

# Cross cultural field experience

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Cross cultural experiences can be defined in many different ways. Some people view these experiences as a way to interact with individuals who are diverse, often experiencing things one would not typically experience within their own culture. A cross cultural experience allows someone to share within another's culture. These experiences can enrich the lives of those who participate by offering experience, knowledge, patience and an understanding into one's culture. Jesus Power Assembly of God I had the pleasure of attending a Sunday worship session on June 2, 2013 at Jesus Power Assembly of God.

This church is a bible based and primarily immigrant church located in Columbus, Ohio and founded by Pastor Bismark Osei Akomeah. Reverend Akomeah is the Senior Pastor of Jesus Power Assembly of God church. He has planted four other Assemblies of God churches in Cincinnati and Georgia. He has also created French and Swahili speaking churches. First Impressions My daughter arranged this visit for us since she has a friend that attends the church. As soon as my daughter and I pulled into the parking lot I realized that this was going to be a cultural experience for us.

We were the only people in the whole church that were not dark skinned. We were stared at. There were whispers behind our backs. We were approached almost immediately by Pastor Bismark Osei Akomeah with welcome arms. I am sure he was wondering how we ended up finding our way into his church as the first thing he asked was if we were invited by a member. Hailey and I found our way into the sanctuary and took a seat in the back. Truthfully I wanted to make sure I could make a break if we needed to. The music and the singing were phenomenal!

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There was a choir and a band and there wasn't anyone sitting in their seats. All were up and praising the word of God. The singing went on for a good amount of time before we actually started the sermon. The people were friendly and welcoming. We were approached several times and encouraged to move up closer to the front of the church. Many people came by and shook our hands and spoke to us. In fact, I actually felt more important and "loved" at this particular church than I have ever felt at any other church I have attended. The Sermon The sermon itself was given in both English and Swahili.

The church has large screens in which the words to the sermon were put on so that people could follow along. It was an active service. I was especially surprised at the events for the day. The service started at 10 am with an opening prayer. There was praise and worship for 45 minutes which consisted of a combination of singing and talking. For about 10 minutes following the initial sermon there was time set aside for the welcoming of visitors. Each person took the microphone and said their names and identified how they came into the church.

Hailey and I declined to take the microphone and all were understanding and sympathetic. Following the introductions of visitors, there were announcements for the church, more songs and music. The Pastor took the stage at about 11: 15 with the sermon for the day. The sermon lasted for about an hour and a half. This was an extremely long service compared to what I am used to at a typical church service. When the sermon was

completed there was an additional hour of praying, singing and the passing of the offering plate.

The entire service from start to finish was 3 hours long! The one thing that was surprising to me was the difference in the length of the service compared to what I have experienced in the past. The longest service I have ever been a part of was an hour, at the most. These people spent almost the entire day together. Once the service was completed they went into another room in the basement and had a huge spread of food they shared. Church to this group of people was a family event. They prayed together, sang together and broke bread together.

There is a clear difference between a Swahili service and a Lutheran or Christian service. Conclusion This experience was an emotional and eye opening event for me. I was able to share in another culture's religious experience and the group welcomed me with open arms. Sharing this experience with my teenage daughter was a valuable lesson for her as well. Although I have always raised my daughter to be accepting of all people regardless of color, religion or culture, she was able to immerse herself in another's culture and see what it was like.