

Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of the liturgical inculturation of Anglican worship in Sabah, Malaysia. This study is essential in order to assess the impact of Anglicanism on the spirituality of the indigenous people, specifically the Kadazandusun in the context of worship with a view to inculturation of the liturgy.

The research methodology employed in this thesis includes historical, survey, analytical liturgical study and the personal context of the researcher as a significant insider. The historical approach reviews, examines and interprets the historical developments of the Anglican Church of Sabah in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Survey in the forms of interviews and questionnaire assess how Christianity had challenged the religio-cultural beliefs and practices of the Kadazandusun and their understanding of the gospel. The analytical liturgical study identify convergent and divergent practices in the process of inculturating the Anglican worship for the fostering of the Christian spirituality of the indigenous people in the Anglican Church of Sabah. The researcher, as a significant insider, provides strong additional series of insights for this project.

This thesis is organised into three parts corresponding to three movements of inculturation in the Anglican Church of Sabah. The first part is an investigation of the first movement, which encompasses the encounter between the Kadazandusun religio-cultural beliefs and Anglican Christianity introduced by the missionary groups in Sabah. The second part is the examination of the second movement – a critique of the encounter between Anglican worship and Kadazandusun spirituality. The third part is an evaluation of the Anglican worship in Sabah, specifically analysing the factors that have contributed to the hindrances of integrating the gospel with the lives of the people through worship.

It is the goal of this thesis to challenge the Anglican Church of Sabah to embrace indigenous Christian worship by implementing inculturation in light of the spirituality of the indigenous people, specifically the Kadazandusun. This will be implemented in a multicultural context in Malaysia.