



Church visit  
The Brooklyn Tabernacle

Introduction to Racial Reconciliation  
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On Sunday, April 16, 2023, I had the delightful pleasure of visiting The Brooklyn Tabernacle, situated in the downtown area of Brooklyn, New York, and known for its gentrified community and diverse population. This visit fulfilled my desire to attend a church embodying the spirit of the Body of Christ, which I had planned to do before the pandemic. My decision to choose The Brooklyn Tabernacle was based on its reputation for having a large and diverse congregation and its world-famous choir, which appealed to my passion for music.

Although The Brooklyn Tabernacle does not have an official “Mission Statement,” its core belief system is focused on spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ through fervent prayer, worship, and the Word of God. This belief system is built on twelve key components, **the Bible, God, Man, Jesus Christ, Atonement for Sin, The Resurrection, Salvation, The Holy Spirit, The indwelling of the Spirit, Ordinances of the Church, and Eternity.** These principles serve as the foundation for the ministry of The Brooklyn Tabernacle.

The Brooklyn Tabernacle is a multi-ethnic church situated in a diverse community, and it has deliberately fostered unity and understanding among people from various racial and cultural backgrounds. The church addresses racial justice and reconciliation concerns through a comprehensive approach that involves preaching, praying, community outreach, cultural

diversity, and leadership. The Brooklyn Tabernacle's commitment to social justice and reconciliation appears deeply rooted in its faith and mission to spread the gospel to all. However, while Senior Pastor Cymbala has instilled an ethos of justice and reconciliation with the church, I believe that there are opportunities for growth in this area that could strengthen their efforts toward justice and racial reconciliation.

At The Brooklyn Tabernacle, I observed more than just stunning visuals. Upon entering, I immediately noticed the genuine diversity among the members, representing various nationalities. This diversity was reflected in the choir, worship service team, and servers. I experienced the members' kindness and sat beside a friendly Caucasian family of six who welcomed me. However, I did notice the lack of a female pastor within the large pastoral team of men from different ethnic groups. When I asked about this, I was very graciously informed that this was an area for potential growth. The absence of a female pastor in a large, diverse congregation made me ponder that even in a successful ministry such as The Brooklyn Tabernacle, there is always more room for improvement in achieving complete diversity.

I observed that reconciliation is highly valued at The Brooklyn Tabernacle. A member explained that Pastor Cymbala is vocal against racism and injustice and consistently emphasizes love, forgiveness, and compassion as essential Christian values. Following the tragic death of George Floyd, the entire congregation came together for a virtual meeting to address the issue and process their emotions. Moreover, the church has a dedicated "Band Ministry" that fervently prays for global prayer requests. Through programs and initiatives throughout the year, including Tuesday night prayer meetings, the church aims to address social issues in the spirit of unity and reconciliation.

In my view, The Brooklyn Tabernacle's dedication to racial justice and reconciliation genuinely reflects its faith and mission. They aim to uphold an inclusive environment where

everyone can unite to worship God and support one another. I am delighted to have been assigned this task.