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INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH:
A Philosophy of Ministry and an Educational Curriculum for
a Cross-Generational Community of Faith.

MASTER'S THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

“There is fire in the eyes of young men
And light in the eyes of old.”
--Victor Hugo

1. The Necessity for Diversifying the Christian Education

Human development is marked by numerous peaks and cycles. In addition to more evident ones such as physical, mental and spiritual peaks¹, there are other significant rites of passage in a person's life. One can argue that the peak of innocence dates back to sometime in early childhood while the peak of revolutionary change and adaptability, in turn, culminates late within the teenage years. With all of these timeframes in mind, the task set before any organization, especially one which is intergenerational and ecclesiastical, is to benefit those at each of these milestones and create opportunities for interaction between those of varying peaks for gaining new learning and the sharing of ideas. This work is a reaction to two of the classical shortcomings of methods used in teaching within communities of faith. It seeks to improve and compliment the best practices of Christian education by reminding of a worthwhile alternative.

Traditionally Christian churches have been age-segregated into categories such as: the nursery, Sunday school, youth ministry, adult membership groups and functions which involve the care of senior citizens. As time progresses, the members of each institution graduate into the next level. This separation of age groups can create problems relating to young adults with prior church experience through family context or

¹ Moore, Steve. *A Graceful Goodbye. The Best Way to Begin a Ministry is by Ending Well. Leadership Journal*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, Page 41, Summer 2002.

otherwise...Such segregated church learning groups do not usually interact between themselves but instead individual cells act in isolation from the remainder of the organization. There is no advancement into an interchurch level of communication.

Doctoral research of Georgia A. Kurko² concluded that there is an intriguing controversy between the values of youth and children's ministers in the church community in relation to the practice of incorporation of the younger generations in worship activities:³

- Although the respondents assigned high value to all inclusiveness of church they excluded children or youth from some, many or all activities of the congregation.
- Although the respondents agreed that the faith community is to exhibit an intentional lack of hierarchy, they in practice, held children or youth at lesser rank of importance.
- Even though the respondents believed that the faith community is designed by God to be an intentionally intergenerational community, they were the enforcers of separating the younger generations from the adults.
- Although the children's (and youth) ministers unanimously agreed that parents are the key role models for children's faith development, in practice parents and their children were separated from one another in Church activities.⁴

Much church youth work is conducted in isolation from the rest of the "church" and its various ministries. Youth work cannot expect to successfully incorporate young people into the rest of church body when they reach the appropriate age if they are kept separate from it until this age. Young people need to experience, benefit from and contribute to intergenerational groups throughout their development. Only this kind of interaction can foster a sense of belonging and keep youth from dropping out of the church body when their time in the youth group has ended.

"We cannot consign the young people to a section of the church's life. We cannot treat the 'youth work' as a neatly self-contained unit

² Kurko, Georgia A. Children's Ministry Leaders in Christian Leaders of the CDEA: Perceptions of Children's Inclusion in the Faith Community. Doctoral Thesis. Trinity International University. 1999. P. 162.

³ Ibid.

⁴ This raises further questions of whether parents themselves prefer age-segregation. If so, why?

which, with the right resourcing and servicing will deliver mature Christian disciples into the adult congregation of the church on their twentieth birthdays.⁵”

As further evidence of this, an important lesson can be learned from observing the secular youth work experience. The British Youth Service is an executive umbrella over regional youth organizations subordinate to the Ministry of Education. In the 1960's, the British Government recognized the need for greater emphasis on youth work and commissioned the Albermarle Report to research the issue. This resulted in increased funding for, and recognition of youth work by government agencies and authorities. Moreover, youth work in Britain experienced a subsequent boom period. However, according to youth worker Bob Mayo, “The Albermarle Report left a Youth Service well-intentioned, well-financed, but flawed”. One of the main flaws Mayo pointed to was that “it dealt with young people in isolation from the rest of the community.”

Within 10 years of the Report being published, thinking was retracting violently from this isolationist approach to young people.

“The Albermarle report of the Youth Service in England and Wales is one of the most disastrous social documents to appear in this country this century. It widens the fissure in English society which divides the generations and no doubt with the best intentions in the world, belittles and humiliates the young. It advocates that there be established a separate, segregated adolescent world...with specially trained (and paid) representatives of Adult society to supervise and oversee it. There is throughout the report no conception of introducing young people into adult society even as junior members⁶.”

According to Mayo, another fault of this much self-contained youth work was that it dealt with symptoms rather than causes:

“In making the raison d'être of the Youth Service to deal with disadvantaged young people within the community, the Service ended up enshrining those very differences it was intended to challenge⁷.”

The isolationism had simply perpetuated the problem.

⁵ Ashton, M. *Christian Youth Work*. Kingsway, 1986. p.153

⁶ Mayo, B. Baxter, D. “Is history repeating itself?” *Youthwork*, October 1998. p10.

⁷ Ibid.

The tragic result of this common practice within the majority of churches is that large numbers of young adults drop out of church functions entirely after graduating from the youth group. The kids that were earlier sent away to do their “youth thing,” will later choose to go away despite the fact that they are now expected to stay within the older segment of the church. Equally sad is that close relationships between members of different generations are rare to nonexistent.

The Barna Research Group conducted a study in the U.S. from January 2000 through May 2003⁸. In total 14,091 adults were interviewed in studies that explored church attendance, spiritual beliefs and practices, and demographic correlatives. The sample of those who were twenty-something included 2,660 adults from ages 20 to 29. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the aggregate sample was ± 1.0 percentage point at the 95% confidence level; the maximum sampling error for the subgroup of twenty-somethings was ± 2.0 percentage points.

The study further concluded that only three out of every ten individuals in their twenties (31%) attend church in a typical week, compared to four out of ten of those in their thirties (42%) and nearly half of all adults age forty and older (49%). The low level of church attendance by those in their twenties is not merely due to the “college years,” when many young adults may not have easy access to a church. The research shows that church attendance bottoms out during the late twenties when the vast majority of students have transitioned from pursuing their education to taking their place within the workforce. Just 22% of those from age twenty-five to twenty-nine had attended church in the last week.

Many “twenty-somethings” are reversing their course after having been active church attenders during their teenage years. As teenagers, more than half attended church each week and more than 4 out of 5 (81%) had gone at one time or other to a Christian church. That means that from high school graduation to age 25 there is a 42% drop in weekly church attendance and a 58% decline from age 18 to age 29⁹. The sharp decline may be softened slightly by new youth from non-Christian backgrounds exploring the Christian message, but that does not reduce the urgency of the topic.

⁸ Barna, George. Twentysomethings Struggle to Find Their Place in Christian Churches. Press release. September 24th, , Ltd. Ventura, CA: Barna Research Group, 2003.

⁹ Ibid.

What can be learned from these statistics is that the youth that are attending churches are not being taught to form relationships with the older generations so that they will be more easily able to transition into their place in the church as adults. Since they have formed no long-term roots, this results in the churches losing them.

Solving this problem is critical should the church desire to survive. It cannot be overlooked or underestimated. Just as a family requires children to survive and carry on the family name, so too the church requires new children to survive and spread its message into the future. Some churches have recognised the crisis of the present lack of involvement of young people in most mainline denominations. For example, the following excerpt is taken from the bishop's invitation to the Third Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (Natal-Transvaal), which was held from 13-16 October 1997:

There is great cause for worry, since many youth do not find a home in our church any more. Must this be seen against the bigger framework of secularisation? Have we as adults lost credibility among the youth, or can it be ascribed to the fact that youth have been repeatedly called the 'church of the future', which implies that they do not enjoy any space within the adult congregation? We have to deal with these and many other questions ... and therefore the main topic of the Synod will be 'Our Youth.' (Lilje 1997)¹⁰.

Therefore, the first argument in favour of finding alternative approaches to compliment Christian education, is the need for a solution to the problem of the large young adult dropout ratio experienced amongst the contemporary churches.

This same problem with the isolation of the youth can also be seen in society at large. Numerous prevailing social patterns and institutions in today's society actively compartmentalize its population. The following is a list of such examples with a brief explanation for each of them.

Work--industrialization and urbanization have brought about locations that are distant from where people live. Many people are working far away from where they live. Since a large portion of time is spent with professional colleagues, adult/parent/child communication has decreased from 4 hours per day to fourteen and a half minutes "of

¹⁰ Codrington, Graeme Trevor. Multi-generational Ministries In the Context Of A Local Church. Master's Thesis. University of South Africa: November, 1999.

which twelve and one-half minutes are spent with parents issuing warnings or correcting things that have gone wrong.¹¹” The generations are not spending time communicating with one another the way they once did.

Schools –What the workplace has done to adult and child relationships, school systems have done to children. Schooling now requires more years per lifetime than ever allowing less availability to non-teacher older adults or younger people of different age groups than is needed for balanced interhuman development. Different age groups simply do not have the opportunity for daily contact and interaction with one another which they had during the age of the family farm and the one room schoolhouse.

Residence – In a like manner, real estate trends in the industrialized world of today are marked by different housing types for different kinds of people and different aged people, thereby separating them from one another on yet another spectrum. Young adults without children tend to occupy urban apartments, families with children are in suburban housing, and the elderly are most often in a communal living arrangement. They are not dwelling together or touching each other’s lives nearly as much as in ages past. Until recent decades, intergenerational communication was unavoidable due to close proximity, family reliance and leadership patterns. Today, even those few that have such opportunities have chosen not to take advantage of them.

The Media – The majority of the communications industry target their programming to narrow niche audiences promoting atomized views and insulated experiences. TV shows, movies and magazines are geared for a specific target audience and have further managed to separate the generations from an understanding or appreciation of one another.

By the same token, the Christian Church, instead of being a faith community which is intergenerational in its human connectedness, has patterned itself after the mainline aspects of life and formed segregations between the different age groups. It has emphasized a separate ministry geared toward each generational group versus the entire church body as a whole. And the church, like its secular counterpart organizations has

¹¹ Glenn, Stephen H. Strengthening the Family. Washington D.C.: Potomac Press, 1981. P.5.

adopted formal programs and created more age-specific service and volunteer programming, Therefore, families have had fewer opportunities to serve together.¹²

Sadly, the result of this damaging trend is that never before has there been as many intergenerational conflicts within the Christian community. Such conflict is common in the secular realm such as social, business and academic circles. But the church claims to have answers to such issues as the salvation of the soul and interpersonal excellence, and yet they are struggling equally with relational breakdown between age groups. The main focus seems to be establishing their status quo and agendas. The generational conflicts often center around preferences of style, differing financial priorities and struggles for authority. Neglect or abuse of entire generations within churches is not a rare occurrence. The problem, in short, is that in today's church there seems to be very little dialogue and even less understanding between the generations.

The second argument in favour of finding alternative approaches to compliment Christian education is that of the widening gap amongst the living generations. While there has always been struggle between the young and the old, today's settings allow more choices for isolation resulting in increased tension between generations, including within churches.

2. Settings and Thesis

For many churches, age-inclusive ministry is an ongoing, unconscious practice. It has been "the way things are done" for as long as anyone remembers. These faith communities have never considered doing anything else. For the majority of others, trying to actively involve each age group together requires intentional planning. This work is written with the latter in mind and in the hope of being both a practical aide as well as the ignition for a new vision.

The central focus of this dissertation is, therefore, to answer one question: Are there legitimate, practical and biblical methods churches can utilize to take advantage of

¹² Roehlkepartain, Eugene C. "Engaging Families in Service: Rationale and Resources For Congregations." Family Ministry: Empowering Through Faith, 17 (3). 2003. Pp. 22-41. P.30

generational strengths rather than allowing them to distance people within Christian ministry? It also sets a hypothesis that while the faith community is the institution best suited to facilitate significant cross-generational life and learning, it can do a much better job of taking advantage of this wholeness.

While a multitude of academic fields and worldviews would benefit from conclusions drawn in this work, it is written from the standpoint of Judeo-Christian background and finds Old and New Testament scriptures authoritative.

3. Research Methodology

The primary research methodology employed for this dissertation was a study of applicable literature. Readings were taken from literature in many diverse fields, including the fields of management development, education, history, conflict management, future studies, generational theory, social development, family, sociology, anthropology, theology and youth work. A vast scope of reading was completed in order to compare different theories of generational development and interaction. The purpose of this approach was to synthesize the various fields of study and develop a new approach that is particularly applicable to local churches.

Additionally, several quantitative research results from numerous countries are presented as they statistically illustrate the conclusions drawn. While being well aware of the cultural bias and unique settings of each country¹³ the author would like to emphasize that only the research that (1) illustrated the trends applicable globally and (2) could be verified through the author's experience from working in Estonian Churches were incorporated in this study. While one may question the percentage points for a particular study in their neighbourhood or church these statistical illustrations should picture a

¹³ The United States remains overwhelmingly religious compared to its older western counterparts. While its populations high religious inclinations (Protestant (White Evangelical) 30%, Roman Catholics 25%, Protestant (Liberal) 20%, Protestant (African-American) 8%, Jewish 2%, other 15%) may create a desire to disregard its national research for global religious conclusions the author has chosen to take advantage of the availability of intriguing statistics for that area, identify the trends, but not necessarily the figures, in the light of global state of a Christian Church. In chapter two, the adaptability of the demographic classification which was utilized to Estonian society is discussed in detail.

comprehensive predilection globally. Finally, the author drew on a number of years of experience as a youth minister and senior pastor of an evangelical church in Estonia.

4. Outline of Study.

This dissertation is divided into the following parts:

In the following chapter, the author presents the foundations of the theory of generations as it is commonly accepted in modern demographics. The work of William Strauss and Neil Howe is discussed as foundational to the topic. This chapter also serves to identify the causes of age-related division between people. In particular, the worship habits of living generations will be discussed. Several bodies of pertinent research are presented and analysed.

In chapter two, the theory of intergenerational ministry is presented through the lenses of theology, particularly process theology, anthropology and education. This chapter is to be considered the heart of the dissertation as it presents the case and argues for a different approach to the way ministry is viewed, but also that such a change must be adult-initiated. It also questions the validity of the commonly unexamined assumption of normativity for the homogenous-age group strategy in the light of the available evidence. In other words, when intergenerational strategies are considered, a mutual exclusivity between intergenerational and homogenous-age group approaches is often assumed, and this assumption is also called into question. In addition to these, various intergenerational church approaches are examined and explained.

Chapter 3 investigates intergenerational dysfunctions and provides answers for churches that find themselves in the middle of conflicts caused by this issue. Three of the prototypical settings are covered in-depth. Also, worship wars – conflicts over preferences of the settings of liturgy - and the ways to avoid them are covered.

Chapter 4 provides the first practical suggestions for a church educator who is searching ways to initiate cross-generational programs. Humanly measurable goals are discussed as are ways to evaluate them. Four basic components to lesson plans are presented

By now the need for an adjustment of the existing church education models to avoid institutional isolationism have been presented. What once seemed like the legitimate ways of teaching in the Church are not sufficient in the light of the changes that society has experienced in the last fifty years. The alarming reality of young adults dropping out from their formerly active¹⁴ membership and increasing relationship tension in churches due to very little dialogue and understanding between the generations requires approaches which take advantage of these generational differences for creativity and learning rather than reinforcing them. In the pages ahead the author will attempt to formulate an alternative philosophy of ministry that would address these concerns and create increased bonding and learning between the generations.

¹⁴ active vs. inactive not necessarily meaning members vs. non-membership.

1. THE THEORY OF GENERATIONS.

“Among democratic nations each generation is a new people.”

-Alexis de Tocqueville, *Among Democratic Nations* (1835).

1.1. Four Cycle Theory in the works of Strauss and Howe as Pertaining to Western Demography

Having identified some of the problems that are visible in (faith) communities of various countries, it is valuable to understand human life-cycles at large. This chapter will serve as a continuation of the introduction and provides the researcher with the context from which to draw functionality for each age group in cooperative participation.

The earliest reference to the seven ages of man was made by Hippocrates in about 357 B.C. Similarly, the Old Testament and other Jewish literature make reference to the stages of human beings, and that life consists of various phases which a person progresses through. The Mishnah, for example, contained a description of the stages of life which was quite detailed and comprehensive. In summary it states,

“At five years old one is fit for the Scripture, at ten for Mishnah, at 13 for the fulfilling of the Commandments, at 15 for the Talmud, at 18 for the bridal chamber, at 20 for pursuing a calling, at 30 for a position of authority, at 40 for practicing discernment, at 50 for counsel, at 60 to be an elder, at 70 for gray hair, at 80 for special strength, at 90 for a bowed back, and at 100 man is one that has already passed away and ceased to exist in the world¹⁵,”

¹⁵ Mishnah Pirkei Avot (The Ethics of the Fathers) 5:21

A fourteenth century Bedouin, Ibn Khaldun, was the first philosopher to describe a four-generation cycle in detail.¹⁶ Strauss and Howe cite the works of Greek historian, Cicero as well as Greek writers, Heraclitus and Homer, Chinese philosopher, Lin Yü-t'ang, and the writers of the Old Testament Pentateuch, amongst others, to show that the cyclical nature of history and generational development has not just been recently noticed.¹⁷

In his 1927 essay entitled "The Problem of Generations"¹⁸, Mannheim addressed the question of how cultural consistency is maintained across generations. He proposed that the continual production of new generations is inherently problematic for the transmission of a prevailing culture. New generations experience historical conditions differently than do older (parent) generations, and in this difference lies the potential for marked social change. Mannheim identified the change potential imbedded in generational succession when he wrote that persons belonging to the same generation share a "common location in the social and historical process" thereby "predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience and a characteristic type of historically relevant action".¹⁹ The emergence of new generations produces individuals "whose attitude towards the heritage handed down by (their) predecessors is a novel one".²⁰

For Mannheim, what is "characteristic" and "novel" about thought, experience, action, and attitude is the probability that all may depart from those held by members of an older generation. Intergenerational discontinuity, then, stems from adjacent generations' interpretations of the same historical events.²¹ Mannheim affirmed this view when he wrote that "the continuous emergence of new human beings (generations) certainly results in some loss of accumulated cultural possessions" and "it facilitates re-

¹⁶ Marías, Julián. *Generations: A Historical Method*. Trans. Harold Raley. Alabama: Alabama University Press, 1970. Pp. 198-207.

