where research data is generated.
- **Data Isolation:** Pastors will not participate in the "harvest" portion of the World Café where communal themes are recorded, nor will they have access to de-identified raw data.
- **Neutral Posture:** The Principal Investigator (PI) will ensure that the pastors' presence remains supportive and non-evaluative to ensure congregants feel free to speak candidly.
- **Informed Consent Disclosure:** The Informed Consent Form provided to participants will explicitly state: *"Your pastors may be present in the room to support this process and provide cultural hospitality. However, they are not part of the research study. They will not see your individual responses, and your participation—or what you choose to share—will have no impact on your standing or relationship within your congregation."*

*required

Ages

Select the age range of subjects that will participate in this project. Check all that apply.

[Less than 18 years old](#)

☒ 18 years and older

*required

Vulnerable Populations

Please check the population(s) that will be enrolled. Check all that apply.

☒ Pregnant Women

☐ Minors

☐ Prisoners

☒ Cognitively Impaired Subjects

☒ Other (Active military, trauma survivors, abuse survivors, the grieving, etc.)

*required

Please describe.

Vulnerable Populations to be Enrolled: Pregnant Women Other: (Refugees / Trauma Survivors)

☐ None of the Above

If human subjects are pregnant women, minors, cognitively impaired, prisoners, or other potentially vulnerable populations, please:

1. Explain the necessity of using these particular subjects
 2. Describe any special protections for their safety
-

*required

Necessity of Inclusion

Pregnant Women

- **Inclusion Rationale:** Pregnant women are included as they represent a significant demographic of the childbearing-aged women within the participating congregations. Excluding this population would result in a loss of reliable, representative data from a vital segment of the community.
- **Protections:** To ensure their safety, the project includes a specific **"Physical Comfort Protocol,"** which provides padded seating with back support, scheduled rest breaks to allow for movement and restroom use, and access to water and snacks to mitigate fatigue or nausea.
- **Protocol for Change in Status:** Once a participant self-discloses a change in status (pregnancy), the Physical Comfort Protocol will be applied immediately.
- **Re-Verification of Consent:** The researcher will conduct a private check-in to ensure the participant still feels emotionally and physically capable of discussing *thlipsis* (communal pressure), accounting for the hormonal and physical shifts associated with pregnancy.

2. Refugees (Trauma Survivors)

- **Inclusion Rationale:** Members of the Bhutanese-Nepali refugee congregation are central to this study. This population is identified as trauma survivors due to their history of displacement. Their inclusion is essential to understanding the multi-ethnic dynamics and collective weights (*thlipsis*) within the 23rd and Phelps community.
- **Protections:** The study utilizes a **Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) framework**. A **Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC-S)** will be present at every session to monitor for distress and provide immediate stabilization.
- **Linguistic Hospitality:** To ensure ethical integrity, community liaisons will be utilized to ensure participants fully understand their right to skip questions or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence to their congregational standing or legal status.

3. Active Military and Veterans

- **Inclusion Rationale:** This includes those who currently serve or have served in the U.S. Military and non-U.S. armed services. It is noted that members of the refugee community may have been involved in armed conflict in their home countries. For the purposes of this study "Veterans" is used to denote both U.S. and non U.S. military persons who have served their country.
- **Specific Protections:** Veterans will be informed that they have the **"Voice and Choice"** (TIC Principle #5) to decline any topic that mirrors their service experience. If a participant becomes "activated" or triggered, the LPC will offer them space in the private room for immediate grounding and somatic stabilization.

Risk Mitigation for Trauma and Abuse Survivors

1. Safe Space Design (Hospitality as Protection)

The World Café format utilizes a non-clinical, communal setting with refreshments and small-group clusters. This reduces the "interrogation" feel that often triggers abuse survivors, replacing it with a hospitality-centered environment.

2. Predictability and Structure

Each session will follow a strict, pre-published agenda. In accordance with TIC principles, predictability is used as a primary tool to reduce anxiety and prevent "survival-mode" responses.

