

## UBUNTU INDABA AND BAPTIST CONGREGATIONALISM

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### **Abstract**

This article argues that use of the traditional African ethic of *ubuntu* and the group decision-making process of *indaba* have great potential for improving the established method for conducting meetings in Baptist congregations.

The gradual integration of congregations in the South African Baptist Union is highlighting the need to become more aware of an ideological divide in Western and African cultures. If people from these different backgrounds can appreciate these differences, and the underlying assumptions about how the world does and should work, they will inevitably have a better understanding of one another.

In its exploration of *ubuntu* and Biblical Baptist “culture”, the article shows how the two overlap to a remarkable degree, and, what is more, how each demonstrates a strength in areas in which the other is most lacking. Three group decision-making processes are surveyed: the experience at Ephesus, *indaba* and an American process that is similar to *indaba*. The article argues that, by incorporating certain principles of *indaba* into Baptist congregationalism, the efficacy of decisions made can be significantly improved.