¹⁷ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. *Generations The History Of America's Future*. New York: William Morrow Publisher, 1991. P.153ff.

¹⁸ Mannheim, Karl. "The Problems of Generations." In Karl Mannheim, *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952. Pp. 283-315.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 291.

²⁰ *Ibid.* P. 294.

²¹ Demartini, Joseph R. *Change Agents and Generational Relationships: a Reevaluation of Mannheim's Problem of Generations*. *Social Forces*. Vol. 64. Iss. 1.1985. P.15.

evaluation of our inventory and teaches us both to forget that which is no longer useful and to covet that which has yet to be won."²²

The smooth transmission of culture between generations is threatened on two accounts. First, the passage of cultural heritage from one generation to another is always less than complete. Elements of this heritage are lost or discarded, especially as they appear to have little meaning to a new generation which has not participated in the accumulation of this heritage.²³ Second, and more importantly, new generations often interpret socio-historical events differently than do parent generations, resulting in a conscious *rejection* of available cultural heritage as an adequate interpretation of these events.

The second half of Mannheim's essay turns away from the general problem of cultural transmission and new generations to the process by which that transmission is challenged. During periods of rapid social change, strains towards discontinuity between generations are intensified.²⁴ Members of new generations often emerge as change agents both challenging traditional interpretations of historical conditions and offering alternative interpretations. Mannheim labeled these change agents "generation units" and defined them as "groups within the same actual generation which work up the material of their common experiences in different specific ways."²⁵ As a result, they are set apart from their peers, distinctive in their interpretation of shared experience. But more importantly, they stand in opposition to older generations and the cultural heritage these prior generations represent. Intragenerational differences highlighted by the existence of generation units are theoretically significant as a source of intergenerational conflict and change.

A generation, loosely defined, then is a group of people who can be, (1) demographically identified by biological trends and (2) have shared experiences. It can

²² Mannheim, Karl. The Problems. P. 294.

²³ Demartini, Joseph R. Change. P.15.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Mannheim, Karl. The Problems. P. 304.

also be defined as a cohort group (1) whose length approximates the span or phase of life and (2) whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality.²⁶

A generational persona is recognized and determined by common age location, common beliefs and behavior, a perceived membership in a common generation, but also generational *Weltanschauung*, a web of beliefs and attitudes about ultimate questions that is carried with it from rising adulthood through old age.²⁷ Most people know their own generation. And they usually have a good intuitive feeling for the generational membership of their next-elders and next-juniors.²⁸

In 1991, William Strauss and Neil Howe wrote what is possibly the most significant demographics research on this subject entitled "Generations", which argues that all of society is unfolding on a regular cyclical basis. The author of this work uses Strauss and Howe's theories as the foundation for understanding the processes and background characteristics that generations of today face when communicating with each other.

Strauss and Howe begin their view of generational cycles with a simple premise in Mannheim's fashion: People born in a particular set of years perceive historical events and react to new opportunities and challenges differently from those who are older or younger than they. Generations, Strauss and Howe hypothesize, interact in "a recurring cycle of four distinct types of peer personalities, arriving in the same repeating sequence."²⁹ A dominant idealist generation is followed by a recessive *reactive* generation, in turn by a dominant *civic* generation and then by a recessive *adaptive* generation.³⁰ This cycle repeats itself. "Constellational eras and generational lifestyles follow predictable patterns, within which each generation has a limited choice of scripts...their social behavior is governed by a well-defined and relatively unchanging life cycle."³¹

A wide range of sociological, psychological, and economic variables -- from crime rates, to attitudes about gender, to vocational patterns -- are well correlated and

²⁶ Strauss, William, Howe, Neil. *Generations*.

²⁷ *Ibid.* P. 240

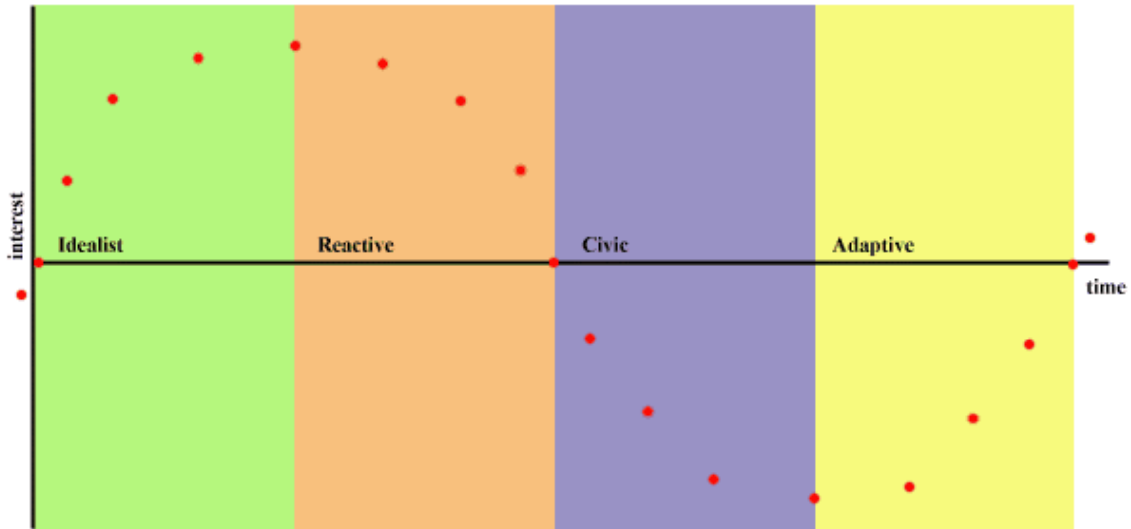
²⁸ *Ibid.* P. 241

²⁹ *Ibid.* P. 33

³⁰ *Ibid.* P. 376

³¹ *Ibid.* P. 441

tracked in tandem, in a generally predictable, cyclical fashion (see the figure below, where X = time, Y = some empirical variable of interest):



Graph 1. Variation of Empirical Interest In Strauss' and Howe's theory.

They note that the length of a cycle (e.g., from trough to trough or peak to peak) is roughly fixed over the centuries, and corresponds roughly to the length of a long human life (80 to 100 years). They call such a cycle a saeculum (the same root word from which more familiar term "secular", meaning transient, changing, is derived, and referring to the world of empirical, everyday experience, as opposed to the eternal, constant, transcendent, and metaphysical or sacred). A human being born at the start of one saeculum might, if he or she did not die prematurely, expect to die in old age at the start of the next one. The correspondence between the length of a human life and the length of a cultural saeculum is, they say, no accident.

Each of the four generations within each cycle has a very distinct personality. These personality types repeat themselves, revealing apparent social similarities from one cycle to the next. Strauss and Howe, in their books, use the United States as their model and trace and record several cycles of American Society from this perspective. Authors Strauss and Howe claim to have observed cyclical trends in people's attitudes concerning topics such as religion, government, education, drugs and alcohol, conformity,

materialism, wealth disparity, suicide, self-esteem, and many others. Of course, not all persons share the traits of their generation, there are exceptions, but the claim is that on average the definitions are largely accurate. What is striking is not that a single swinging pendulum can be seen in the data from one social barometer, but that this model claims to explain many different pendulums, swinging with different phases. All of these pendulums are linked to the others, building a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts.

Strauss and Howe proposed that the cycle is driven mainly by the desire of parents to overcompensate for the flaws they remember from their own childhood. This is expressed in the raising of their own children, and in the attitudes towards childrearing by society in general.³² In short these four nurturing cycles, the heart of theory, may be labeled as (1) underprotection, (2) increasing nurture, (3) over protection and, (4) decreasing nurture.

They note that just as a human life traditionally has four "seasons" each lasting about 20-22 years -- the "spring" of childhood, the "summer" of young adulthood, the "autumn" of midlife, and the "winter" of elderhood -- so, too, can the cultural saeculum be divided in this way. The parallel is that just as humans are born, live, and die, so eras or epochs in history (the saecula) have a natural life span: they are bounded by (begin with, and end with) a time of crisis, chaos, external threat (such as a major war), or ekpyrosis. At the end of each saeculum, the culture must, in a sense, die and be reborn -- or fail to be reborn, as when an entire civilization ceases to exist. The transformation in a society engendered by moving from one saeculum to another is so dramatic, so radical, so much of a "quantum leap" change that one might say that the society is born into a "new world".³³ A detailed article on the underlying stimulus for the generational cycles is presented in Appendix 1.

³² Morgan, Tim. Generations Theory. www.timepage.org.

For example a GI parent who remembers his childhood (1930's) as being restrictive and smothering. As a parent he might try to provide his Boomer child with a childhood (1960's) that has greater freedom and less supervision than he had. That Boomer child might become a parent who remembers his childhood environment as not controlled enough, and swing back to being a more restrictive parent to his Millennial child (1990's).

³³ Achenbaum, Andrew W. Ed. The Changing Contract Across Generations. New York, NY: A. de Gruyter. 1993. P.261.

1.1.1 Four Generational Types

Based on the above concepts, Strauss and Howe define the four generational types as follows:

Idealist generations come of age (adolescence or early adulthood) in a time of spiritual awakening, and reach elderhood in a time of secular crisis. The most recent Idealist generation was the Boom generation (born 1943-1960).³⁴ The oldest member of the previous Idealist generation, the Missionary generation (born 1860-1882), died in 1994 at the age of 112.³⁵ Idealists are visionary, individualistic, and spiritual. Core values include principle, religion, education. A typical weakness (as least as perceived by others) might be dogmatism (principles taken to excess).³⁶

Reactive generations are children during a time of spiritual awakening, and reach midlife in a time of secular crisis. The most recent Reactive generation were Busters (born 1961-1980).³⁷ A very few, very old members of the Lost generation (born 1883-1900), also a Reactive generation, are still alive.³⁸ Reactives are rebellious, pragmatic, and materialistic. Core values include liberty, practicality, survival. A typical weakness (as least as perceived by others) might be amoralism (pragmatism taken to excess).³⁹

Civic generations come of age (adolescence or early adulthood) in a time of secular crisis, and reach elderhood in a time of spiritual awakening. The most recent Civic generation was the Millennial generation (born 1981 or later).⁴⁰ The G.I. generation that fought World War II (born 1901-1924), a great many of whom are still alive today, was also a Civic generation.⁴¹ Civics are heroic, collegial, and rationalistic. Core values include community, technology, affluence. A typical weakness (as least as perceived by others) might be insensitivity (rationalism taken to excess).⁴²

³⁴ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. Generations. Pp. 299-316

³⁵ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. Generations. Pp. 233-246

³⁶ Embree, Marlowe C. Cycles of History. University of Wisconsin. <http://www.uwmc.uwc.edu/psychology/history.htm>

³⁷ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. Generations. Pp. 317-334.

³⁸ Ibid. Pp. 247-260.

³⁹ Embree, Marlowe C. Cycles.

⁴⁰ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. Millennials Rising

⁴¹ Strauss, William. Howe, Neil. Generations. Pp. 261-278.

⁴² Embree, Marlowe C. Cycles

Adaptive generations are children during a time of secular crisis, and reach midlife in a time of spiritual awakening. The most recent Adaptive generation was the Silent generation (born 1925-1942).⁴³ The first new Adaptive generation should (if current cycles hold) start being born around 2003 or 2004. Adaptives are conformist, sensitive, and cultured. Core values include pluralism, expertise, and social justice. A typical weakness (as least as perceived by others) might be superficiality (adaptability taken to excess).⁴⁴

For the purpose of clarity generations in this work are divided as following:

Millennial, Gen Y, Mosaics – those born between 1983 -2000

Buster, Gen X, Xers, Thirteenth - those born between 1965 and 1983

Boomer - those born between 1946 and 1964

Builders, Silent - those born between 1927 and 1945

Senior, GI - those born in 1926 and earlier

	1924	1942	1960	1981	2003	2025
Elderhood	Progressive <i>(Adaptive)</i>	Missionary <i>(Idealistic)</i>	Lost <i>(Reactive)</i>	Seniors <i>(Civic)</i>	Builders <i>(Adaptive)</i>	Boomers <i>(Idealistic)</i>
Midlife	Missionary <i>(Idealistic)</i>	Lost <i>(Reactive)</i>	Seniors <i>(Civic)</i>	Builders <i>(Adaptive)</i>	Boomers <i>(Idealistic)</i>	Busters <i>(Reactive)</i>
Rising adulthood	Lost <i>(Reactive)</i>	Seniors <i>(Civic)</i>	Builders <i>(Adaptive)</i>	Boomers <i>(Idealistic)</i>	Busters <i>(Reactive)</i>	Millenials <i>(Civic)</i>
Youth	Seniors <i>(Civic)</i>	Builders <i>(Adaptive)</i>	Boomers <i>(Idealistic)</i>	Busters <i>(Reactive)</i>	Millenials <i>(Civic)</i>	New-adaptive <i>(Adaptive)</i>

Table 1. Generational Diagonal⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid. Pp. 279-293.

⁴⁴ Embree, Marlowe C. Cycles

⁴⁵ Burson-Marsteller. Theory of Generations: Looking Past to the Future.

	Civic	Adaptive	Idealistic	Reactive
Name	Seniors	Builders	Boomers	Busters
	Millenials	Newadaptives		
Content	What it does? How it works?	How it makes things better?	What it does for me and for the world?	What it says about me?
Context	team achievement authentic	belonging establishment projecting	change self-discovery growth	take risks own path visual
Tonality	Straightforward positive can-do	conformity honest safe	spiritual forward thinking principled	iconoclastic individualistic path-finding
Delivery	local institution-oriented technology-reliant	“mass” traditional common-ground	specialized connected personal	new non-traditional personal

Table 2. Communications Implications⁴⁶

In 1978, Thomas C. Schelling discussed the implications of the fact that in many situations individuals' behavior depends upon the behavior of those around them.⁴⁷ By understanding the cultural influences and forces that have been brought to bear on each of the living generations, especially those during their early, formative years, when their value systems were being shaped, we can begin to understand what has made people of different generations develop such different worldviews. Researchers can also identify

⁴⁶ Burson-Marsteller. *Theory of Generations: Looking Past to the Future*.

⁴⁷ Schelling, Thomas C. *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1978.

with the nature of the clashes between these worldviews, or “cultures”, and begin to look for solutions.⁴⁸

Builders: This generation falls between the Silent Generation and the Boomers. Their generation is defined more by the boundaries of the two flanking generations than by anything inherent within itself. They are also defined by what they just missed. They were too young to participate in WWII and too old for the youth movement of the 1970’s. Thus their first birth years from 1925 to 1942 is the era which coincided with the lowest birthrate per decade this century.

Boomers: Baby boomers comprise the cohort of individuals born between 1946 and 1964. It refers to the temporary reversal in the long-run decline of the crude birth rate following the conclusion of World War II⁴⁹. Sweeping societal change is virtually guaranteed when a population includes an unusually large number of people in a single birth cohort. They were impacted by television, economic affluence, the space race and scandals that drove them to question authority and challenge traditional values. As the boomers have aged, changes in American society have been obvious. In the 1960s, youthful boomers drove changes to a great extent, from sexual freedom to antiwar sentiment. In the early 2000 decades, retirement-aged boomers will likely drive changes in consumerism, health care, and retirement funding.

Busters: Their formative years fell between the 1980’s and 2000. Various analysts like Braungarts, Wckert and Willems, Mackay and Rushkoff⁵⁰ have documented the social

⁴⁸ Codrington, Graeme Trevor. Multi-generational P24.

⁴⁹ Carter, Susan B. Cohorts. University of California Project on the Historical Statistics of the United States Center for Social and Economic Policy Studies Institute University of California. Riverside, CA, September 2001.

⁵⁰ Braungart, R. G. Braungart, M. M. Youth problems and politics in the 1980s: Some multinational comparisons. *International Sociology*, 1 (4). 1996. Pp. 359-380.

Eckert, R. Willems, H. Youth conflicts and public policy challenges in Western Europe. Paper read at Twentieth International CFR Seminar on social change and family policies, Melbourne. 1984. In Hill, Brian V. Can Religious education be theologically neutral. *Journal of Christian Education*. Vol 42.1. 1999. Pp. 9-24.

Mackay, H. *Generations: Baby Boomers, Their Parents and Their Children*. Sydney: Pan McMillan Australia. 1997.

changes which have led the youth of that generation exhibiting a mind-set that is in many significant ways different from any that have gone before. Affluence and greater educational opportunity have combined with the graphics revolution and the breakdown of traditional authorities - not least, the home - to produce a generation that is at once hedonistic and disillusioned, worldly-wise yet mind-raped by the commercial media. Many studies⁵¹ (e.g. Francis and Lewis; Kitwood) have documented the disinterest of busters in the traditional institutions and messages of religion, while noting their continuing search for personal meaning. This group is also called "the children nobody wanted" referring to them as the fruits of the sexual revolution of their parents. This generation has been raised by television and babysitters more than any other. They have quickly embraced technology and become dependent upon it. This generation has given birth to so many new styles of music that there is none that could be called its signature. It is the poorest of all generations and has been faced with a changing economy, AIDS, and small representation among other age groups. Busters are committing suicide more frequently than any other generation since the Lost Generation (the last Reactive generation). Gen-Xrs are pragmatic, rejecting the Boomer values and focusing instead on community causes and practical education. Because of their parents high divorce rate Busters are cautious of a marriage commitment.

Millennials: The youngest generation is already starting to makes waves in our culture in areas ranging from music and language to sexual patterns and educational commitment. This new segment of our population earned the label "Mosaics" in response to various attributes it possesses. Among those attributes are their eclectic lifestyle, their non-linear thinking style, the fluidity of their personal relationships, their cut-and-paste values profile, and the hybrid spiritual perspective most of them have developed

Rushkoff, D. *Children of Chaos: Surviving the end of the world as we know it*. London: HarperCollins. 1997.

⁵¹ Francis, L. J. Lewis, J. M. Who wants RE? A socio-psychological profile of adolescent support for religious education. In J. Astley & L. J. Francis (Eds.), *Christian theology and religious education* London: SPCK. 1996. Pp. 223-246.

Kitwood, T. *Disclosures to a stranger: Adolescent values in an advanced industrial society*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1980.