3. The "Stop" Signal and Somatic Check-In

Participants will be taught a **"Somatic Check-in"** during the introductory session. If a participant feels "crushed" by a topic, they are encouraged to utilize a non-verbal signal to step away or move to the designated "Quiet Room" without need for explanation.

4. Monitoring for Informed Consent Capacity

The Primary Researcher and the LPC will monitor for "Informed Consent Capacity" throughout the six weeks. Signs of significant memory loss, inability to follow the group thread, or extreme confusion will be noted.

5. Dignity Preservation and Transition

- **Gentle Transition:** If a participant is found to be cognitively or emotionally impaired to the point where they can no longer participate safely, they will be "retired" from the data-collection portion of the project.
- **Inclusion without Data:** To avoid shame or social exclusion, the participant may be allowed to remain in the "Fellowship" aspect of the gathering (hospitality) without their journals or responses being used in the research findings, provided the LPC deems it safe for them to remain.

*required

Special Protections

Participant Wellness & Accommodations Protocol

I. Physical Comfort and Accessibility

To ensure the dignity and physical well-being of all participants, particularly those who are pregnant or suffering from chronic physical ailments, the following standards will be maintained:

- **Seating Arrangements:** The researcher will ensure that all seating has adequate back support. For participants requiring additional assistance, cushions or chairs with armrests will be provided to ensure comfort during the two-hour sessions.
- **Rest Breaks:** Sessions will incorporate scheduled "micro-breaks" every 45 minutes to allow participants to stretch, use the restroom, or rest.
- **Nutritional Support:** Easy access to water, snacks, and light refreshments will be provided throughout the session to help participants manage nausea, fatigue, or blood sugar fluctuations.

- **Facility Accessibility:** All convening areas will be on the ground floor and accessible with a ramp to minimize walking and stairs. Designated Handicap Parking will be accessible. Reserved parking close to the entrance will be provided upon request for those with mobility challenges or advanced pregnancy.
- **Facility Use:** The building will be solely reserved from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on session days. This will allow for adequate set-up and tear down. It will also provide participants a sense of safety that others who are not involved in the project are entering the session. I will use the building wide text alert system with participant only numbers that can notify of any changes to the schedule and as reminders for upcoming sessions.

II. Health and Safety Oversight

- **Medical Awareness:** The researcher will maintain awareness of medical restrictions that might affect a participant's ability to engage (e.g., avoiding prolonged standing or strenuous movement).
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Updated emergency contact information for every participant will be kept in a secure, readily available file. All facilitators will be briefed on the building's medical emergency protocols.

Supplementary Participant Forms

A. Pregnancy Experience & Support Form

- How far along are you in your pregnancy? (Estimated weeks)
- Are there any particular concerns or challenges you are experiencing that you would like the research team to be aware of?
- What specific adjustments can we make to ensure your participation is comfortable and enjoyable?
- Do you require any additional emotional or spiritual support during this research journey?

B. Refugees & New Americans Sensitivity Questionnaire

- **Informed Consent regarding Narrative:** *"Are we permitted to discuss your journey from your home country to the USA, or would you prefer to focus strictly on your current experiences within the local community?"*
- **Cultural Considerations:** What cultural traditions, dietary restrictions, or communication norms should be respected to ensure you feel fully honored during this study?

C. Emergency Contact & Health Registry

- Participants will complete the building wide Emergency Contact Form that will be on file for each session. This form contains information related to emergency contacts and health needs.

Additional information and guidance can be found by clicking the question mark in the top-right corner of each section.

*required

What are the risks participants will be exposed to through your project?

?None? is not an acceptable answer.

Describe all measures you will take to mitigate the risks listed above. Include any professionals you will have on hand or as referrals. List their credentials and contact information.