This generation's name also reflects some of the unique qualities of the group. For instance, recent research by the Barna Research Group⁵² indicates that Mosaics (Millennials) will baffle their elders by exhibiting comfort with contradictions related to spirituality, family, career development, morality, and politics. The youngest generation will also energetically pursue spiritual insights, although they are less likely than preceding age cohorts to feel constrained by traditional theological parameters. Millennials will continue the Buster tradition of prioritizing personal relationships

Sadly, although they will not place as high a premium on those relationships as do their teen predecessors, Millennials are also likely to gain the reputation for being the most information-overloaded group ever. The development and acceptance of new technologies over the course of the next decade will challenge the ability of these young adults to process the mountains of data and constant psychological stimuli.⁵³ Millennials will grow up with the lowest parent-child ratio in history.

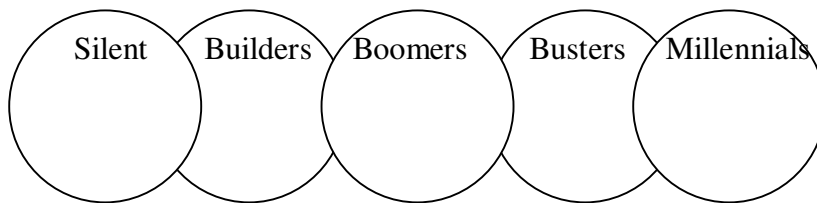
1.1.2 Overlapping of generations.

It is important to understand, however, that the generational divisions broadly discussed in this work cannot be rigidly applied to a group of people. Rather it could be argued that the general characteristics of each generation are strictly true of only about three-fourths of each generation. A wise pastor once noted that there are “old young people and young old people.” Similarly there are overlapping attitudes and characteristics among every generation that go beyond age or the particular generation in which an individual was born. Some Boomers will be very traditional in their outlook on church and ministry, while some Builders will enjoy the excitement of contemporary music and worship. There is an overlapping of the generations at both ends. Since people born at the beginning or end of each generation grow up during a transition from one generation to another, they feel strong pulls both ways and may go in either direction. There are also traditionalists in every generation who may identify with those a generation removed⁵⁴

⁵² Barna, George. Real Teens: contemporary snapshot of youth culture. Regal Books. Ventura, CA. 2001.

⁵³ Ibid. P.62

⁵⁴ McIntosh, Gary L. One church, four generations: understanding and reaching all ages in your church. Baker Books. Grand Rapids, MI. 2002. P.215.



Graph 3. Overlapping of generations

1.2. Adaptation of the Theory of Generations to Estonian Society.

Strauss and Howe state that although America offers the world's best example of cyclical history, other modern societies have beaten to similar rhythms - and since World War II, these rhythms are drawing closer together. Generational archetypes similar to America's can be found, in roughly the same age brackets in Canada and Australia, throughout Europe, Russia, Israel, and even China.

Specifically, the author can draw distinct parallels between the demographic and psychological parallels of Estonians. The authoritative work on the field of Estonian generations and their value systems was done by Kraav and Niemelä in 1997.⁵⁵ Their division of generations overlapped with those of Howe and Strauss with an insignificant fluctuation which should be considered remarkable considering the vast distance between the two sample societies.⁵⁶ The shaping years of the Builder group were marked by the establishment and growth of the first independence period of the Republic of Estonia. Independence fuelled the energy of Estonians to change it from provincial agrarian society to an industrious western society. The devastating effects of the Second World War and the surrounding circumstances (Soviet occupation, 10% loss of population due to two forced drafts, emigration, and exile) had a great impact upon the Builder generation in Estonia. Moreover, it left many in this generation gullible to the Communist ideology that promised equality and prosperity for its devout adherents while there was a significant group who were sceptical about the red gospel. The new society

⁵⁵ Niemelä, P. Kraav, I. Rusanen, T. Vornanen, R. Väisanen, R. Turvottumus Suomessa ja Virossa. Artikkeleita eri ikävaiheista ja elämänaalueilta. Kuopion Yliopiston julkaisuja. E. Yhteiskuntatieteet 32. Kuopio. 1995.

⁵⁶ Kraav used the division of Finnish researcher J.P Roos to six 12 year periods (1) up to 1925, (2) 1926-1938, (3) 1939-1951, (4) 1952-1964, (5) 1964-1975 and (6) 1976-1981 that correspond to Strauss' and Howe's (1) Silent, (2) Early Builder, (3) Late Builder, (4) Early Boomer, (5) Late Boomer, (6) Early Buster categories.

required a new kind of citizen. The next 35+ years which followed were marked by the promotion of a new set of values such as government owned property, centralized decision making, and an educational system that valued the politization of academics, but also fast urbanization and the rise of industry and accessibility of education . Many of the Builders became ascetic atheists that religiously trusted in the course of their leaders. However, there is a distinct group of Estonian Builders that held on to the values established prior to WWII . Many of those found disfavour with the government and were shunned by their peers. It can therefore be argued that there are two types of Builder generation representatives in Estonia. The first, in the light of the contemporary re-evaluation of ideologies, could be called a 'deceived generation'. And the second, sceptical Builders, made up of those that remained on the borders of traditional western values of their GI parents despite later shrinking into a distinct minority.

The generational schizophrenia shriveled somewhat within the Estonian Boomer generation. While this generation had never seen anything but the Soviet way of running things, there were two contributing factors that distinctly emerged. First, sceptical builders continued to raise their children in the light of traditional values that they held to. Second, the emerging popular youth culture of the 1970's that oozed into Estonian society from the West despite the closed borders. Geographical distance and widespread condemnation may be the reasons for the late emergence of the revolutionary flower children in Estonia.

The research of Mikk Titma from Tartu University followed closely the late Boomer generation born in the middle years of the 1960's in Estonia. 3360 were questioned in 1983, as they were preparing for high school graduation. 2183 of the respondents were again queried in 1987, out of those 2128 again in 1993 and finally 2143 in 1997.⁵⁷ Most likely unaware of the upcoming political and societal changes Titma had captured the section of generation that became the key actors in the changing Estonia to market economy. Titma discovered that an entire 23% of men in that group were in the position of management and 35% of all respondents were either employed as managers or

⁵⁷ Titma, Mikk ed. "Kolmekümneaastaste põlvkonna sotsiaalne portree". Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus. Tartu-Tallinn. 1999. P.10.

professionals.⁵⁸ Explaining it with the societal changes of early 90's in Estonia where professional seniority suddenly was rejected as an asset and all generations had an equal opportunity to apply to the leadership positions Titma carves a new term for this late boomer group – the generation of winners.⁵⁹ Titma proved that the former Soviet dynasty approach to hierarchical leadership had ended by showing that only 7% of those in new leadership positions had been raised in families where one of the parents was a manager.

Titma further discovered that the foundations of the modern societal approaches to marriage, family and children were coined by this generation of Estonians. This group succeeded in establishing the norms of societal acceptance of high divorce and cohabitation and the low birthrate of children. As this group reached maturity, education and financial success took precedence in their value scales.⁶⁰

In comparing the results of the altruistic interests of early and late Boomers in a 2002 study, Ainsaar states that there was little difference between the interests of early Boomers born in the late 40's and those born in the 60's when it came practical decisions.⁶¹ It could be argued that the percentage that allowed the progress of the Communist ideals to influence their personal decisions was equal to those people that chose the good of the Estonian Republic to do the same 20 years later.

The Buster generation in Estonia seems almost identical to its counter groups in the world with the exception that its destructive rebellion was specifically targeted toward a society that indeed collapsed (not seen in the western culture). Busters in Estonia have been privileged to be part of designing the new face of a country. Many of their western counterparts, on the other hand, have had to be satisfied with funnelling their energy into sports and nature fascination without leaving strong permanent marks in the lifestyles of their neighboring generations. Inger Kraav points out the high emphasis of Busters on true friendships, happiness, leisure time, pursuing a good life and financial affluency compared to the previous cohorts.⁶²

⁵⁸ Ibid. P.30.

⁵⁹ Ibid. P.9.

⁶⁰ Ibid. Pp.157-191.

⁶¹ Titma, Mikk. 30- ja 50-aastaste põlvkonnadaastatuhande künnisel. Tartu Ülikool. Tartu. 2002. P.112.

⁶² Kraav, Inger. Väärtused erinevate põlvkondade vahel. In Väärtuskasvatus. Tartu Ülikooli pedagoogika osakonna väljaanne. Nr.6. Tartu, 1998. Pp.72-94.

There also seem to be few differences in the lives of Estonian Millennials compared to their peers in other countries since globalization has effectively swallowed Estonia in its embrace. Just like their peers in other western societies, they aim high and do not think of themselves as limited by their background.⁶³ They live in a fragmented culture with little common experience apart from the media. Strongly affected by the technology that has allowed them to develop individualism they are not a homogenous group. They appear self-confident and seem not to be shocked by anything.⁶⁴

There has been limited research on the spirituality of Estonian generations. World Values research in 1998 (n=942) identified that the respondents indicated faith in God in the following manner.

Busters		Late Boomers		Early Boomers		Late Builders		Early Builders	
15-24		25-34		35-49		50-64		65-74	
Est	Rus	Est	Rus	Est	Rus	Est	Rus	Est	Rus
36%	50%	31%	73%	36%	69%	44%	67%	66%	81%

Table 3. Faith in God according to World Values 1998 research.⁶⁵

It shows noticeable steady decline in faith until the Buster generation that could be credited with the changes in society in the early 90's. The proportions of answers corresponded to similar World Values questionnaires for both 1992 and 1995.⁶⁶ This study clearly indicates the higher level of religious consciousness amongst the non-Estonian population which requires further study.

The religious inclinations of Estonian Busters is verified also by Inger Kraav's research on the subject of salvation and eternal life. On the scale of four to one, Busters rated the importance of the topic with 2.3, Boomers 2.0, Builders 1.7 and Silent 2.2.⁶⁷

⁶³ Miller, Pamela Ann. How South African Further Education Learners Acquire, Recall, Process and Present Information in a Digitally Enabled Environment.. Doctoral Thesis. Faculty of Education. University of Pretoria. April 2003. P. 18

⁶⁴ Zoba, W. M. The Class of '00. Christianity Today. 03.02.1997. Vol 2. P. 18.

⁶⁵ In Liiman. Raigo. *Uskonnollisuus Muutuvassa Virossa*. Kirkon Tutkimuskeskus. Sarja C Nro. 59. 2002. P.58.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Kraav, Inger. *Väärtused*. P.78

The Year 2000 census indicates the following distribution of religious believers (Christian and non-Christian) by generations: Busters 15%, Boomers 22%, Builders 50%.⁶⁸

1.3 Generations relating to religion.

How do generations worship? Similarly to the differences noted in the aforementioned discussions, different generations worship differently as well. Some of the prototypical worship expressions are as follows:

Builders have a strong sense of obligation to serve the church. They are often at the heart of their churches, in part due to their dedication and willingness to serve. They are the most churchgoing generation. This generation born before 1945 was shaped by scarcity and sacrifice. Many of them prefer a worship that honors heritage in its liturgy and traditions. While Lutheran Builders may value the hymns of Bach or Mendelsson, many Methodist Builders are drawn to the simple hymns of Wesley even though in his day they were considered radically contemporary. They may prefer liturgical uniformity, constancy, historical appreciation and tradition. Builders often appreciate the effort that goes into the task even more than the outcome. Therefore, a less perfect singer may be encouraged and praised for well-meaning effort, regardless of the outcome.⁶⁹

Boomers are characterized as uncommitted to the church but interested in a personal relationship with God, not set by rules. Christian Boomers see their relationship with Christ as unrelated to church attendance. Many Boomers have changed their denomination at least once in contrast to the Busters' lifelong commitment to one church type. A survey conducted by Roof⁷⁰ amongst 1600 Boomers in 1993 concerning their church attendance concluded that about 33 percent could be labeled loyalists, never having left the organization. Twenty-five percent can be labeled as returnees, those who have come back to the church. But the largest group, 42 percent, left church in the past

⁶⁸ Statistical Office of Estonia. 2000 Population and Housing Census. Part IV. Education. Religion. Tallinn. 2002. Pp. 292-345.

⁶⁹ Whitesel, Bob and Hunter, Kent R. A House Divided. Bridging the Generation Gaps In Your Church. Abindon Press. Nashville, TN. 1996. P.170.

⁷⁰ Roof, Wade Clark. A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation. San Francisco, CA:Harper. 1993.

and have not returned in spite of their spiritual leanings. The study also suggested that Boomers could be divided into “mystics” and “theists”. The mystics see God within themselves and are attracted by New Age teachings. The theists see an eternal source of spiritual authority, though not necessarily the God of the Bible.⁷¹

A hurting generation always looks for answers, and Busters are no different. Society and school have taught them that there are no absolutes, and yet they long for answers that only personal faith can provide. While all generations have had their share of problems, this generation has experienced more dysfunction, abuse and broken families than any before it.⁷² The Buster Generation is very pragmatic about its needs and desires a faith that works for them. Today they look to churches to provide them support networks and moral ethics. Second, Busters want to meet the real needs of other people. They expect their churches to be involved in the social issues of their local communities.

The members of the Millennial Generation are still attending youth groups but already a few things can be said about their church expectations. According to the research by Dr. Thom S. Rainer only 4% of them claim to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.⁷³ Depending on whom one considers an authority, the consensus is that about 85% of people who accept Christ do so before their twentieth birthday. The churches they are attracted to are considerate of their short attention span but involve a variety of senses and communication channels.

The following is the summary of the research done by Barna Research Group in 2001 as pertaining to the religious behavior of generations in the U.S.A.⁷⁴

Activities: Busters are less likely than any other generation to volunteer time to their church. (12% of Busters report volunteering) Conversely, 25% of Boomers, 25% of Builders, and 23% of Seniors have volunteered at a church in the past week.

Small group participation appears to be positively correlated with age, with 23% of Seniors, 18% of Builders, 17% of Boomers and only 14% of Busters reporting that they participated in a small group in the past week. Compared to 71% of Seniors who have a "quiet time" during the week, 63% of Builders, 52% of Boomers and 36% of Busters do

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² McIntosh, Gary L. One. P.139

⁷³ Rainer, Thom S. The Bridger Generation. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997. P.169.

⁷⁴ Barna, George. Generational Differences. Barna Research Group, Ltd. Ventura, CA 2001.

the same. 35% of Busters, 42% of Boomers, 50% of Builders, and 47% of Seniors attend church on a given Sunday. In a typical week, 29% of Busters, 39% of Boomers, 43% of Builders, and 59% of Seniors read the Bible. Busters are the age group least likely than any other age group to pray to God. In a given week, we found that 76% of Busters, 84% of Boomers, 87% of Builders and 85% of Seniors report praying.

Faith: Boomers emerge as more likely and Busters as less likely than any other generation to be born again (49% of Boomers are born again, compared to 44% of Builders, 36% of Seniors and 33% of Busters). Age appears to be positively correlated with the importance individuals place on their faith. While only 56% of Busters say their faith is very important in their life, 70% of Boomers, 80% of Builders and 79% of Seniors indicate that their faith is a very important part of their life. 69% of Busters, 73% of Boomers, 77% of Builders, and 70% of Seniors believe that God is the all-powerful, all-knowing, perfect creator that rules the world today.

Self-descriptions: Busters are more likely than the other generations to be searching for meaning in life: 44% of Busters compared to 32% of all others are searching for their purpose in life. Busters are the generation most likely to feel “too busy.” Compared to 53% of Busters who maintain that they are too busy, 49% of Boomers, 32% of Builders and 27% of Seniors feel the same. Older individuals are also more likely than younger individuals to describe themselves as a “born again Christian.” 49% Seniors and 47% of Builders call themselves born again, compared to 42% of Boomers and 31% of Busters. Financial comfort appears to come with age. We found that 38% of Busters say they are personally struggling with finances, compared to the 32% of Boomers, 23% of Builders, and 20% of Seniors. Busters are almost twice as likely as are Seniors to indicate that they are stressed out (41% to 22%, respectively). Likewise, 32% of Boomers and 27% of Builders said that “stressed out” is an accurate description of them.

Barna research confirms the theories of secularization of generations initiated by Max Weber already in 1930 and developed by Steve Bruce⁷⁵ and other sociologists of

⁷⁵ Bruce, Steve. Christianity in Britain. R.I.P. Sociology of Religion. Summer, 2001.

Swatos, William H. Jr. Christiano, Kevin J. Secularization Theory: The Course of a Concept. Sociology of Religion, Fall, September 22. 1999.

Weber, M. The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. New York: Scribner.1930.

religion. Research indicated unique value systems of each cohort group⁷⁶ with the overall decline in religious interest over the progression of time.⁷⁷ Furthermore, it calls for utmost sensitivity on biases and disparities when approaching more than one generation simultaneously.

While creating stereotypes for generations by the demographers has brought valuable new information about generational differences and self-perception there can be noted little excitement about learning from these diverse perspectives. It has, instead, shown that it is one's own generation that understands one the best and so additional distinctions are created that separate age groups further. It has allowed each generation to see itself as a separate community rather than an integral part of one larger community.

To summarize, Strauss and Howe present a fascinating hypothesis of generational organization. The theory draws similarities between cohorts whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personality. The most simplistic abstract is that history moves by seasons from spring to winter. In spring, (corresponding to modern Builders) there is a civilizational high of good behavior, peace, and prosperity but also stultifying conformity and spiritual deadness. In summer (Boomers), there is a consciousness revolution, in which the younger generation rebels against their elders and their institutions. In fall (Busters), there is an unraveling in which people turn inwards and focus on their private satisfactions and let public institutions and the community values fall into neglect. In winter (Millennial), there is a crisis such as a war or economic depression that forces everyone to become more communal and morally strict again.

Without needing to accept the conclusions about the predictability of the future generations, that this premise also allows for, the researchers have organized the past and present cohorts behavior in a practical key to understand ways in which they interrelate. Such demographic research should provide valuable clues for bringing various age groups together rather than naturally perpetuating towards stereotyping that causes further distancing.

⁷⁶ This fascinating research paints a panorama of the relationship between the generations and religion in the United States. While its conclusions contribute towards the case for multi-generational interaction the author expresses the need for an assessment of similar depth from an Estonian perspective.

⁷⁷ Fortunately thinkers like Rodney Stark makes a good case for the possible irreversibility of secularization. Stark, Rodney. Secularization. R.I.P. Fall. Sociology of Religion. September 22. 1999.

The research of M. Kraam and M. Titma confirms the adaptability of the theory to the Estonian society, proving Estonians' generational traits overlapping with those in other western populace while allowing room for the uniqueness of its own history.

Finally, Barna research confirms the theories of secularization of generations. It indicates unique value systems of each cohort group with the overall decline in religious interest over the progression of time. It calls for utmost sensitivity concerning biases and disparities when approaching more than one generation simultaneously.

The subsequent chapter presents the heart of principles governing the concurrent interaction with the representatives of different generations in the church setting.

2 INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

“If you have a new world, you need a new church.
You have a new world” – Brian McLaren⁷⁸

Having overviewed some of the weaknesses of homogenous-age group educational processes and the uniqueness of living generational cohorts it is time to establish the theoretical framework for the reciprocal interaction of age-groups in religious ministry.

2.1 Overview of the literature and definitions

In the 1970's a small number of books were published outlining intergenerational programs in faith communities. Three of those books have since become benchmark titles in subsequent intergenerational education developments: Sharee and Jack Rogers' *The Family Together* in 1976⁷⁹, Don and Pat Griggs' *Generations Learning Together* in 1976⁸⁰ and George Koehler's *Learning Together* in 1977⁸¹. Initial enthusiasm for the topic appeared to wane for some years following, although the chapter it was accorded in

⁷⁸ McLaren, Brian D. *Reinventing Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998. P.9.

⁷⁹ Rogers, Sharee. Rogers, Jack. *The Family Together: Intergenerational Education in the Church School*. Los Angeles, CA: Acton House. 1976.

⁸⁰ Griggs, Donald & Griggs, Patricia. *Generations Learning Together: Learning Activities for Intergenerational Groups in the Church*. Livermore, CA: Griggs Educational Service. 1976.

⁸¹ Koehler, George E. *Learning Together: A Guide to Intergenerational Education in the Church*. Division of Education. Board of Discipleship. United Methodist Church. 1977.

Changing Patterns of Religious Education by Foster in Taylor in 1984⁸² was positive. However 1988 saw the publication of James White's *Intergenerational Religious Education*.⁸³ This book is an impressive attempt to provide both philosophical and theological foundations to the field and continues to be the greatest authority and reference to intergenerational church ministry. The most significant non-American contributors are Michael Lush (1983, 1986)⁸⁴ and Megan Coote (1988)⁸⁵ from Australia; Dean (1992) and Privett (1993)⁸⁶ from the UK. In South Africa, Eddie Prest authored *From One Generation to Another* in 1993⁸⁷. Today Allan G. Harkness from Trinity Theological College in Singapore continues to keep the topic on the tables of scholars with his intriguing articles⁸⁸. On the larger scale however, the information about ecclesiastical creativity to involve different generations for learning has been somewhat overlooked and under-researched. This cannot be said in the context of Estonia where the formal academic interest in the Church context has been missing entirely.

The three theoretical foundations used in this chapter are the phenomenological perspective, cognitive learning and attachment. Phenomenology focuses on an experience and the meaning inherent in an experience as it is described by the people living it.⁸⁹ Schutz⁹⁰ explained that meaningful experiences are grasped reflectively and are perceived to be significant. Action, meaning, emotion, and organizational consciousness are

⁸² Foster, Charles R. *Intergenerational Religious Education*. In *Changing Patterns of Religious Education*. Ed. Marvin J. Taylor. Nashville, TN: Abingdon. 1984. P. 282.

⁸³ White, James W. *Intergenerational Religious Education: Models, Theory, and Prescription for Inter-Age Life and Learning in the Faith Community*. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1988.

⁸⁴ Lush, Michael. *All Age Activities for Learning and Worship* (Know How). Scripture Union Publishing. 1983.

Lush, Michael. *Special Events for All the Church Family* (Know How). Scripture Union Publishing. 1986.

⁸⁵ Coote, Megan. *Growing Together: How to Plan All-Age Learning in the Church*. Joint Bd Christian Ed. Australia. 1988.

⁸⁶ Privett, Peter. *Signposts: Practical Ideas for All-Age Learning*. London: Church House Publishing. 1993.

⁸⁷ Prest, Eddie. *From One Generation to Another*. Cape Town:South African Scripture Union. 1993.

⁸⁸ Harkness, Allan G. "Intergenerational and Homogenous-age Education: Mutually Exclusive Strategies For Faith Communities." *Religious Education: An Interfaith Journal of Spirituality, Growth and transformation* Volume 95, Number 1.Winter 2000.

Harkness, Allan G. "Intergenerational Christian Education: An imperative for effective education in local churches. Part 2." *Journal of Christian Education. The Australian Christian Forum on Education*. Vol. 42. No.1. May 1999.

⁸⁹ Berman, H. J. Analyzing personal journals of later life. In J. F. Gubrium, & A. Sanker (Eds.), *Qualitative methods in aging research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 1994. . Pp. 211-226.

Giorgi, A. A phenomenological perspective on certain qualitative research methods. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 25, 190-220. 1992.

⁹⁰ Schutz, A. *The phenomenology of the social world*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University. 1967.

essential components of building bonds and are best studied through a phenomenological lens. Individuals' experiences and opinions expressed in their own words are of vital importance.

With this phenomenological understanding, only participants in the cross-generational interaction can reflectively determine what they deem meaningful within their intergenerational relationships. It is through their voice of interpretation that activities or action can be described as being meaningful, not through the observation of a third party. Thus, it is then the educator's responsibility to listen to the voices of participants in order to better understand which actions, experiences, or activities have been internally perceived as meaningful and which have not been deemed meaningful within these intergenerational relationships.

The theoretical foundation of cognitive learning within any settings is best summarized by Bloom's taxonomy⁹¹. Categorizing the level of abstraction of questions that commonly occur in (ecclesiastical) educational settings fall in the groups of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis or evaluation. Learning is evidenced by an increase in any one of the of above which makes a change in behavior possible.

Attachment is also an important perspective incorporated within this proposal. Bowlby's⁹² attachment theory involves the terms secure base, separation and loss, felt security, and exploration. Initially, this theory of child development was based on infant-caregiver relationships. According to Mancini and Sandifer,⁹³ attachment is the opportunity to display emotions and feelings of security and connectedness with another individual. Schaffer and Emerson⁹⁴ studied the development of social attachment from early infants to 18 months of age. They found that by 18 months of age, infants were not solely attached to one individual, but were attached to as many as five or more people

⁹¹ Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain*. New York ; Toronto: Longmans, Green. 1956.

⁹² Bowlby, J. *Attachment and loss. Vol. 2: Separation: Anxiety and anger*. London. Hogarth. 1973.

⁹³ Mancini, J.A., Sandifer, D.M. *Family dynamics and the leisure experiences of older adults: Theoretical viewpoints*. In R. Blieszner & V.H. Bedford (Eds.), *Aging and the family: Theory and research*. Praeger. Westport, CT. 1996. pp. 133-147

⁹⁴ Schaffer, H. R. Emerson, P. E. *The Development of Social Attachment in Infancy*. *Monographs of the Society Research in Child Development*. No.94 .1964. Pp 1-77.

(fathers, siblings, grandparents, or even a regular babysitter). This social attachment at an early age has been examined frequently in adult attachment studies.⁹⁵

According to West and Sheldon-Keller, attachment in adults must be defined for investigation primarily in terms of function. The achievement of felt security can also be connected and attributed to the idea of social support.⁹⁶ Starker, in her review of social support research, found many scholars associating the word support with expression of love, understanding and friendship. Other studies have defined social support in terms of emotional support that included intimacy and attachment, reassurance, and being able to confide in and rely on another.⁹⁷ In 1980 Kahn and Antonucci⁹⁸ identified the term “convey of social support” to describe the ever-changing social networks over the life course that are founded on patterns of exchange, which are not reciprocal. Whittaker noted in 1983 that social support most often occurs within the family context, and among friend and peers⁹⁹. For example a major element in grandparent-adult grandchild relations was functional support.¹⁰⁰ Intergenerational functioning generally involves feelings of satisfaction that one member gains for doing things for or caring for the other. This includes not only concrete instrumental assistance, but also emotional support.

In the faith community, all-age integration is dependant on the perception of the proper placement of children and youth (but particularly children) in regard to their inclusion in worship. Moore has developed a typology based on the literature which could be used to further explore subjects’ perceptions of the responsibility of the faith community to children and youth.¹⁰¹ It establishes that the higher the church’s perception of such, the greater their interest in pursuing intergenerational activities:

⁹⁵ West, M.L. Sheldon-Keller, A.E. Patterns of relating: An adult attachment perspective. New York: Guilford. 1994

⁹⁶ Starker, J. Methodological and conceptual issues in research on social support. Hospital and community Psychiatry. Vol. 37, (5), 1986. Pp485-490.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Kahn, R.L. Antonucci T.C. Convoys over the life course: Attachments, roles and social support. In P.B. Baltes & O. Brim (Eds.), Life-span development and behavior. New York, NY: Academic. 1980.

⁹⁹ Whittaker, J.K. (1983). Mutual helping human service practice. In J.K. Whittaker & J. Garbarino (Eds.), Social support networks: Informal helping in the human services. New York, NY:Aldine.1983.

¹⁰⁰ Langer, N. Grandparents and their adult children: What they do for one another. International Journal of Aging and Human Development. Vol. 31. 1990. Pp. 101-110.

¹⁰¹ Moore, James. Children’s religious thinking, worship forms, and church responsibility: Perception of children’s worship leaders. Ph.D. diss., Trinity International University. 1995. P.71.

1. Non-members - Children are not members of the faith community; they are unable to understand or contribute to community life.¹⁰²
2. Miniature members - Children are small adults/miniature members of the faith community; therefore churches need to provide a small-sized adult worship for their benefit.¹⁰³
3. Immature members - Children are immature members of the faith community; therefore churches need to develop age appropriate worship experiences for them.¹⁰⁴
4. Observers - Children are observers of the faith community; therefore faith communities need to model the faith before them.¹⁰⁵
5. Part members -- Children are part members of the faith community; therefore churches need to plan specific times in worship for their involvement.¹⁰⁶
6. Full members -- Children are full members of the faith community; therefore, the churches need to involve children in the entire worship life of the congregation.¹⁰⁷

The more inclusive the church's view of their young, the more motivated they will be in seeing the benefits of intergenerational ministry programs in their community and willing to actively participate in them.

When attempting to define intergenerational relations and learning, the researcher will come across several working definitions with similar phraseology. Different definitions in the literature are worth reviewing as insightful variations for the purpose of clarifying the topic of this work.

¹⁰² Cully, Iris. Children in the church. Philadelphia:Westminster. 1960.

Ban, Arline J. Children's time in worship. Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson. 1981. P. 15.

¹⁰³ Doan, Eleanor. How to plan and conduct a junior church. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1954.

¹⁰⁴ LeBar, Mary. U.S.C. Children can worship meaningfully at church and home. Wheaton,IL: Scripture Press. 1976. P.32.

Wilkerson, Barbara. 1987. All about children's church. Camp Hill, Pa.: Christian Publications.1987.

¹⁰⁵ LeBar, Mary. U.S.C. P. 42.

Ban, Arline J. Children's. P. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Lehn, Cornelia. Involving children and youth in congregational worship. Newton, KS: Faith and Life. 1982.

Smith, Alan. Children belong in worship: A guide to children's sermon. St. Louis: CBP. 1984.

¹⁰⁷ Stewart, Sonja, and Berryman, Jerome. Young children and worship. Louisville: Westminster. 1989. P.13.

Richards, Lawrence. A theology of children's ministry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1983. P.371.

George Kuhler says a “setting for intergenerational education” is “a planned opportunity for teaching/learning as a faith community in which a major purpose is to engage persons of two or more generations in shared experiences/interaction, caring and mutual responsibility for learning.”¹⁰⁸

White defines intergenerational religious education as two or more different age groups of people in a religious community together learning/growing/living in faith through in-common-experiences, parallel-learning, contributive occasions, and interactive sharing.¹⁰⁹

UNESCO defines intergenerational programmes as vehicles for the purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations.¹¹⁰

Newman suggests another of the definitions of intergenerational programs. She writes,

“Intergenerational programs are designed to engage non-biologically linked older and younger persons in interactions that encourage cross-generational bonding, promote cultural exchange, and provide positive support systems that help to maintain the well-being and security of the younger and older generations.”¹¹¹

By supplementing, recreating, or replacing the basic familial connections that now seem to be crumbling in many communities, such programs can have a direct impact on the quality of an individual’s life.¹¹²

This definition, however, excludes biological family relations, which may result in a misleading understanding of such programs. Intergenerational programs imitate extended family relations and consider extended family the most advanced of any relational models. The author agrees with the Catholic cathetical documents that support and recognize families as “domestic church” and define family catechesis as “preceeding, accompanying, and enriching” all forms of catechesis.¹¹³ It is because of its roots in family interactions, that intergenerational programming has a positive impact on

¹⁰⁸ Koehler, George E. Learning Together. P.1.

¹⁰⁹ White, James. Intergenerational. P.18.

¹¹⁰ Hatton-Yeo, Alan. Intergenerational Programmes: Public Policy and Research Implications, an International Perspective. Ed. Toshio Ohsako. The UNESCO Institute for Education. P.10.

¹¹¹ Newman, Sally, et al. Developmental Theories as the Basis for Intergenerational Programs, Intergenerational Programs: Past, Present and Future. Washington: Taylor and Francis, 1997. P. 56.

¹¹² Ibid. P. 37.

¹¹³ Catechesi Tradendae #68. Catechesi Tradendae (On Catechesis in Our Time). John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation. 16 October, 1979.

[community, family and individuals]. Intergenerational ministry assumes the context of a family unit, encourages family responsibility and specifically focuses on working alongside the parents of younger generations.

Having said that, it is important to clarify that family ministry is only one aspect and presentation of intergenerational church ministry which is capable of providing family-like care in the context where something is lacking or in dysfunctional family models which focus on family units. Intergenerational ministries that focus exclusively on family units often fail to take sufficient cognizance of the reality of many contemporary congregations which comprise a wide range of people for whom a “family” model for church may be unhelpful.¹¹⁴

Leifer and McLarney¹¹⁵ highlight three main conditions that must be in place to ensure successful multi-generational programs:

- (1) Older generations must be willing to share their power and responsibility.
- (2) Younger generations must be willing to take on responsibility.
- (3) Both young and old need the skills to work together.

It should be reasonably obvious from what has been said so far that multi-generational ministry is not simply a case of adults “allowing” young people to attend events planned by and for the older adults, but involves young people, and respects their participation at all levels. It must be ministry *with* young generations, not to or for or even by young people. These aspects are the critical factors to consider when setting up and evaluating the effectiveness of multi-generational programs.¹¹⁶

The single most important defining characteristic of multi-generational programs is that “both older and younger age groups derive mutual benefits from their participation in such programs.”¹¹⁷ That is achieved by stimulation of all participants, but with appropriate content. Sensitive variation of cognitive and phenomenal learning intensity require skilled preparation.

¹¹⁴ Harkness, Allan G. Intergenerational. P435-436

¹¹⁵ Leifer, Loring, McLarney, Michae. Younger Voices, Stronger Choices. Kansas City: Kansas City Consensus, 1997. P.18.

¹¹⁶ Codrington, Graeme Trevor. Multi-generational

¹¹⁷ Newman, Sally. et al. Developmental. P.81.

Still, the author asserts that faith community is the institution best suited to facilitate significant and intentional cross-generational life and learning. The first reason for this has to do with the wide age spread of its membership, both formal and associated. Second, members draw meaning and find satisfaction from that membership. Stephen Cutler found from his research that among the dozens of voluntary associations in which older persons participate, only membership in religiously affiliated groups emerges as a significant predictor of life satisfaction.¹¹⁸ The Church is the only agency in Western civilization which has all the members of the family as part of the clientele.¹¹⁹ . While not all participate, they are certainly all invited. “Intentional” points to the fact that, although parishes are, by nature, intergenerational, we must choose to be intentional, that is, conscious about creating opportunities for interaction and learning between the generations. It is not something that easily happens on its own, especially taking into consideration the societal movements which encourage the opposite. As affirmed by Harkness:

“...it is not sufficient simply to have a group of people of differing ages together, but rather [programs] in which elements of intentional and mutual interaction in a multi-age grouping are consciously encouraged¹²⁰.”

James White, an author, much referred to in this field claims that the church is not a very good institution for fostering generational cohesiveness. But, just like democracy, it is better than whatever is in second place.

”Even at its worst, our earthen vessel institution is doing a better job than any other contemporary society in bringing family and non-related persons of different ages together for worship, fellowship, life and learning. At least, congregations *want* to be inclusive.”¹²¹

His last statement corresponds well with the qualitative research of perceived church priorities. In October 2003, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain,¹²² released results from a Field Test Survey of Youth and Adults in Fifteen U. S. Congregations participated in by

¹¹⁸ Cutler, Stephen J. “Membership in Different Types of Voluntary Associations and Psychological Well-Being.” *Gerontologist* 1976. P336.

¹¹⁹ Sawin, Margaret M. *Family Enrichment with Family Clusters*. Valley Forge, PA:Judson, 1979. P.22.

¹²⁰ Harkness, Allan G. *Intergenerational* P.433

¹²¹ White, James. *Intergenerational*. P.14.

¹²² Roehlkepartain, Eugene C. “Building Assets, Strengthening Faith: An Intergenerational Survey for Congregations.” *Family and Congregation Initiatives*. October 2003.

1,592 people, including 486 youth. Detailed demographics of the sample group can be found in Appendix 2..

Consistent with the overall structure of the survey, youth and adults were asked to select two particular areas of congregational life that were most important for the congregation's future. The high ranking for intergenerational opportunities must be evaluated cautiously. It became evident in the field test that some adult respondents may have selected this option simply because it was the only one that related to them personally. Thus, the final survey includes a sixth option that focuses specifically on opportunities for adults. It is impossible to know, of course, why people selected some groups as most important for their congregation's future. It is particularly noteworthy that all subgroups in the survey had the same highest and lowest priorities. Though the specific percentages varied, all groups (including youth) placed highest priority on "high-quality programs and activities for people of all ages to do together" and the lowest priority on "high-quality programs and activities for children." In between, the order of priorities varied across age groups.¹²³

Another research available to the author targeting the leadership of 287 Catholic parishes in the United States indicated their attitudes towards cross-generational programs. When asked, overall, how valuable they considered it to be to create unintentionally intergenerational parish community, respondents' average selection was 4.5 out of 5.¹²⁴ When asked, overall, how difficult they considered the creation of intentionally intergenerational parish communities, respondents definitely perceived some level of difficulty averaging 2.7 out of five.¹²⁵ Further results are presented in Appendix 3.