Assessment of Risks and Mitigation Strategies

1. Emotional and Psychological Discomfort

- **Risk:** Discussing collective trauma, racial diversity, racism, and systemic exclusion can stir intense emotions and may act as a trigger for participants.
- **Mitigation: * Voluntary Participation:** Participation is entirely voluntary. Participants may skip any questions or withdraw from discussions at any time without penalty.
 - **Professional Support:** A **Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)** will be present at all sessions to provide immediate support with the use of a private room for anyone triggered by the discussion.
 - **Crisis Resources:** A pre-arranged list of mental health resources and access to pastoral care will be provided to all participants for support during or after the study.

2. Privacy and Confidentiality Concerns

- **Risk:** Participants may worry that sensitive disclosures regarding trauma or congregational history could be linked back to them, impacting their social or communal standing.
- **Mitigation: * Anonymization Protocols:** The researcher will use unique identifiers (pseudonyms) instead of names in all data collection, analysis, and final reporting.
 - **Secure Chain of Custody:** Participants will be briefed on how their data is encrypted, stored securely, and used solely for academic research purposes.
 - **Group Covenants:** Discussions will be conducted under a shared covenant of privacy, explicitly asking all members to respect the confidentiality of details shared within the "World Café" circle.

3. Time and Commitment Burden

- **Risk:** The six-week commitment could pose a burden for participants with busy schedules, leading to stress or attrition.
- **Mitigation: * Transparency:** The time commitment will be clearly communicated during the four-week reflection period prior to consent.
 - **Cultural Accommodation:** Recognizing that the three congregations have unique needs, the researcher will offer three distinct sessions to cover similar material while accommodating specific schedules. In the work of multiethnic ministry, these accommodations are vital to honoring the various cultures involved.
 - **Researcher Integration:** To supplement data collection and reduce the burden on participants, the researcher will attend worship services at Shalom Victory Church and Bridging the Gap Ministries throughout the project duration.
- **Partner Organization:** Effective Counseling Solutions (ECS) **Clinical**

Licensed Professional Counselor Information

- **Name:** Meredith Budowanec, M.Ed., LPCC-S
- **Title:** CEO and President, Effective Counseling Solutions (ECS)
- **Physical/Mailing Address:** 822 Portage Trail, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221
- **Contact Number:** (330) 964-5433 or (833) 944-7571
- **Email:** meredith.ecs@gmail.com

Professional Accreditations & Licensing

- **Licensed States:** Licensed to practice in the **State of Ohio**.
- **License Type:** LPCC-S (Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor with Training Supervision Designation).
- **Licence #** E.1500002-SUPV
- **ECS Mission:** Our mission is to provide education for the public on mental health and adaptive coping. We aim to provide knowledge and skills that will assist individuals in their everyday life and for the rest of their life. Our objective is to provide the highest quality of mental health care for our clients while maintaining a work environment that is focused on provider mental health and cultural tranquility for our staff. We believe that mental health is of the utmost importance for our clients and clinicians alike and strive to uphold standards and practices that support these tenants in our everyday practice.
- **Mission Integration:** Effective Counseling Solutions, under the leadership of **Meredith Budowanec, LPCC-S**, is dedicated to providing trauma-competent clinical oversight that bridges the gap between psychological safety and community restorative work. The mission of ECS is to ensure that individuals navigating the "Great Ordeal" of collective and systemic trauma have access to high-level clinical stabilization.

Provide a summary of your state's mandatory reporting laws (for instance, involving minors, the elderly, suspected abuse or criminal activity, suicidal ideation, etc).

If your project takes place internationally, list any political or social dangers subjects may experience while participating in your project.

Legal Compliance: Mandatory Reporting in Ohio

In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC 5101.63), the following classes of individuals are recognized as "Mandatory Reporters."

The researcher (Rev. David Hull-Frye) and any professional support staff (such as the attending LPC) will abide by these legal requirements should evidence of abuse be disclosed during the study.

1. Medical and Health Professionals

- Individuals authorized to practice medicine, surgery, osteopathic medicine, podiatric medicine, or chiropractic medicine.
- Licensed Dentists, Pharmacists, Registered Nurses (RN), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN).
- Certified Dialysis Technicians.
- Employees of hospitals, public hospitals, outpatient health facilities, home health agencies, or community mental health agencies.