These surveys argue research values for a strong congregational support for an intergenerational approach in ministry. In the first survey the presented figures lead one to conclude that over half of the parishioners of various ages are willing to pursue intergenerational reconciliation through programs and activities in their churches. In the

¹²³ People's level of congregational involvement did not make a difference in how they rated the five priority areas; gender differences were so slight that they were not meaningful.

¹²⁴ Ellair, Steven M. *Toward Shaping Intentional Intergenerational Communities*. Intergenerational communities/ cathechesis. Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Office of Religious Education. Los Angeles. 2000. P14.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

second, the creation of intentionally intergenerational communities was seen to be quite valuable amongst the church leadership and respondents were quite interested in learning more about the topic.¹²⁶ They also perceived the difficulty level of creating such communities as only moderate. This indicates a high-level interest and relative ease with which communities may become more intentionally intergenerational.

2.2. Theological overview.

From the the historical Judeo-Christian perspective, being aware of one's community or social structure and promoting interaction between the generations was simply a way of life for early religious communities. All societies were based on systemic concepts which considered each generation integral and inherently connected to the larger community and function of society. Family units were not only cohesive and inseparable amongst themselves, they were also woven into the very fabric of the local community. Generations had constant and essential contact with each other and the entire community took responsibility for rearing and initiating members of their particular community into the traditions and customs of that community.¹²⁷

The roots of religious involvement are no exception. The very basis of the Hebraic tradition included equality amongst all the generations. Even though each generation had specific roles in the community, it can be shown that:

“children, representing the new generation were not merely included in the religion of Israel, they were assimilated or incorporated with a deep sense of belonging into the body or the family of God's covenant people¹²⁸.”

Robert Banks¹²⁹ shows evidence that children were present in most of the activities and meetings of the faith community – and even the persecutions! Importance and benefit to the community was based, not on a generational age category, but instead, on a concept of community and membership which was intergenerational.

¹²⁶ Ibid. P.18.

¹²⁷ Ibid. P4.

¹²⁸ Harkness, Allan G. Intergenerational. P. 438.

¹²⁹ Banks, R. Going to Church in the First Century: An Eye-Witness Account. Beaumont: Christian, 1990.
Banks, R. Paul's Idea of Community. Sydney: ANZEA Publishers. 1988.

The language of the New Testament is full of indications of the intergenerational nature of the people of God. There is given, for example, “The family of believers” (Galatians 6:10). Paul affirms the position of young Timothy, encouraging him not to be looked down upon because of his youth. (1 Timothy 4:12) On the other hand, Peter appeals to the young to be submissive to the elders (1 Peter 5:5) and he urges old and young alike to clothe themselves with humility toward one another. (1 Peter 5:1-5) Indeed it was Jesus’ prayer that all believers might be “one.”(John 17:21). Throughout the New Testament so called ”one another” calls for service appear. For example, instruct one another (Romans 15:14), serve one another (Galatians 5:13), and submit to one another (Ephesians 5:12). These exhortations are directed toward believers of the same faith and different generations.

Pauline theology holds this vision strongly as he summons us to invigorate the ideas of “community” with an acknowledgement of the importance of each individual member of that community. In Paul’s time, a great division in communities of faith was beginning, evidenced by the positioning of status and “importance” in God’s eyes. Of specific import was being perceived as possessing a particular “gift” which made one “more valuable” to God¹³⁰. This division not only pitted church leaders against church membership, but membership against each other. Even generations began perceiving themselves as more or less “precious” in God’s eyes than others¹³¹. Seeing the danger in such compartmentalization and division, Paul calls these communities back to wholeness by forwarding a real understanding of giftedness and its communal purpose:

“There are different gifts but the same Spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good...but it is one and the same Spirit who produces all these gifts, distributing them to each as he wills.” (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

This passage supports intergenerationalism as it acknowledges that each person in a community has particular gifts and that it is in sharing those gifts with the entire community that their potential is realized. No one age or gift is superior to another. They are, in fact, reliant upon each other. This occurs naturally when membership equity is

¹³⁰ Ellair, Steven M. *Toward Shaping*. P. 3.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* P.4.

honored. Our modern theology of parish and church community is deeply rooted in Paul's letters, and his language of gifts and corporate understanding of church is beautifully inclusive of all generations.

Is there a wider plan for these kinds of relationships? It appears from the Bible that God's plan for Scriptures has always been that it will be passed on from "generation to generation" (a phrase used 10 times in Scripture: Exodus 3:15, 17:16; Psalm 79:13; Isaiah 34:10, 17; Jeremiah 50:39; Lamentations 5:19; Daniel 4:3, 34; Luke 1:15; also, Psalm 145:4). This injunction was given in the preamble to the Law, which follows immediately after the giving of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5). Also in Deuteronomy 6:4 we find the "Shama Israel" – the call to worship still used by the Jewish people today, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One". After entreating the listeners to impress the laws on their own hearts, the very next command is to "impress these things on your children" (Deuteronomy 5:7). The intent is not simply a theological discourse or classroom setting, as the verse goes on to give the context for such teaching, "Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 5:7-9, NIV).

Generational conflicts can also be found in the Bible. There are the biblical stories of Job and his irreligious sons, the revolt of the young leaders in Jeremiah's time, and the problems of King David and his rebellious son Absalom.¹³²

Throughout the book of Proverbs younger generations are told to listen to the counsel of the older generation. There is not that much written regarding the older generation's respect for the younger. However, some insights might be gained from the study of passages such as Colossians 3:21, "Fathers do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart." Ephesians 6:4 is also of note, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." From the generational perspective, the older generation must be careful not to exasperate or provoke the younger generations.

¹³² Achenbaum, Andrew W. ed. The Changing Contract Across Generations. A. de Gruyter. 1993. P.6.

Perhaps the most dramatic biblical example can be found in the first chapter of the book of 1 Kings. It says that when King David was a very old man he was given a young woman, Abishag, to keep him warm. White suggests that Abishag may, literally, have tried to nurse the aging monarch. It was believed that a woman's milk was a vital force for the sustaining of life – even of the old by the young. Such transferring of life source worked in the other direction too, as when the infant Samuel was “lent” to the old priest, Eli, to receive the elder's tutelage.¹³³ While the author of this paper questions the legitimacy and authenticity of the former of these practices, it nevertheless correctly contributes to the high view of intergenerational relations evident in many scriptural accounts.

In addition to the support which the Bible and history give to the idea of intergenerational education, further under-girding may be found in contemporary theological thought. From this perspective the work done in the field of *process theology* is particularly helpful. Process theology was influenced by the Grecian philosopher, Heraclitus (c.504 BC). Heraclitus viewed reality in terms of "becoming" rather than "being." He believed, "...the basis of reality was change and flux."¹³⁴ In the 20th century philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead and the theological company of Hartshorne, Weiman, Williams, Loomer, Ogden, Teilhard de Chardin and others there were many similarities. The three categories of God, the world and humankind are viewed as more alike than dissimilar. They share common characteristics so that the way we describe people, may also be descriptive of the world and God. The five characteristics that are found in common between the three in the works of process theologians are the following:

1. Becoming – *Becoming* is the primary word in process theology. It is a synonym for "process" and "growing". To say that the world or God or people are in the process of becoming is to acknowledge that what "is" is not what "will be." There is room for expansion, change and improvement.¹³⁵ The change and moving in people are the easiest to notice. In the process of becoming, every person needs

¹³³ White, James. Intergenerational. P.177.

¹³⁴ Mellert, Robert. What Is Process Theology? New York: Paulist Press, 1975. P.12.

¹³⁵ Ibid. P.82.

others to aid him or her. We are not born alone. We seldom die alone. Neither do we grow alone. Process theologian Norman Pittenger writes,

”We belong with our fellow humans. We should not be able to develop our capacity to understand ourselves unless we had others around us and with us. Healthy growth depends always upon acceptance of those others, with whom we live and in sensitive relationship with whom we begin to live well.”¹³⁶

2. Relating- In the relationship between God, humankind and the world one should note that the relating is dynamic. God’s consequent nature – or what God shall become – is in part determined by humankind’s offering to the world. Process theology does not work with hierarchical understanding of divine-human connectedness. Instead it suggests both giving and receiving in more equal measure. For the purposes of this study it should be emphasized here that people’s humanity is ensured only through relational contact which is meaningful. Contrary to popular secular opinion, there is no ”self-made” man or woman. One cannot be human alone. A newborn baby literally has to be stroked or the spine shrivels up and the infant dies. Remus and Romulus, wolf-reared children did not re-enter society as humans. And the physically sickest people in society are not those most exposed to other’s germs. More than age, it is isolation that shortens a person’s lifespan.¹³⁷
3. Loving – Loving is the active principle in the world by which things are moved, according to process theologians. By loving God, humanity is lured into becoming something new. Through loving, we also move one another and the world. Whitehead writes, Vision ”dwells upon the tender elements in the world, which slowly and in quietness operate by love; and it finds purpose in the present immediacy of a kingdom not of this world. Love neither rules, nor is it unmoved; also it is a little oblivious as to morals. It does not look to the future; for it finds its own reward in the immediate present¹³⁸.” The greatest example of the loving

¹³⁶ Pittenger, Norman. Unbounded Love: God and Man in Process. New York: Seabury, 1976. P. 36.

¹³⁷ White, James. Intergenerational. P. 84.

¹³⁸ Whitehead, Albert North. Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology. New York: Free Press, 1969.

God and the loving human is the person of Jesus Christ. He loved/lured/persuaded people into a dynamic relationship with God so they might become all that is possible for them to become. Loving is the style best suited to religious education. The people that the church is ministering to are unique individuals who are precious to God.

4. Creating – Process theology emphasizes that God is the ongoing creator, which is much more than merely a sustainer of a once created universe. The creation is going on for both God, the universe and the people. In Isaiah 43:19 Yahweh says, "Behold! I am doing a new thing!" This assertion about God's activity is likewise affirmed for the world and people in process thought. As we join God in the work of making things new and join Him in involving and benefiting people, we become His sub-creators.

5. Enjoying--The idea of "enjoying" by God/world/people is a category in process thought that John Cobb and David Griffin, in particular have lifted up.¹³⁹ All created things –rocks, trees, bees, and people – have an initial aim in life. That aim is to become the most that it is possible for them to become. When that happens a person or other created thing reaches a state that is optimally satisfying. The entities then find fulfillment or great enjoyment in time. It has been suggested that enjoyment should be thought as close to what Abraham Maslow¹⁴⁰ means in speaking of "peak experiences." In older language, it might be considered the answer to the question from the Westminster catechism¹⁴¹, "What is the chief end of man?" The answer: "The chief end of man is to know God and to enjoy Him forever." On God's part it can be said that the Creator is delighting in the world and enjoying the praise which divine love inspires.¹⁴² The obvious

¹³⁹ Cobb, John B. Jr. and David Ray. Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition. Westminster, 1976. P. 54-57.

¹⁴⁰ Maslow, Abraham. "Religious Aspects of Peak-Experiences." Personality and Religion. Harper & Row: New York, 1970. P.170.

¹⁴¹ Available online: http://www.reformed.org/documents/WSC_frames.html?wsc_text=WSC.html

¹⁴² White, James. Intergenerational. P.86.

point made here was that intergenerational religious education should be enjoyable too.

Process theology sees the entire cosmos as an organic whole. While deeply interrelated, these relationships are not equal, however.¹⁴³ To illustrate, a single skin cell does not affect his or her life as much as does a nerve cell in the brain. Analogously, social groups are more effective than single individuals, and individuals are more effective than single cells. Just as the systems of the human body are guided by the human mind, Hartshorne (1897-2000) conceived of God as the guiding principle of the cosmos.¹⁴⁴ Thus, the cosmos is the very body of the Creator. As the human mind is something more than the human body, God is not simply equal to the sum of the ingredients of the universe. God is affected by the elements of the universe, living the joys and sorrows of every created entity, yet God is not overcome by this multitude of feeling.

Today, process theology is viewed as an eloquent branch of natural theology. It attempts to integrate science and theology, and vice versa; they are together in the same universal sphere of discourse, namely, process metaphysics¹⁴⁵. The process theologian contends that if metaphysics describes those general concepts or principles by which all particulars are to be explained, and if God is the chief exemplification of those principles, then talk about God is eminently meaningful and basic to the meaningfulness of everything else. A strong benefit of process theology is a clear and plausible form to a dynamic, personal view of God. Personal qualities such as self-consciousness, creativity, knowledge, and social relatedness are attributed to God in the most literal sense.

Like with any theological school this one too has seen deviations from orthodox Christianity amongst its thinkers. Some of the process theologians have held unbiblical views in the non-tripersonal view of the Trinity, a Nestorian or Ebionite tendency in Christology, a non-supernaturalistic view of the Bible, the denial of divine

¹⁴³ Pawar, Sheela. Synopsis of Process Theology. Center for Process Studies, at: <http://www.ctr4process.org>

¹⁴⁴ Viney, Donald W. Charles Hartshorne and the Existence of God. New York, NY: Suny Press. 1985. P.33-34.

¹⁴⁵ Diel, D. W. Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. Process Theology. Walter E. Elwell., editor. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 2001.

foreknowledge¹⁴⁶ and predestination, and a weak view of human depravity.¹⁴⁷ Despite some of its eccentric representatives, process theology's contribution to the understanding of human transformation toward multicultural community has high significance by providing a good foundation for the study of unity in diversity.

2.3 Anthropological overview.

Life can be viewed as a quest in which we seek to understand the world in which we find ourselves, discover its meaning, and locate ourselves within the grand scheme of things. As we go about the lifelong business of constructing our intelligible worlds, we pass through different eras or stages in our lives. We each approach our meaning-making task quite differently. James Fowler, from Harvard University, called these life stages the "stages of faith"—one's faith being the way one makes sense of the world¹⁴⁸. After listening to the life stories of hundreds of people, Fowler believed he had found a consistent pattern of six major faith stages which occur in an invariant order. However, most people complete only three or four during their lifetime. These stages have to do with the type of faith but not with the amount of faith. Profound faith in God or unbelief may occur at any stage. One's faith stage determines what one considers to be the important questions, what counts as evidence, and how and with what cognitive tools one looks for answers. The stages can be thought of as the different lenses through which one views the world as he/she journeys through life.¹⁴⁹ Fowler's conclusions compliment the findings of key figures in psychology such as Jung,¹⁵⁰ Allport,¹⁵¹ Piaget,¹⁵² and

¹⁴⁶ Stegall, William. A Perspective from Process Theology: Guide to A.N. Whitehead's Understanding of God and Universe. Creative Transformation. Autumn 1994. Pp. 46-51.

Hartshorne, Charles. Omnipotence and Other Theological Mistakes. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1983.

¹⁴⁷ Deal, D.W. Evangelical. Process Theology.

¹⁴⁸ Fowler, James. Stages of Faith. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row. 1981.

¹⁴⁹ Testerman, John K. "The Stages of Faith." Adventist Today. March/April 1995.

¹⁵⁰ Jung, C. G. Psychiatric Studies. The Collected Works. Bollingen Series XX, 20 Vols. Translated by R. F. C. Hull and edited by H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, Wm. McGuire. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1970.

¹⁵¹ Allport, G. W. The individual and his religion, a psychological interpretation. New York, NY: Macmillan. 1950

¹⁵² Piaget, Jean. Studies in reflecting abstraction. Hove, England: Psychology Press, 2000.

Kohlberg¹⁵³ who have all done various amounts of research on faith development. Today, Fowler's faith development theory has been integrated into many adult research studies including the disciplines of psychology, theology,¹⁵⁴ and even medical research.¹⁵⁵

The first three stages of Fowler's schema are somewhat linked to biological development. The latter three are attained only by processes having to do with life experiences, hard thinking, and significant interactions:

Undifferentiated Faith (Infancy, years 1 and 2): Bodily contact is crucial at this phase of human development. In the first two years of life, before the advent of any language, the infant has profound experiences of both trust and anxiety. The ability to trust others (so foundational for all forms of faith) seems to be innate; but it also needs to be drawn out of the infant by the promptings of parents and other close relatives and friends.¹⁵⁶ By simply being there in a caring manner, they help to create in the infant a sense of mutuality, which can later blossom in the future into more advanced faith .

In the *intuitive-projective* (2-7) stage, the world is a magical place, the line between reality and fantasy being indistinct. At this stage, children are not able to understand abstractions.¹⁵⁷ With the acquisition of language skills, a richer "impulsive self" begins to grow. Before the advent of logical thinking, the imagination of the child is able to roam free as a bird. Stories stimulate, rituals and symbols fascinate. This is a time of profound feelings and emotions

In the *mythic-literal* (7-12) stage, Fowler describes the time of the "imperial self". The typical primary school child develops the ability to reason at a concrete level, and tries to make sense of the world through notions of causality, space and time. Equally, the child begins to enter into the perspectives of others, and to appreciate that others may see

¹⁵³ Kohlberg, L. *Essays On Moral Development*, Vol.1, New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1981.

¹⁵⁴ Lownsdale, S. "Faith development across the life span: Fowler's integrative work." *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 25(1). 1997. Pp.49-63.

¹⁵⁵ Particularly, the study of Swensen, C.H., Fuller, S., & Clements, R. (Stage of religious faith and reactions to terminal cancer. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, Vol.21(3).1993. Pp. 238-245) was done to find out whether the stages of faith had any specific type of effect on patients with terminal cancer and their spouses. After a variety of surveys and interviews, it was determined what stage of faith the patients were in, and how they were reacting to their terminally ill condition. The study proved that a patient's religious faith is an important factor in determining their general quality of life.

¹⁵⁶ Fowler, James. *Stages*. P.29.

¹⁵⁷ Roberts, Keith A. *Faith Development*. Encyclopedia of Religion and Society. Editor: Swatos, William H. Walnut Creek, CA:AltaMira Press. 1998 P.117

the world in a different light than them. Stories retain their attraction, as key sources of the meaning of life¹⁵⁸.

Conventional (adolescence) form of religiosity focuses primarily on group conformity. Authority is external to the self, residing in the reference group. Faith is not rationally scrutinized, remaining more implicit or unexamined. Symbols are believed to have intrinsic power rather than being abstractions that stand for something else¹⁵⁹.

In the *individuating-reflective* stage, the symbol is understood as separable from its meaning. The individual understands that meaning is "constructed" or arbitrarily assigned to symbols. There may even be interest in "demythologizing" the myths of the faith to reduce symbols to logical propositions detached from a carrier. Authority for determination of what is true or false is transferred to an evaluation process occurring *within* oneself.¹⁶⁰

At Stage 5—*conjunctive faith*—a new openness to non-rational experience allows the individual to affirm the imagery and fantasy that a symbol stimulates. Myths and symbols are appreciated as carriers of truth and wisdom, but, unlike earlier stages, those truths are viewed as relative and as less than complete. Both the myths and the symbols of one's own tradition and those of other traditions are affirmed as carrying wisdom.

Universalizing faith. This stage is defined by feeling at one with God. People here invest their lives in a larger cause without being concerned by the personal cost¹⁶¹ (Parrott & Steele, 1995). These stages are simply frameworks for understanding people and where they are in regard to their faith. The element that Stage 6 persons have in common is that they are driven by a vision of *justice* that supersedes the normal boundaries between groups and nations. The commitment to one's vision of Truth becomes complete (not compromised by the feeling that one's vision is relativistic). But even though the commitment is uncompromising, it is not exclusive or particularistic.

¹⁵⁸ Fowler, James. Stages. P.43.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. P. 46.

¹⁶⁰ Roberts, Keith A. Faith Development. P118.

¹⁶¹ Parrott, L. III. Steel, L. Integrating psychology and theology at undergraduate colleges: A developmental perspective. Journal of Psychology and Theology, Vol. 23(4). 1995. Pp.261-265.

Fowler confirms the connection of faith with community when relating his stage development constructs to the questions of “religious socialization”:

“The development of faith competences and the movement from one stage to another cannot be the direct result of education or schooling. Rather, in precisely the fashion described by the religious socialization theorists, faith development occurs as a person wrestles with the givenness and crises of his/her life, and draws adaptively upon the models of meaning provided by a nurturing community (or communities) in construing a world which is given coherence by his/her centering trusts and loyalties.”¹⁶²

Despite the predominance of homogenous-age group educational processes for faith development, a close examination of the practical outworking of faith development theory in the educational endeavors of faith communities indicates that there are significant opportunities for intergenerational interactions to enhance effective movement through the ages:¹⁶³

Relationships at both the undifferentiated faith stage, in which children are becoming aware of the conflict between trust and mistrust, and intuitive-projective faith stage, in which children rely on images, positive relationships with significant adults—parents and others—are essential, for the quality of these interactions lays the foundation for faith in later life. The extent to which mutuality is observed, especially at the affective level, will be significant for later personal ownership of the value of the church as a significant community to which to belong.

At the mythic-literal faith stage, because children seek to build coherent patterns from their experiences, their sense of meaningful belonging is crucially important. Hence the composition, activities, and relationships of the groups to which they belong is critical, and there will be a qualitative difference experienced as a result of involvement in age-homogenous compared to intergenerational groups.

Stage 3 (synthetic-conventional faith), usually the stage of adolescence, is a period in which identity is newly discovered and affirmed. This “confirming stage” carries the potential of being a time of unexplored opportunity for “all-age” activities—especially learning and worship. Such events encourage dialogue between different age

¹⁶² Fowler, James. “Faith Development Theory and the Aims of Religious Socialization.” Lecture notes. Quoted in White, James. *Intergenerational*. Pp. 117-118.

¹⁶³ Harkness, Allan G. *Intergenerational*. Pp.60-61.

groups—an opportunity to change, something which will also tend to move adolescents to the next stage.

A tension is apparent at individuative-reflective faith stage. While people at this stage are less able to cope with diversity of views, they need to be involved in dialogue and discussion in order to accept the validity of positions other than their own. The sensitive use of intergenerational activities, especially drawn upon the insights of children and young people, can provide affirming opportunities and so encourage ongoing faith maturity.

Intergenerational interaction for people in conjunctive faith or the rarely attained stage of selfless faith is a means by which they can come to appreciate the perspectives of other generational groups. There is no threat here, rather, the different insights enable an examination of the strengths and limitations of one's own worldview, resulting in a maturing sense of identity and purpose.

These examples confirm that intergenerational strategies are not at all inconsistent with faith-development theory. In light of these findings, therefore, the underlying thought behind the intergenerational theory is the need (often a recognized desire) for different age groups to share experiences. Generally, the young admit to the value of having heroes and mentors to look up to and imitate. The old agree with each other concerning the beauty of their younger companions while the middle-aged seek the support of both of the others for the decisions they have to make.

Newman¹⁶⁴ links the needs of elderly adults to the corresponding needs of children. Reciprocal needs directly linking the generations:

<u>Older adult's needs</u>		<u>Children's needs</u>
To nurture	↔	To be nurtured
To teach	↔	To be taught
To have a successful life in review	↔	To have cultural identity
To communicate positive values	↔	To have positive role models
To leave a legacy	↔	To be connected to preceding generations

¹⁶⁴ Newman, S. Sharing skills, experience key to interaction between young and old. Perspectives on Aging, Vol.15 (6), Pp. 6-7, 9. 1986.

Newman's claim can be verified by a qualitative research of the highest perceived needs of Swedish elderly. In 1994 in Malmö, Sweden, a questionnaire was distributed to a group of elderly. The majority of the persons in the study were 66 years old. Questions included how people from the first welfare generation in Sweden looked upon their life as retired persons. The questions were closely connected to quality of life, where it was expected that health might play an important role. A qualitative study of answers and comments in the questionnaire showed that one of the most important dimensions in Quality of life was "Network". This category was almost twice as important as "Health" and "Work."¹⁶⁵ The study shows the importance of relational network in the field of gerontology.

When Margaret Mead died in 1978, she was the most famous anthropologist in the world. Since the 1920s when she observed "growing up in Samoa" and wrote her famous book by the same title, Mead had been the foremost analyst of generational relations. At the end of her life she was convinced that a new pattern of generational learning had been developed. There are, she claimed, three cultural styles operating in the world. These she described by the words

"postfigurative, when the future repeats the past; cofigurative, in which the present is the guide to future expectations; and prefigurative for the kind of culture in which the elders have to learn from the children."¹⁶⁶

In the past, post figurative culture, the generation of the grandparents, was the primary determinative of the way of life for the following two younger ones. A sense of timelessness and unchangeableness pervaded society at large. The essential characteristic of the postfigurative culture is the assumption expressed by the members of the older generation that their way of life is unchanging, eternally the same.¹⁶⁷

There have been times in history when the all-determinative importance of the oldest generation has not been weighed as heavily, however. This illustrates the cofigurative society, a culture where "the prevailing model for members of the society is

¹⁶⁵ Bang, Hanne, *Retirement and the Quality of Life*. University of Malmö, 1995.

¹⁶⁶ Mead, Margaret. *Culture and Commitment: The New Relationship Between the Generations in the 1970s*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1978. P.13.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. P.14.

the behavior of their contemporaries.”¹⁶⁸ Mead brought examples of times when distinct breaks from the past have occurred due to new emerging technologies, changing models of work or a younger generation moving to a new country. In such cases the generation of grandparents is either figuratively or literally left behind.¹⁶⁹ Their past knowledge does not prove to be helpful, therefore education is given over to others who are non-traditional.

Mead argues that today we live in a prefigurative civilization, the most unpredictable and fascinating of such. Mead writes: “As I see it children today face a future that is so deeply unknown that it cannot be handled, as we are currently attempting to, as a generation change within a stable, elder-controlled and parentally modeled culture in which many postfigurative elements are incorporated.”¹⁷⁰ Today, nowhere in the world are there parents who know what the children know, no matter how distant and simple the societies are in which the children live. In the past there have always been some elders who knew more than any children in terms of their experience of having grown up within a cultural system. Today there are none.¹⁷¹ Perhaps Mead’s most challenging words are the following: “The development of prefigurative cultures depend on the existence of a continuing dialogue in which the young, free to act on their own initiative can lead their elders to the new experiential knowledge.”¹⁷² This theory, quite adaptable to that of Howe and Strauss, leaves both young and old responsible for patching the generation gaps. It becomes the responsibility of the knowledgeable young to reach out their hand for the older generation to take hold of.

Still, regardless of who is in charge, the key to understanding intergenerational relationships is found in the following model where the letters symbolize different generations:

$$abc > a+b+c$$

The outcome of an activity performed together with a member(s) of a different generation is always greater than done alone or with a peer. Here the measurement goes beyond the effectiveness of a job performed, but wholistically measuring the entire development of a human being.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. P.39.

¹⁶⁹ White, James. Intergenerational. P. 100.

¹⁷⁰ Mead, Margaret. Culture. P.64.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. P.75.

¹⁷² Ibid. P.88.

2.4 Critique of Intergenerational Theory.

The field most controversial in the intergenerational education is that of incorporating children and teenagers in worship as equal partners. At the heart of this scepticism is the view that full participation in worship is related to one's ability to mentally comprehend what is occurring, and to respond accordingly.¹⁷³ The implicit conclusion is that worship is essentially an adult activity into which children must "grow" over time. Weil notes that over-emphasis on the cognitive has meant that children have been regarded as 'pre-liturgical'. In over-emphasizing the rational faculties, that aspect of the human person is elevated out of proportion to other aspects of personality, including the affective and intuitive powers which children manifest at an early age.¹⁷⁴ Marginalization of children in and from worship frequently reflects an understanding of worship as something that humans do. One's capacity for worship is then related to one's ability to take part in the practices of corporate worship. At the heart of this argument is a profound theological misconception. It is God who is the actor in worship, calling people of all ages together. Children, to the extent that they are permitted to participate, are equal and needy recipients of God's divine workings in and through corporate worship. They may not worship in the same ways as adults, but they are nevertheless fully gifted and enabled for participation in worship.¹⁷⁵

Ironically, writers on children and worship frequently note that, developmentally speaking, children are more inclined toward wholistic expressions of worship than are adults.¹⁷⁶ Children have certain abilities and attitudes which lie at the heart of worship. They are aware of their environment and the community around them. They are capable of intense identification and imaginative hearing. They are infectiously enthusiastic. They can be sacrificially generous and honest in their responses.¹⁷⁷ They respond physically and emotionally to what they see and hear. Children bring to worship a directness and

¹⁷³ Briebbenow, Greg. Towards an Integrative View of Children in Worship. Children in Worship. St. Paul, MN: Luther Seminary. Spring 2002. P3.

¹⁷⁴ Weil, Louis. Children and Worship. The Sacred Play of Children. Ed. Diane Apostolos-Cappadona. New York, NY: Seabury Press. Pp.55-60. 1983. P. 56.

¹⁷⁵ Briebbenow, Greg. Towards. P. 4.

¹⁷⁶ Ng, David. Thomas, Virginia. Children in the Worshipping Community. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press. 1981. P. 16.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid,

simplicity of faith. They are spontaneous. They are receptive and have hope. They know how to show thankfulness and joy; indeed, they show these feelings more wholly and wholeheartedly than do most adults.¹⁷⁸ In many ways children enrich the worship of the church.¹⁷⁹

An integrative approach to intergenerational worship respects what children and all other ages bring to worship, and makes room for them to worship in the manner for which God has gifted them. For example, it seeks to provide experiences where the childhood sense of wonder can be engaged in praise of God. In other words, an integrative approach helps children to worship as children. The question is not “How can we make our children into worshippers?” but “How can we worship together with our children and enable their worship?” Or, as Fairless asks, “What happens when we dare assume that children have the same claim on the space, ritual, style and content of worship as do adults?”¹⁸⁰

The second and third commonly expressed concern about intergenerational education in faith communities have been outlined by Sutcliffe:

“It can be unfair to involve them (youth) as observers of some adult activities and equally unfair on adults to have them working always in such a way as will keep the interest of children. Some topics are outside the experience of children; to try to adapt them to make them suited to children is to trivialize the theological and experiential dialogue in which adults should be engaged.”¹⁸¹

Therefore, the first criticism of the intergenerational theory is that of the “unfairness” present to a certain extent within intergenerational education. This criticism may be valid in some situations which are adult-dominated (e.g. children being made to sit through congregational worship experiences) or child-dominated (e.g. adults participating in

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. P.23.

¹⁷⁹ Further on the topic of children’s capability to worship:
Juengst, Sara Covin. *Sharing Faith with Children: Rethinking the Children’s Sermon*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press. 1994.

Berglund, Mary Catherine. *Obedying the Mystery: Worship and the Very Young. Beginning the Journey: From Infant Baptism to First Eucharist*, United States Catholic Conference, Washington D.C. 1994.

¹⁸⁰ Fairless, Caroline. *Children at Worship: Congregations in Bloom*. New York, NY: Church Publishing. 2000. P.11.

¹⁸¹ Sutcliffe, J.M. “Glimpses into Participation and Cooperation in Church Education.” Educator. (1). 1994. Pp.54.

children's services). But the activities described by Sutcliffe do not correlate with the generally accepted "modus operandi" of intergenerational programs. Such programs are meant to provide learning activities which involve all participants by utilizing a range of activities, so that all leave the event having benefited. The activities may provide balance in the following areas:

- a. Activities based on the cognitive thought processes on the one hand and affective processes on the other.
- b. Movement and action balanced with opportunities for stillness and quiet reflection.
- c. Drawing on the full range of human senses to provide variety in experiencing the world and to encourage wholistic learning¹⁸².

Proponents of intergenerational education join its critics in agreeing that it is unrealistic to expect all participants to engage in activities and maintain their interest all of the time. It cannot happen in an intergenerational setting, but seldom does it happen in homogenous-age learning situations either. People at both settings move in and out of engagement with the issue or the task depending on the internal (personality, needs, individual learning styles) or external conditions (environment).

The second argument Sutcliffe raises has to do with the subject matter in intergenerational settings. While it is true (as for the homogenous-age groups) that the subject matter needs to be of common interest to the range of people attending, very few topics need to be off limits provided that they are dealt with in a manner appropriate to the people present. Instead of trivializing the theological dialogue, a new depth and breath of understanding is often achieved because of insights people of different ages bring to the topic.¹⁸³

Additionally, John Hull suggests that the problem of exposure to inappropriate material may not be highly significant,

¹⁸² Harkness, Allan G. Intergenerational. P.55

¹⁸³ Ibid. Pp.56-58.

“While it is true that children and adults at the earlier stages of development will not understand materials characteristic of later stages, it is also true that there is very little evidence that such presentation causes any harm (194).”¹⁸⁴

Hull even goes further to imply that such exposure may even be beneficial, in some circumstances, for the encouragement of maturity in faith.

The true potential and linked hazards of intergenerational education arise when comfort zones are considered. First, some parents want to get away from their kids. Second, some kids want to get away from adults.¹⁸⁵ These reasons are often considered sufficiently valid for the utilization of age-segregated groups, but doing so may undermine the building of unity and community which the faith community values. This hazard has to do with the internal motivation of church members that choose comfort over growth potential.

2.5 The elements of the healthy intergenerational group.

While each of the cross-age groups have their unique dynamics there are still unilateral principles that characterize healthy intergenerational interaction. There is no meaning attached to the order of their presentation below.

The first element of a healthy intergenerational group is the principle of *bonding*. The term “bonding” was first introduced by Klaus and Kennell¹⁸⁶ and referred to the unique developmental changes thought to occur at birth and have a lasting effect on subsequent parent-child relationships and child development.¹⁸⁷ According to Saxton,¹⁸⁸ a bond is anything that ties, binds or fastens together. Bonding is a function of attachment, and is most commonly used in describing the close, intimate attachment that develops

¹⁸⁴ Hull, John. What Prevents Christian Adults From Learning? Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991. P.133.

¹⁸⁵ Koehler, George E. Learning. P. 18.

¹⁸⁶ Klaus, M. H. Kennell, J. H. Maternal-infant bonding. St. Louis, MO: Mosby. 1976.

¹⁸⁷ Goldberg, S. Parent-infant bonding: Another look. Child Development. Vol 54. 1983. Pp.1355-1382.

¹⁸⁸ Saxton, L. The individual, marriage, and the family. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. 1996.

between a primary caregiver and an infant.¹⁸⁹ With this in mind, Saxton also explained that bonds can be applicable to relationships outside of the most common caregiver-infant scenario. A paired bond is a special manifestation of a primary relationship. A paired bond may be a special relationship, asexual in nature, between family members or between companions or friends. On the other hand, a paired bond may be sexual, meaning erotic, such as the bond between lovers.

Using Saxton's definitions, intergenerational bonds would consist of paired bonds. Intergenerational bonds are defined as the emotional closeness, the connectedness, and the kinship ties that exist among extended family members across more than one generation. When one is bonded to another, one may feel and understand the meaning or significance of this relationship. The term multi-generational bond can then be referred to as the ties and emotional closeness that connect several generations.

The second principle indicating health in a relationship across ages is the principle of *shared power*. In the context of multi-generational relationships, the term power is used as the ability to influence or control events. When one group can control the other's behavior, or the circumstances surrounding that behavior, then that party, in that context, holds some degree of social power. However, power is not an individual concept, but a relational concept. Power only makes sense in the context of the relationship between parties.

For example, how much power does any leader possess if that leader has no followers? A leader only possesses the power which the followers are willing to give him/her. The same applies in group interaction also.¹⁹⁰ In general, research indicates that any potential conflict is best regulated when sharing relatively balanced power. This is due to the balance between encouraging productivity due to accountability. Each side knows that it cannot act with impunity. When not in balance, the stronger party knows that it can act independently to accomplish goals. Balanced power encourages parties to

¹⁸⁹ Worobey, J. Mother-infant interaction: Proto-communication in the developing dyad 1989. In Taylor, C Alan. *Perceptions of Intergenerational Bonds: The Comparison Between Grandfathers and their Adult Grandchildren*. Doctoral Thesis. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. 1998.