2. Behavioral Health and Social Services

- Licensed Psychologists.
- Licensed Social Workers and Independent Social Workers.
- Professional Counselors and Professional Clinical Counselors (including the attending LPC).
- Marriage and Family Therapists and Independent Marriage and Family Therapists.
- Senior service providers (excluding representatives of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman).

3. Clergy and Legal Professionals

- Members of the Clergy.
- Attorneys practicing law in Ohio.
- Notary Publics (appointed and commissioned).

4. Public Safety and Emergency Services

- Peace Officers and Coroners.
- Firefighters for lawfully constituted fire departments.
- First Responders, paramedics, and EMTs (Basic and Intermediate).
- Ambulance drivers for emergency medical service organizations.

5. Financial and Real Estate Professionals

- Certified Public Accountants (CPA) and registered Public Accountants.
- Licensed Real Estate Brokers and Salespersons.
- Employees of banks, savings banks, savings and loan associations, or credit unions.
- Investment Advisers, Dealers, and Salespersons.
- Financial Planners accredited by a national accreditation agency.

6. Facility and Administrative Employees

- Employees of nursing homes or residential care facilities.
 - Employees of residential facilities providing care for 3 to 16 unrelated adults (ORC 5119.22).
 - Employees of city or general health departments.
 - Local building department officials conducting residential inspections.
 - Agents of a county humane society.
-

Specific Reporting Mandates

- Abuse of Vulnerable Populations: * Elder Abuse: Reporting is required for suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of adults 60+ (ORC 5101.63).
 - Child Abuse: Immediate reporting is required for suspected abuse or neglect of minors under 18 (ORC 2151.421).
- Threats of Harm (Duty to Protect): In accordance with ORC 2305.51 and professional ethics, the researcher and/or the attending LPC will intervene and report if a participant expresses suicidal ideation or a specific threat of harm toward an identifiable third party.
- Criminal Activity (ORC 2921.22): The researcher will report knowledge of any felony crimes to the appropriate law enforcement authorities as required by Ohio law.
- Reporting Protocol: Reports will be made immediately via telephone to the appropriate county agency (Adult/Child Protective Services) or local law enforcement, followed by a written report if requested by the agency.

*required

Expected Benefits

Describe the expected benefits for subjects (if any) and/or society that will arise from this study.

- **Individual and Educational Benefits**
 - **Theological Education regarding *Thlipsis*:** Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the biblical concept of *thlipsis*, which refers to a "crushing" or "pressing" weight, and its connection to the great ordeal. This lens expands the personal definition of trauma and creates a shared opportunity for lament across different congregations.
 - **Psychological Education in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC):** Participants will be introduced to the framework of TIC, including its six core principles of 1. Safety, 2. Trustworthiness and Transparency, 3. Peer Support, 4. Collaboration and Mutuality, 5. Empowerment, Voice and Choice, 6. Cultural, Historical and Gender Issues.
 - **De-stigmatization of Trauma:** Through group dialogue and education, participants will take part in de-stigmatizing the shame often associated with collective trauma.
 - **Narrative Sharing and Empowerment:** Participants will be given a dedicated opportunity to share the story and journey of their own people, ensuring their community's history is witnessed and valued by others.

Communal and Relational Benefits

- **Inclusive Fellowship Opportunities:** Participants will benefit from structured, inclusive fellowship opportunities specifically designed to bridge the isolation between the three congregations.
- **Cross-Congregational Understanding:** Participants will gain insight into the unique collective traumas experienced by the other congregations sharing the facility, fostering a shared vision of ministry.
- **Expansion of the "Beloved Community":** This project facilitates the expansion of the "Beloved Community" by moving congregations out of isolated silos and into a shared mission.

- **Collaborative Ministry and Shared Stewardship:** The study creates tangible, shared opportunities for ministry, replacing a sense of "permitted presence" with active, joint participation and partnership.
- **De-escalation of Communal Tension:** By addressing historical racial tensions in a safe environment, participants contribute to a model of healthy ministry ethnic ministry.