¹⁹⁰ Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert. *Managing Interpersonal Conflict*. Sage Publications, Inc. 1992. P.90.

work together to accomplish their goals.¹⁹¹ Balance in a group can easily be identified with a short questionnaire:

1. Does each generation have an equal ability and willingness to impact the other generation's decisions?
2. Do all generations believe that they are not required to give in to the others?
3. Does each generation realize that they cannot act independently?
4. Does each generation understand the value of balanced power in negotiating collaboratively?
5. Are all generations approximately equal in their communication skills?
6. Do all parties feel safe in negotiating with each other?

More than two negative answers to the above questions indicates one of the following:

- (a) Fear of speaking their mind due to a fear of retaliation.
- (b) Feelings of inadequacy due to poor communications skills.
- (c) Feelings of inability or unwillingness to influence the outcome.¹⁹²

Group leaders have the responsibility to stress the "one another" commands found in the New Testament to create servanthood models within an existing group. (See the Judeo Christian roots.)

The third principle of an intergenerational group is the principle of *reversible teacher/learner relationship*. Traditionally in the curriculum preparation process the teacher is the controller of the educational interactions, assuming what is essentially a unilateral transmissive model. A challenge from the New Testament churches is to recognize that within Christian faith communities' mutuality and interdependence are essential elements of the teaching/learning process, whereby 'teachers' and 'students' learn together and from each other. Thus in any activity each participant may move in and out of teaching roles. The usual assumption – that in a mixed age-group settings older people or adults will naturally adopt the role of the teacher – will need to be sensitively

¹⁹¹ Ibid. P. 106.

¹⁹² Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert . *Managing*. Pp.162-163.

challenged and practices modified.¹⁹³ Study of Bronfenbrenner examined children 's influence on their parents and concluded that there is reciprocal or bi-directional learning from parent to child and from child to parent.¹⁹⁴

2.6 Finding the back door.

While nobody doubts in the vast array of differences that separate the living generations, a question arises: Is there common ground that could be used to generate positive contact? Are there common interests and passions that churches could use in bringing generations together around the same table? While some of the common differences have already been discussed in this work, there is still certainly a lot to work with in the list of similarities:

Builders: Even though relations between older Builders and Boomers were strained in the 60s, much of the animosity has dissipated, although some Builders have still not reconciled their differences with their Boomer children. However, Builders relate well to their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As we have observed, Busters and Bridgers are returning to the values similar to those of their grandparents, and, as a result, strong bonds are developing between them and their Builder grandparents.¹⁹⁵ Builders can also be trained in pastoral care. Their past experiences probably mean that they will be able to love and be willing to listen to others. According to McIntosh, studies have found that older people find it much easier to say "I love you" than young people and thus may be the best ones to extend their love through pastoral care. Using Builders this way will extend pastoral care to a larger percentage of the church body. When a pastor is not

¹⁹³ Harkness, Allan G. Intergenerational. P. 48.

¹⁹⁴ Bronfenbrenner, U. Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22, 1986. Pp.723-742.

¹⁹⁵ McIntosh, Gary L. One. P.51.

available Builders can be.¹⁹⁶ Maggie Kuhn¹⁹⁷ mentions points of contact between Builders and younger generations (Busters).

Boomers: As Boomers have aged, their interest has shifted more towards family involvement. Boomers also are more appealed to by small group environments that discuss, minister to personal needs and offer close personal relationships. Boomers appreciate those who honestly live their faith as opposed to Sunday Christianity. They favor activism and since they view themselves as problem solvers, approaching them with a specific issue or project may prove successful. Shapiro writes that Boomers are looking for identity and groups that are able to provide clearcut beliefs and boundaries are best able to attract them.¹⁹⁸

Busters: Family, to Busters, is broadly defined to include practically everyone who will be their friend. This is the effect of the high ratio of family dysfunction and divorce this generation has grown up with. They are highly open to para-family groups irrelevant of demographics. More pragmatic than other generations, most Busters value being able to see the results of their involvement. They are looking for faith and involvement that meets their needs, but also the needs of other people.

Millennials: Since Millennials are compelled by intrigue, challenge should be the invitation to engage this group in intergenerational relationships. They are turned off by the blatant and obvious, but will require a strong participative sense. In an intergenerational relationship with the Millennial, the only successful approach is that of the mentor rather than a Bible Study leader. Millennials only trust those they get to know

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. P.52.

¹⁹⁷ Kuhn, Maggie. www.graypanthers.org.

Neither group is taken seriously. The old are told, "We don't do it that way anymore." The young are told, "You don't know what you're talking about."

Both groups have limited incomes.

Both are going through dramatic physical changes. The young are growing hair; the old are losing hair.

Both are involved in the drug scene, though faced with different drugs and different pushers.

Both experience conflict with the middle generation.

Both have difficulty securing employment because of rampant age discrimination.

Both are free to be agents of social change. When they work together, the changes can be dramatic.

¹⁹⁸ Mcintosh, Gary L. One. P.65.

on a deep level and who hang with them. They are resigned to the fact that everyone is flawed in some manner, and they tolerate each other's inadequacies, believing that everyone has problems and not hiding them is a sign of authenticity.¹⁹⁹ They prefer sensory group experiences rather than traditional formats. Therefore the use of art, music, poetry, media, the Internet, drama and lots of stories is widely encouraged.

2.7. Intergenerational Church Models.

The intergenerational church is a wholistic congregation with distinct generational subgroups peacefully co-existing under one roof, one name, and one leadership core. Expressing intergenerational ministry requires the following:

- a. Selecting church leaders who hold that all generations should be treated with equality and who themselves pursue relationships beyond their comfort zone.
- b. Planning a budget with the expression of Christian values in mind.
- c. Planning church activities so that they do not compete with families, but rather involves them in church life.
- d. Developing a church evangelistic approach so that whole families are reached, not split up.
- e. Providing services and fellowship for singles, divorced, widowed, single parents, and others of all ages who need the church as "family."

A relationally healthy church has contacts with people of various ages on multiple levels.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid. P.176.

2.7.1 Groups formed of different generations (abcabc)

At some point in church history, Judeo-Christian all-inclusive worship turned into a response to God by theologically mature adults. Today it takes a conscious effort on the part of most churches to involve younger and older generations in mutually enjoyable common activity that builds new shared experiences. Church worship – which is an end in itself - is an example of various age groups meeting for a same purpose and activity. The denominations having the most success in holding people of all ages together in worship seem to be the most liturgical. Catholics²⁰⁰, Lutherans²⁰¹ and Episcopalians²⁰², for example, stress age-inclusive worship and have been increasingly hard-working at saying how to do it. High liturgy churches seem to emphasize participatory worship aided by involving the full range of the human senses.

J.F White from the University of Notre Dame writes, “Our worship must be constructed around a healthy respect for the varieties of people who will be worshipping either in homogeneous or heterogeneous groups. What is appropriate worship for children may not be so for teenagers or their parents. No longer can we afford to offer a menu with only a dinner on it. For years we have, in effect said, “This is it and you can take it or leave it.”²⁰³

Some of the Protestant churches only include children in the service for the opening 10-20 minutes. This can be a great opening toward changing the service and making it more fulfilling for everybody. Songs can be picked with which all generations are familiar. Even if no age-inclusive allowances are made in the opening, a children’s sermon, narrative or a drama will be generating a faith-learning experience for all ages.

Similar interaction takes place naturally at family gatherings where peculiarities relating to age and preferences are respected. Margaret Sawin has developed the term Family Clusters which she defines as a group of four or five complete family units which

²⁰⁰ Ellair, Steven M. Toward. Pp.8-9.

²⁰¹ Finley, Kathleen. Coffey, Kathy. Devillers, Sylvia. Mailander, Rita. Growing Together. Vol I&II. Living The Good News. 2001.

Intergenerational Christian Education. Lutheran Education Association. LEA Monograph. Spring. 2003.

²⁰² Parker, Andrew D. Keeping the Promise: A Mentoring Program for Confirmation in the Episcopal Church. Harrisburg, PA:Morehouse. 2000.

²⁰³ White, James F. New Forms of Worship. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971. P.34.

contract to meet together periodically over an extended period of time for shared educational experiences related to living in relationship with their families.²⁰⁴

Yet another variation in congregational life is the parish-within-a-parish concept. The most popular form of this is known as cell groups. Such models are often used by larger churches that consider it important to offer members personal pastoral care (even if it be by lay members).²⁰⁵ The shepherding duties are thus delegated to the cell group members who meet each other's needs

The key to this form of interaction is that generations are represented at groups of various purposes that may or may not be intentionally seeking generational bonding and understanding. This model does not have the problem of becoming overly therapeutic.

2.7.2 Groups formed of same generation (aa, bb, cc)

Natural differences exist between generational groups in faith communities, and this fact cannot be ignored. Koehler lists five reasons in favor of homogenous groups that the author fully endorses:

1. There are stages of Christian growth appropriate to each age level, and we need to concentrate on helping each age with such growth.
2. There are personal and social issues which peak at various age levels. People of like ages need a chance to think these through together.
3. People of all ages learn certain things best from their peers, not from another generation. Therefore, we should group peers together for such learning.
4. Most people enjoy being with persons of the same age and will want to do some of their learning that way.
5. Abilities vary by age. Many learning activities and resources are useful only for a narrow age span.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Sawin, Margaret M. Family. Pp.61-71.

²⁰⁵ Neighbour, Ralph W. Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for Cell Churches. Houston, TX: Touch Publications Inc. 1990.

²⁰⁶ Koehler, George E. Learning. P. 16-17.

Such reasons are valid for encouraging the use of homogenous-age group educational settings. What is not justifiable is when these reasons are presented as a rationale for exclusively homogenous-age group settings. Instead, the author agrees with Privett that “we must learn to do only those things in separate age groups which (we) cannot in all conscience do together.”²⁰⁷

Age-specific ministries, like the traditional Sunday school, children's church, and adult Bible studies, are great for teaching the stories and concepts of the faith. In contrast, age-integrated ministries, teach how to incorporate those truths into relationships. There needs to be a place for both.²⁰⁸ Peer groups share the same interests and for that reason, require less time for the establishment of rules. Since similar values are held these groups are quick to reach their goals. The weakness of such groups is that there is little challenge and stimulation that may lead to a new understanding of self and others. An example of such groups in the church context would be age segregated Sunday schools and Bible studies. While this model is not intergenerational, it plays an enormous part in an intergenerational church.

2.7.3 Groups formed of same generation interacting with similar groups of different generations (aa+bb).

In this model peer groups join forces temporarily or permanently for a shared purpose. Such interaction is usually characterized by its focus on a specific theme, problem, or project. Differences are realized, but room is made for them in the interest of and for the outcome of the common good. Each peer group may share different responsibilities that fit their strengths and weaknesses the best. Such partnerships open doors for projects of cooperation within a church. A successful example of this type of cooperation occurred in a church where the youth group decided to go to the area nursing home to minister with songs and testimonies. This sparked interest amongst the senior

²⁰⁷ Privett, P. ed. Signposts: Practical Ideas for All-Age Learning. London: National Society/Church House Publishing, 1993. P. 77.

²⁰⁸ Zahn, Drew. “Connecting the Generations: How churches are building and sustaining age-integrated, multi-generational ministry.” Leadership Journal. Vol. XXIV, No. 2, Spring 2002. P.37.

generation of the church members who decided to accompany the young. The visit became a success since both generations were able to build meaningful relationships with the ward and between themselves.

The most popular and often repeated aa+bb pattern groups are those formed relative to major holidays of the religious calendar year. Often the church leaders will borrow from holiday group themes and then build their own creative ideas for structuring the faithing event. This model is clearly the easiest and the most practiced in the intergenerational community field. The time demands are patterned after the calendar and there are a lot of resources available. In fact most churches use this pattern even without being knowledgeable about intergenerational education.

Because of the one-time nature of the event or the time elapsing between seasonal workshops, there may not be as much significant sharing among generations as can happen in the other models. So the event runs the risk of being too soon forgotten. On the other hand, for many congregations it is a “foretaste” of what might be and, as such, has led them into deeper and longer term involvement in intergenerational religious education.

2.7.4 Members of different generations interacting individually (ab, ac, bc)

Friendships form naturally. In fact, some would argue that the more spontaneity a relationship has, the more satisfaction it will bring. In this model, individuals who possess different historic backgrounds bond voluntarily for the purpose or entertainment. Friendships between younger and older generations do not have to be compensational for ancestral interaction, although they may greatly relieve the stress caused by whatever poor family relationships may exist.

The greatest beauty of individual intergenerational relationships, however, is found in mentoring. Empirical studies, primarily in a secular context, have defined mentoring differently. Rhodes, Ebert, and Fischer, for example, defined mentors as those

non-parental adults identified as providing support and referral to resources.²⁰⁹ For Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee, however, mentors are those whose goal is to "support and facilitate the realization of the Dream" by serving as transitional figures for another person.²¹⁰ In work with adult leaders from a Christian context, Clinton and Clinton, define mentoring as "... a relational experience by which one person empowers another by transferring God-given resources" .²¹¹ Chris Adsit, author of Personal Disciplemaking, sees mentoring as "a subset of disciplemaking."²¹² It is to describe the process of developing a man or a woman to their maximum potential through a commitment of time and emotional energy to a relationship with an understudy. This goes beyond mere interest and is a commitment that, more often than not, is intense. A mentor is not necessarily a person who can do the work (in the work relationship) better than his followers. Instead, he can get his followers to do the work better than he can. Fred Smith, president of Fred Smith & Associates calls mentoring "instruction" and "coaching":

"Instruction is what Plato referred to as transferring information from one mind to another. Much of the technology information can be transferred by instructors. Instruction deals with how to do something useful – something for which one has a talent and something one can swap in the market for financial return and recognition as a craftsman. Coaching, on the other hand, is the process of developing unique qualities in the art of learning. For example, such things as thinking, feeling and dedication to excellence can not be given by instruction – they can only developed by coaching/mentoring (Smith 94)."²¹³

From the author's experience, more often than not, the more mature party becomes interested in the mentoring relationship first. Having a vision for the purpose and steps of this relationship will allow to quickly recognize the right protégé into whose life to invest oneself. Mentor of mentors, Ted Engstrom, lists four principles to follow in

²⁰⁹ Rhodes, J. E., Ebert, L., & Fischer, K.. Natural mentors: An overlooked resource in the social networks of young African-American mothers. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 20, 1992. Pp. 445-461.

²¹⁰ Levinson, D. J., Darrow, C. N., Klein, E. B., Levinson, M. H., & McKee, B. *Seasons of a Man's Life*. New York, NY: Ballantine.1978. P. 98.

²¹¹ Clinton, J. R., & Clinton, R. W. *The mentor handbook: Detailed guidelines and helps for Christian mentors and mentorees*. Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers. 1991. P.1.

²¹² Adsit, Christopher. *Personal Disciplemaking. A Step-By-Step Guide for Leading a New Christian From New Birth to Maturity*. Integrated Resources. 1996. P180.

²¹³ Smith, Fred Sr. *Leading With Integrity : Competence With Christian Character*. David L. Goetz Ed. Bethany House Publishers. 1999. P.94.

order to be effective in the role of a mentor. First only a mentoree whose philosophy of life the mentor shares should be selected. The greatest mentors are those who are also role models. Secondly, a mentoree should be chosen whose potential the mentor genuinely believes in. The secret of mentoring in any field is to help a person get to where he or she is willing to go. Third, the mentoree's progress should be constantly evaluated. An honest mentor will be objective. If necessary, he or she will encourage the person to stay on course, to seek another direction, or even enter into a relationship with another mentor. Finally, there is a need to be committed, serious and available to mentorees.²¹⁴

While ideal mentoring is provided for within the home, the church also firmly stands as an excellent environment for such discipleship to take place. Countless opportunities for forming close relationships and service allow a person to become familiar with the needs firsthand and thus find the one or several into whose life to invest oneself.

In conclusion of the chapter, hope for renewing an intergenerational vision and nurturing cross-age learning is not beyond the reach of congregations that desire it. They are, by nature and mandate, intergenerational. Since the church community is, in fact, one of the only societal institutions left that contains four or more generations, they must only discover the ways in which they can become more *intentionally* intergenerational.

The outcome of an activity performed together with a member(s) of a different generation is always greater than done alone or with a peer when wholistically measuring the entire development of a human being. That view is supported by the historic Judeo-Christian practice as well as contemporary theological school of process theology. Examination of Fowler's faith development theory in the educational endeavors of faith communities indicates that there are significant opportunities for intergenerational interactions to enhance effective movement through the ages.

Four approaches to congregational ministry are suggested that compliment each other by meeting different developmental needs.

²¹⁴ Engstrom, Theodore Wilhelm. *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to Others What God Has Given to You*. Newburgh, IN: Trinity Press, 1989. P.24.

The difficulty of intergenerational learning lies in assuring that both older and younger age groups derive mutual benefits from their participation. That is achieved through the stimulation of all participants, but with appropriate content. The entire fourth chapter is dedicated to that purpose. Prior to that, however, an introduction to generational tensions is needed with the purpose of learning to avoid it.

3 FROM DESTRUCTIVE TO CONSTRUCTIVE.

Growth is the only evidence of life.

Cardinal John Henry Newman

(1801-1890)

3.1 Generational Dysfunctions in Today's Churches

The separation and segregation of age groups noted in this work breeds competition. The churches of today are experiencing increasing competitive tension in the way generations relate. Likes and dislikes are crossed in worship styles, preferred ways of learning, preferred ways of being led, communication styles, approaches to problem-solving, interactions with pastors and leadership and building and maintaining relationships just to name a few.²¹⁵ Resolving intra-congregational intergenerational conflicts requires understanding of generational differences, mediation and negotiation skills that this chapter addresses. Unfortunately, because people often become polarized, and ministers are generally not skilled mediators, conflicts can become destructive schisms.

In addition to specific relational arguments the author has identified three broader church-wide dysfunctions that are common in relationally struggling churches. None of the following is guaranteed to paralyze the entire church ministry, but will hinder greatly generational group interaction and trust.

²¹⁵ Lahiri, Indra. Understanding and addressing Intergenerational Conflict. Cultural Diversity at Work. May 15th, 2001.