Benefits for Society (and the Academy)

- **Multiethnic Collaboration:** This study provides a repeatable model for how ethnically diverse congregations can transition from **"Parallel Proximity"** (sharing a building) to **"Joint Participation"** (sharing a mission).
- **Conflict De-escalation:** By addressing "unspoken weights" and historical racial tensions within a controlled, trauma-informed religious setting, the study contributes to the de-escalation of communal unrest and fosters local social cohesion in a community with the historical moniker "Caucasian Falls"
- **Contribution to Practical Theology:** Society benefits from new research into how the Church can act as a **"Third Space"**—a safe, non-clinical environment where various races and cultures can address collective trauma through the lens of faith.
- **Contribution to the MultiEthnic Ministry movement:** This project moves the multi-ethnic church movement beyond the **'Aesthetic of Diversity'** and into the Trauma Informed Koinonia.
- **Resource Development:** The findings may lead to the development of a **Trauma-Informed Koinonia Toolkit** that other multiethnic or geographically shared churches can use to navigate similar demographic shifts and historical tensions.
- **Contribution to Trauma Theology:** Trauma theology is an emerging theological discipline that seeks to understand trauma through a theological lens. This project contributes a multiethnic understanding to the field.

*required

Will deception be used as a method of data gathering?

Yes

✓ No

Safeguarding the Identity of the Participants

*required

What uses will be made of the information obtained from the participants?

Planned Use of Participant Information

1. Diagnostic Identification of Fellowship Barriers

- **Purpose:** To systematically identify the historical, theological, and systemic barriers (the "unspoken weights" or *thlipsis*) that currently keep the congregations in isolated silos.
- **Use:** This information will be used to analyze why previous "permitted presence" models did not result in joint partnership and to inform the creation of specific strategies to dismantle these barriers.

2. Participant Feedback and Communal Validation

- **Purpose:** To provide participants with insight into the collective findings of the study, fostering a sense of shared ownership and "Voice and Choice" (TIC Principle #5).
- **Use:** A summary of the anonymized findings will be presented to all three congregations at a post-study event. This presentation will highlight key outcomes and proposed fellowship opportunities, demonstrating to participants that their contributions have directly shaped the future direction of their shared ministry.

3. Evaluation of Intervention Effectiveness

- **Purpose:** To assess the "before and after" impact of trauma-informed education on the frequency and quality of cross-congregational engagement.
- **Use:** By comparing pre-project baseline data with post-project outcomes, the researcher will determine if a theological understanding of trauma leads to a measurable increase in collaborative fellowship opportunities.

4. Scholarly Research and Dissertation Completion

- **Purpose:** To provide the primary qualitative and quantitative data required for the researcher's Doctoral Dissertation.
- **Use:** This data will be synthesized to form the results section of the dissertation. It will serve as the evidentiary basis for a new **Model for a Trauma-Informed, Multiethnic, Inter-Congregational Fellowship**.

5. Model Development for the Broader Church

- **Purpose:** To translate local findings into a replicable framework for other multiethnic or shared-facility faith communities.
- **Use:** The researcher will use the insights gained to establish a toolkit for building "Beloved Communities" that move beyond mere proximity to active *Koinonia* (joint participation).

*required

How will you redact your thesis to remove identifiable information gathered through your data collection methods, whether accidentally or intentionally disclosed by participants?

Participant Data Protection and Anonymization Protocol

I. Data Coding and De-Identification

- **Unique Identifiers:** Participants' names will be replaced with alphanumeric codes (e.g., Participant 01, 02). I will use letter designations to categorize focus groups to analyze similarities and differences between congregations; however, participant numbers will not be sequential or assigned in a way that reveals a specific individual's identity.
- **Removal of Personal Details:** I will eliminate or generalize any information that could identify a participant, such as job titles, family references, or unique characteristics (e.g., sexual identity, native language).
- **Aggregated Demographics:** Demographic data (age, gender, occupation) will be presented in ranges (e.g., 18–35, 36–50, 50–65, 65+) rather than exact figures. Additionally, findings will be shared as overall feedback rather than identifying which specific congregation provided which response.

II. Handling Quotes and Testimonials

- **Strategic Paraphrasing:** To protect participants, I will paraphrase responses whenever possible. This removes distinctive language patterns or expressions—specifically protecting the identity of those who speak English as a second language.
- **Generic Language:** If a direct quote is essential, it will be phrased generically. I will omit all names, locations, and specific congregational references. For instance, instead of writing "A member of [Church Name] stated," I will use "A participant shared."

III. Redaction and Data Aggregation

- **Omission of Sensitive Incidents:** If a participant inadvertently discloses highly specific or sensitive personal stories, I will either omit the details entirely or describe the theme in a way that removes any potential for identification.
- **Thematic Summarization:** I will present data in an aggregated format to highlight trends and common themes across the project rather than highlighting individual cases. I will contextualize findings with care to ensure that no specific congregation is singled out (e.g., avoiding "This congregation gave this response...").

IV. Quality Control and Review

- **Final Cross-Check:** Before finalizing the thesis, I will review all data for "accidental disclosures"—unique combinations of details that might allow a reader to "guess" a participant's identity.
- **Mentor Oversight:** I will review my redaction and anonymization process with my mentors to ensure all necessary ethical steps have been taken to protect the community.

*required

Voluntary Participation

How will you ensure your participants have enough time and information to make a non-coerced decision to participate?

I. Providing Comprehensive Information

- **Detailed Information Sheets:** A comprehensive information sheet will be created to explain the study's purpose, participation requirements, and the expected six-week time commitment.
 - **Clarity of Objectives:** The sheet will include explicit details regarding the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks (such as emotional triggers related to *thlipsis* or collective trauma), and expected benefits.
 - **Bilingual Accessibility:** To ensure all congregants are fully informed, all written and verbal information will be provided in both **English and Nepali**.
-

II. Ensuring Voluntary Participation

- **Explicit Voluntariness:** It will be clearly stated that participation is entirely voluntary and that participants may withdraw at any any stage without negative consequences.
 - **Protection of Status:** The researcher will provide written assurance that a decision to participate (or decline) will have no impact on the participant's membership, standing, or access to ministry within their respective congregations.
-

III. Establishing Confidentiality Measures

- **Data Protocols:** Participants will receive a clear explanation of how their data (surveys, journals, and video recordings) will be collected, stored on encrypted drives, and protected.
 - **Anonymization Processes:** The researcher will explain exactly how identifiable information will be redacted or replaced with pseudonyms to ensure privacy in the final doctoral project.
-

IV. Structured Consideration Period

- **Adequate Reflection Time:** Potential participants will be granted a **four-week window** to consider their involvement before the participation deadline of **August 16th, 2026**.
 - **Early Distribution:** Information sheets will be distributed during initial informative sessions to allow for deep reflection and consultation with family or peers.
 - **Open Dialogue:** The researcher will remain available for follow-up questions or one-on-one meetings throughout the consideration period to clarify any concerns.
-

V. Accessible Contact and Ongoing Support

- **Direct Researcher Access:** Contact information for the lead investigator (Rev. David Hull-Frye) will be provided on all documents.
- **Supportive Infrastructure:** This contact information will remain available during and after the study to address any concerns or provide support should a participant experience distress related to the study's topics.

Participants will have 4 weeks to make a decision regarding participation.

*required

Informed Consent

Describe the procedures for obtaining informed consent.

Procedures for Obtaining Informed Consent

To ensure all participants fully understand their rights and the nature of the study, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. Initial Recruitment and Information Briefing

- **Procedure:** The researcher will hold a brief informational meeting at each of the three congregations (Grandview UMC, Shalom Victory, and Bridging the Gap) following a worship service or during a scheduled community hour.
- **Action:** Potential participants will be given a printed "Study Fact Sheet" that summarizes the goals, the six-week timeline, the use of video/audio recording, and the role of the attending Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

2. Distribution of the Informed Consent Form

- **Procedure:** Hard copies of the IRB-approved Informed Consent Form will be distributed to interested individuals at least one week prior to the start of the study.
- **Action:** This "reflection period" allows participants to review the document at home and consult with family or spiritual advisors before committing. For participants from Shalom Victory or Bridging the Gap who may prefer verbal explanations, the researcher will be available for one-on-one Q&A sessions.
- All recruitment materials, consent forms, and data collection instruments will be provided in both English and Nepali to ensure equitable access and understanding for all participants.

3. Formal Consent Signing (Week 1)

- **Procedure:** At the beginning of the first session in Week 1, the researcher will walk through the consent form out loud, highlighting key sections:
 - **Voluntary Participation:** The right to withdraw at any time.
 - **Confidentiality:** How data is anonymized.
 - **Recording Protocols:** The use of video/audio and the "pause" distress protocol.
 - **Mandatory Reporting:** The legal limits of confidentiality in Ohio.
- **Action:** The researcher will give opportunity for those who wish to withdraw before we begin the study to do so at this time. Two copies will be signed: one for the researcher's locked files and one for the participant's personal records.

4. Accommodating Cultural Needs

- **Procedure:** In alignment with Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) principles of **Safety and Collaboration**, the researcher will ensure that the language used in the consent process is accessible.
- **Action:** If language barriers are present, the researcher will work with congregational leaders to ensure the concepts of "research" and "consent" are translated accurately in spirit and letter, ensuring no participant feels coerced into signing.

5. Ongoing Consent (Re-verification)

- **Procedure:** Because the study addresses sensitive collective trauma, consent is viewed as an ongoing process.
- **Action:** At the start of each subsequent week, the researcher will briefly remind participants that their participation remains voluntary and that they may opt-out of any specific activity or recording without penalty.

*required

Informed Consent Form

Insert the content of your informed consent form(s) in the text area below. [Template](#)

Informed Consent Form

United Theological Seminary

Investigator Name: Rev. David Hull-Frye

Contact Information: 2315 Phelps Ave. Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223

Email: dfrye1@united.edu | **Phone:** 740-343-9550

Introduction

I am a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary. I am conducting this study as part of my Doctor of Ministry (DMin) project.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to move the three congregations meeting at 23rd and Phelps from "Parallel Proximity" toward a model of **Trauma-Informed *Koinonia*** (Joint Participation). This project seeks to understand how recognizing collective trauma can help de-stigmatize historical wounds and create a multiethnic fellowship that no longer functions in silos, but as a "Beloved Community."

Requirements for Participation

You are invited to participate because you are an active member (18 years of age or older) of either Grandview UMC, Shalom Victory Church, or Bridging the Gap Ministries.

Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be involved in the following over a six-week period:

- **Initial Assessment:** Completing a Pre-Project Questionnaire regarding your understanding of trauma and congregational history.
- **Curriculum:** Attending a six-week Multiethnic Book Study and World Café discussion sessions.
- **Data Generation:** Participating in small group discussions, creating visual artifacts (responses on butcher paper), and keeping a weekly journal.
- **Final Assessment:** Completing a Post-Project Questionnaire.

Video and Audio Recording

Sessions will be video-recorded using Zoom for the sole purpose of identifying non-verbal cross-congregational engagement and ensuring accurate transcription.

- Recordings will be stored on a password-protected, encrypted drive accessible only to the researcher.
- Recordings will be destroyed following the successful defense of this project.
- **Privacy:** You may choose to use a pseudonym (false name) in the final written report.

Risks and Discomforts

This study addresses sensitive topics, including **collective trauma, race, and systemic exclusion.** *

Emotional Risk: Discussing these topics may cause psychological or emotional discomfort.

- **Somatic Awareness:** You may be asked "probing questions" about where you feel stress or safety in your body.
- **Right to Pause:** If you feel overwhelmed, you may ask to pause the recording, excuse yourself, or withdraw from the session at any time. A list of local mental health professionals will be provided to all participants.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** As the researcher, I will abide by state mandatory reporting laws regarding the safety of children or vulnerable adults.
- **Informed Consent Disclosure:** Your pastors will be present in the room to support this process and provide cultural hospitality. However, they are not part of the research study. They will not see your individual responses, and your participation—or what you choose to share—will have no impact on your standing or relationship within your congregation.
- **Pregnant Women:** And for women who are pregnant or may become pregnant during the study, they must provide a doctor's note for their safety, since they are considered a protected class (i.e., vulnerable population) by the Federal Law.

Benefits

- **To You:** The opportunity to build cross-cultural relationships, share your community's story, and gain a deeper understanding of the biblical concept of *thlipsis* (shared weight).
- **To Society:** This study helps create a replicable model for how diverse congregations can engage in healthy, trauma-informed ministry together, potentially de-escalating communal tensions.

Confidentiality

While I will maintain strict confidentiality of all raw data, **Focus Groups rely on mutual trust.** We ask that all participants abide by the "Vegas Rule": *What is said in the circle stays in the circle.* I cannot guarantee that other participants will maintain your privacy, but we will establish group covenants to prioritize safety.

Voluntariness

Participation is 100% voluntary. You may skip any question or stop participating at any time. Your decision will have **no impact** on your membership standing, your relationship with your Pastor, or your access to the building at 23rd and Phelps.

Signature

Signing this paper means that you have read this form (or had it read to you) and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Researcher Date

Confidentiality Agreement for Non-Participant Support Staff

Project Title: Through the Great Ordeal: From *Thlipsis* to *Koinonia*—A Trauma-Informed Model for Multi-Ethnic Fellowship at 23rd and Phelps

Principal Investigator: Rev. David Hull-Frye

Role of Signatory: (e.g., Hospitality Volunteer, Translator, Logistical Support)

1. Purpose of Role I understand that I am present during the World Café sessions at Grandview United Methodist Church in a supportive, non-research capacity. My role is to facilitate the "Safe Container" of the environment through [hospitality / translation / logistics]. I am not a participant in the study, and no data will be collected from me.

2. Confidentiality of Participants I recognize that during these sessions, participants may share personal, sensitive, or trauma-related experiences. I agree to maintain strict confidentiality regarding everything I see or hear in the room. This means:

- I will not record or repeat any specific stories, comments, or opinions shared by participants to anyone outside of the research team.
- I will not associate specific names with any comments I may overhear.
- I will not discuss the contents of the sessions in any public forum, church committee meeting, or casual conversation.

3. Non-Interference with Data Collection I understand that to protect the integrity of the doctoral research:

- I will not sit at the designated dialogue tables reserved for consented participants.
- I will not offer my own opinions or input during the recorded "harvest" portions of the session.
- I will not handle or view the raw data (e.g., table cloths, journals, or questionnaires) unless specifically directed by the Principal Investigator for logistical purposes.

4. Respect for the "Beloved Community" Framework I agree to conduct myself in a manner consistent with the principles of *Agape* and Trauma-Informed Care. I will maintain a supportive, non-evaluative presence that encourages a sense of safety for all multi-ethnic participants.

5. Affirmation By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood this agreement. I understand that my presence is vital to the success of this integration project and that my primary responsibility is the protection of the participants' privacy and the maintenance of a safe communal place.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Principal Investigator Signature: _____

8- Conflict of Interest

*required

Do you or any investigator(s) participating in this study have a financial interest related to this research project?

Yes

☒ No

Outside IRB of Record

Study Protocol

Attach the protocol for this study that was reviewed by the Outside IRB.

Outside IRB Approval

Attach the IRB Approval from the Outside IRB.

Outside IRB Review Meeting Minutes

Attach the minutes from the outside IRB meeting(s) for the review of this study.

Outside IRB Correspondence

Attach all correspondence concerning the review of this study by the Outside IRB.

[Professional_Safety_Agreement_Effective_Counseling.pdf](#)

[Clinical_Safety_Log_Final.pdf](#)

[Effective Counseling Solutions](#)