3.1.1 Church of Missing Generation

In the first example of churches, one entire generation is missing completely. As long as the proportionality of members does not change and other groups bear in mind each other's differences successful ministry is possible in this environment. e.g. church service (acac). This situation can occur as a result of war, persecution, plague, change of values in society etc. Although there is a generational dysfunctionality present in this example this does not have to progress into a relational and congregational dysfunction.

3.1.2 The Church of Missing Generational Identity.

One age group is missing its generational identity. This is a more serious abnormality. While one generation may be present at church services (abcabc) they assume the values of another generation in other ministry situation and are absorbed into a dominating group (aa+bbc). This, in turn, will create a power imbalance in group relationships. Several potentially destructive outcomes will begin to emerge rather quickly. There becomes high likelihood of the stronger group being unwilling to attend to the personal/generational needs of the weaker group²¹⁶. This unproportional ministry model will suppress a group initiative as the conflict stays focused on needs and fails to move to substantive issues. This is due to the high-power party's little need for the low-power party.²¹⁷

A second danger associated with power imbalances is that the weaker parties are not in position to pursue a collaborative settlement for two basic reasons.²¹⁸ First, collaboration requires that both parties express a willingness to change and become more flexible in their demands. Changing and becoming more flexible means relinquishing

²¹⁶ Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert. Managing. P. 108

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

some control over outcomes (i.e. relinquishing power). As a result, low-power parties have less to give and thus less flexibility to offer the other party.

Also, collaboration requires parties to focus on the substantive problem at hand. Because the low-power parties tend to concentrate on their personal needs in a relationship, their ability to focus on an entire organization's interests diminishes considerably. Low power groups want respect and recognition before they are willing to negotiate the details of some kind of deal.²¹⁹ Practically, the church minority is not willing to cooperate in a situation where their generational music, budgeting distribution, ministry preferences are not respected.

Problems resulting from power imbalances confront people every day in family relationships, economic and social oppression and ethnic minorities. When the same occurs in a church it will result in deeply broken spirits due to the vulnerable nature of the Christian environment. The roots of such imbalance have led to oppression, neglect and abuse from the side of the high-power generations. Aggression, rebellion and indifference are often visible on the part of the low-power groups and church splits and/or lost faith when a solution has not been found. How each generation views the gap is different. Younger generations tend to focus on the intrinsic differences in values, and older generations tend to focus on the immaturity seen in the personal habits and styles of the younger.²²⁰

Not surprisingly, the keys to the situation are held by the high-power group. It is up to this group to grant needs (give power) to weaker parties and place them in a position to negotiate in good faith. Donohue and Kolk suggest three paths to power balancing:

1. The high-power group can give the other group greater control over topics of conversation, critical decisions affecting both parties and the expression of personal needs.²²¹ Sharing resources will mark the beginning of a more collaborative relationship.
2. Focus on the common needs as opposed to minority needs. When the focus is on the relationship people become more sensitive and aware of the other's

²¹⁹ Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert. Managing. P.108.

²²⁰ McIntosh, Gary. One. P. 220.

²²¹ Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert. Managing. P.109.

needs.²²² This reaction is common when an outside source threatens parties in the relationship. That external threat makes people forget about their differences and cause them to focus sharply on what binds them together.

3. The high-power party can reveal how much power the low-power generation really possesses in the relationship. The minority generation may actually control more than he or she believes. When a group controls resources as well as demonstrating the willingness to use these resources, that group possesses power. Sometimes simply a reminder of that power possessed will help to bring a solution to the conflict.²²³

In this context, the author has created a few more adjustments to the Harvard Negotiation Project recommendations for ways for the underdogs to gain power.²²⁴ There is power in developing a good working relationship between the various groups involved. If one party understands the other side and they are also understood; if emotions are acknowledged and people are treated with respect even when they disagree; if problems are addressed directly, not by demanding or offering concessions on substance, then negotiations are likely to be smoother and more successful for both parties. Second, there is power in understanding interests. Is the other generation really against something or instead are they merely for something else? Third, there is power in inventing creative options. Successful brainstorming increases one's ability to influence others. Once the other side's interests are understood, it is often possible to come up with ingenious solutions. Fourth, there is power in using external standards of fairness. For example, turning to the Bible for answers instead of hours of arguments will bring the answer closer. Also, referring to a third, respected party for mediation can also help in the event of a standstill. Fifth, there is power in developing a "walk away" alternative. This becomes especially helpful in abusive situations. If the outcome is not reached, there may come a time for more drastic solutions that one should be prepared for. This is

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Donohue, William A. Kolt, Robert. *Managing*. P.109-110.

²²⁴ Fisher, Roger, Patton, Bruce. Ury, William. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. Pp.179-186.

especially important in abuse cases where continuing in the previous manner may be impossible. Finally, there is power in making commitments and sticking with them.

Usually dysfunctional churches *claim* to minister to all generations while in reality they are only meeting the needs of one group. While being a niche church de facto (see below) they maintain an intergenerational cover. The bright side is that it is possible to change dysfunctional, abusive churches into healthy churches but it may take years of prayer and negotiating. This may be well worth it for the right cause and distinctive group.

Qualitative research – Participatory observation as well as interviews with church members.

Background: A protestant evangelical church in Northern Estonia. Sunday service attendance around 40.

The church had a small and active youth group for teenagers 13-18 years old. Since the church membership age was set at 16, a large portion of the youth group members were below the qualifying age for membership. There were a few young families below age 30 that had grown out of the past youth group. The group of members age 31-45 was only represented by one member. The 46-60 age bracket was attended by 5 people. The age 61-75, however was well represented by 17 members. Not surprising since the average mortality rate in Estonia is 71.2 there were only 3 females older than 75 in the oldest membership roster.

	Male		Female		Total	
	Member-ship	Sunday	Member-ship	Sunday	Member-ship	Sunday
Age 16-30	3	3	6	6	9	9
Age 31-45	0	0	1	1	1	1
Age 46-60	2	2	3	4	5	6
Age 61-75	2	4	15	18	17	22
Age 75+	0	0	3	2	3	2

Table 4. Church X demographics by membership (members, who had attended within the last year) and by attendance (on a sample Sunday service in October 2003).

Below are highlights of interviews held with the members of the church in the fall of 2003. The interviewer had the opportunity to assimilate into the church community and conducted interviews with different members on the topic of intergenerational relations within their church. Presented are the sections of the conversations that indicated tensions between age groups.

When asked about the methods used to reach the young generation one of the influential board members (male 53) answered: "When the young people come to our Sunday worship service they will learn to like the style of music we play. They will change their preferences and learn to value what we have to offer. This is what happened to me when I was young."

A male member age 25 recalled the following incident: "A group of young people from a church with a similar background as ours were invited to participate at our Sunday service. While the sound equipment was being set up, an elderly lady, an ambassador of the largest group of members, delivered a message to me that if the guests were going to worship they were going to get up and leave the church."

In this dialogue the word "worship" had become synonymous with loud, contemporary music that the older generation had a difficult time relating to. When asked about the course of this particular service the interviewee remarked that while no

special concessions were made nobody left the service early and it turned out to be a very special Sunday occasion

During the period of observation the researcher had several opportunities to participate in the midweek prayer meetings where the topic of youth was covered periodically. Those meetings were foremost attended by retired women. It was observed that there were two kinds of prayers prayed regarding the youth. The first type of prayer for the youth, by far the most dominant, could be described as perplexity and grief from their perspective of seeing all young people as slaves to ungodliness.

There was a different prayer sometimes prayed by one female member, however. In that prayer she asked God to change her to understand young people better. Recording those prayers mentally for the purposes of later notetaking could be considered unethical, yet it gave a good understanding of how the youth were viewed within the older generation.

A female member age 23 described relations with the elderly community in the church in the following way: "I was approached by a member of the largest demographics group after leading worship during a Sunday service. The person told me that what I did was fake. I felt hurt because my motives were incorrectly judged."

The church under observation held its biannual youth retreat, drawing about 10 teenagers that were members of the weekly youth group activities and 10 more who were invited as guests by their friends from church. Incidentally, the church board (5 members including the youth minister) was also present in the church at this time to discuss financial matters. Upon the completion of the board meeting a spontaneous decision was made to take a vote amongst the youth. The question was worded: "Do you have friends in our church who are of a different generation than you are who are not present in this room?" Sadly, not a single hand was raised in answer to this statement by those attending the youth event.

In summary of the research, the church under consideration could be categorized as generationally dysfunctional. The two significant age groups present were not proportional, nor was there a middle group that had preserved their separate generational identity. Infrequent relations between young and old were characterized by mistrust and

frequent conflicts. The underlying attitude on part of many members was that God prefers one generation over another to accomplish His work.

3.1.3 The Church of Homogenous Unit

The homogenous unit churches can also be called niche churches (i.e. youth churches). Many of the advocates of the niche approach base their position on principles derived from the Homogenous Unit principle (HUP). The HUP is a principle of church growth theory championed by Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Mission during the 1970's. A Homogenous Unit can be defined as "a section of society in which all members have some characteristic in common."²²⁵ These common characteristics may be geographical, linguistic, ethnic, economic, social class etc. The primary motive for such a strategy is the belief that sociological barriers often inhibit people from converting because the Gospel appears alien to them. Homogenous unit churches attempt to reach one particular section of society by adopting an approach that does not appear alien to that focus group.

The theory created considerable debate, and in 1977 the Lausanne Movement convened at a special conference to consider it. Supporters and opponents both presented papers and some common ground was found. One of the conclusions reached was:

"...a homogenous unit church can be a legitimate and authentic church. Yet we are also agreed that it can never be complete in itself. Indeed, if it remains in isolation, it cannot reflect the universality and diversity of the Body of Christ. Nor can it grow into maturity. Every homogenous unit church must take active steps to broaden its fellowship in order to demonstrate visibly the unity and variety of Christ's church. This will mean forging with each other and different churches creative relationships which express the reality of Christian love, brotherhood, and interdependence."²²⁶

²²⁵ Stott, John. Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents from the Lausanne Movement. Paternoster, Cumbria. 1996. P.61.

²²⁶ Ibid. P. 64.

Niche churches are purposefully single-generational to assure their members a personal approach and avoid intergenerational conflicts. They do not set a goal to reach people of all ages, but instead focus on what they know how to do well.

The dangers associated with age related homogenous units have to do with the unavoidable isolation it creates towards those it contrasts with. Stanley Grenz²²⁷ highlights the communal nature of the people of God.

“The Church is far more than a collection of saved individuals who band together for the task of winning the lost, for the programme of God moves beyond salvation of the isolated individual to encompass social interaction (Grenz 184-185).”

Church leaders are thus left with an utilitarian dilemma: if homogenous churches tend to grow faster than heterogeneous churches “we have to choose between apparent acquiescence in segregation for the sake of numerical church growth and the struggle for reconciliation at the expense of numerical church growth.”²²⁸

Many of the advocates of a niche approach suggest that the challenge of bridging the gap between young and old is now too great and therefore we have little choice but to meet separately. They maintain that the cultural challenges of the 1st Century church were less exacting than those that exist today. In the year 2000 edition of Youthwork, John Buckeridge comments on the rise of “Niche Church Services”²²⁹ that growing numbers of churches appear to find the challenge of all-age meetings too tough. He argues that coming up with a formula that addresses the needs and holds the attention of young children, teenagers, singles, married, the middle-aged, divorced and senior citizens – all together in one church service – is a task beyond an average congregation. He writes:

“ The early church knew no barriers between races, ages, genders or background. But that was then – what about now? If I believe that the niche church fosters spiritual maturity and growth significantly better than older models, why not?”²³⁰

²²⁷ Grenz, S. Revisioning Evangelical Theology. A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century. Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 1993. Pp.184-185.

²²⁸ Stott, John. Making. P.65

²²⁹ Buckeridge, J. “Editorial.” Youthwork, July 2000. P.4.

²³⁰ Ibid.

The current writer believes that such opinions show a misunderstanding of the culture of the early church and the challenge that confronted it. Cultural tensions between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female were every bit as real as those that exist today between young and old, Baby Boomers, Baby Busters and Generation Xers. Significant sections of the New Testament deal with these tensions and even a brief review of the way they were dealt with reveals that the model for overcoming them is very different to the one many churches are adopting today.

The apostles' teaching on division in the church does not advocate a solution based on establishing separate meetings to suit the styles of the various parties. The solutions involved sacrifice, tolerance, love, and respect for others (e.g. Philippians 2:1-4; Ephesians 2:14-25) – qualities we would do well to inculcate today. Perhaps if Paul was writing Galatians 3:28 today he would need to include ageism along with racism and sexism. Mark Ashton believes there are close parallels between the three.

“Where a generation barrier appears in congregational life it must be resisted as stoutly as racism or snobbery. The idea of “youth churches” as a permanent expression of the Christian community’s life is highly questionable. If we abandon the vision of a church without age barriers, we are discarding a part of the gospel, just as much as if we accepted there should be different churches for different classes, races or skin colours(Ashton 147).”²³¹

The basic thinking of the HUP was developed in a context of cross-cultural mission, primarily by McGavran during his work in India in the 1930’s²³² and it is thus most applicable in mission and evangelism. Indeed, it is on the basis of this missionary motive that it is usually defended. However, questions arise when it becomes normative for the life and ministry of the church in general. While “church” must be about evangelism and mission, it is more than this. Church is also about maturity, unity, discipleship and community²³³, (egg. Eph. 2:11-21; Heb. 5:11-6:3; Col. 3:12-17) and these dimensions cannot be fully demonstrated in a Homogenous Unit. There is also the danger that the HUP

²³¹ Ashton, M. *Christian Youth Work*. Kingsway, 1986.

²³² Jebasingh, C. D. Ed. *God's Light House: Donald McGavran, Father of Church Growth Movement*. Church Growth Research Center. 2001.

²³³ Eph. 2:11-21; Heb. 5:11-6:3; Col. 3:12-17

makes too much of a distinction between mission and the church. The church is the primary agent of mission.²³⁴ It is both ontologically mission and occurs only when mission occurs.

This model may well work for individuals whose interaction with the different generations occurs outside of the church environment. Yet it is strongly recommended that niche generation would cooperate with a counter-generational group to assure positive interaction (e.g. youth church would adopt a nursing home).

3.2 The Pros and Cons of Blended Styles

No other field of contact for generations has been battered by the plurality of preferences as worship. Perhaps sacred music is one of the last strongholds where even an open minded church member is secretly hoping to receive and not to give. For many it is the last and utmost foothold of familiarity, comfort and tradition that is threatened to be reformed by those of a different heritage. An intergenerational church wanting to effectively minister to different ages faces at least two possible paths of direction in putting an end to worship wars.

Multiple track churches are those that offer distinct service approaches at different times, particularly in two or more worship services. Such an approach allows for the use of distinct philosophies of ministry at the same time. Churches using this model tend to:

- offer different styles of worship in different services.
- offer separate ministries for each generation.
- allow for lots of diversity.
- provide ways for the generations to minister to each other.
- reach multiple target groups.²³⁵

Blended churches are those that combine two or more differing philosophies of ministry, usually in the worship service. Churches using this model are characterized by:

²³⁴ More on the subject: Is "Church" or "Kingdom" the goal of Mission?
http://www.nbseminary.com/CCIImpact/CCI_6.htm

²³⁵ McIntosh, Gary. One. P.212.

- two or more styles of music in one worship service.
- traditional ministries and new ones side-by-side.
- changing terminology.
- a transitional atmosphere.²³⁶

The Barna Research group, a leading Christian sociological organization in the United States, studied the topic of worship preferences and church music styles extensively.²³⁷ The findings below support the use of blending the styles of worship in church services.

The survey found that the severity of so called worship wars is limited due to the fact that most church people appreciate the use of music for worship, but are not obsessed with the style used. The research found that the style of music relied upon in the service is a matter of high significance to just one-third of all church attenders. In fact, only 17% said that they would definitely or probably change their attendance pattern if their church altered the musical style of the service they usually attend, while three-quarters (76%) said they would just go along with the new style and not make any change in their attendance habits.²³⁸ These figures suggest that in spite of the controversy surrounding church music, people may be more accepting or flexible than assumed. The study did find that the segment of adults most likely to change services or churches rather than accept a

²³⁶ McIntosh, Gary. One. P.214.

²³⁷ The research data were generated through three separate surveys. Using a national omnibus survey conducted in April 2002 by the Barna Research Group, 1007 randomly sampled adults were surveyed, of which 727 described themselves as Christians who attend a Christian church. In April and May 2002, 601 Senior Pastors of Protestant churches were interviewed, as well as a sample of 69 worship leaders serving at churches from which the Senior Pastor had already been interviewed. Many of the questions asked of each population were identical, to allow direct comparisons for many important factors under scrutiny. All of the survey respondents were drawn from random samples of qualified individuals living within the 48 continental states. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the aggregate national sample of the 727 adults who described themselves as Christian is ± 3.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level; the maximum level of estimated sampling error among the 601 Senior Pastors, also randomly selected from all U.S. Protestant churches, is ± 4.1 percentage points at the 95% statistical confidence level. (The sampling error for subgroups may be higher because the sample size of those segments is smaller. There are other types of error besides sampling error that may also be present in surveys.) All of the interviews were conducted from the Barna Research Group telephone interviewing facility in Ventura, CA. The distribution of the survey respondents coincided with the geographic dispersion of the U.S. adult population according to Census Bureau estimates, while the distribution of pastors was based on estimates of denominational affiliation in the country. Multiple callbacks were used to increase the probability of including a reliable sample of adults.

²³⁸ Barna, George. Music and the Church: Relevance in a Changing Culture. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2003.

style of music they did not like was evangelicals.²³⁹ Despite Barna's conclusion,²⁴⁰ (See below) this is an encouraging insight. Blending musical styles has become, according to researcher John C. LaRue Jr., the primary style of churches in 2001. He reports that 22 percent of churches in the United States employ a contemporary style, 25 percent use a traditional style, and 43 percent practice a blended style of worship.²⁴¹ A significant increase in blending in Estonia during the last 5 years, can be confirmed by the author's experience as well.

As presented earlier, a blended approach to intergenerational services is not the only approach used in churches today. Whitesel and Hunter argue that, for most people, such blended formats feel erratic, unappetizing, and unfocused. Some of their interviewees noted that as soon as they began to enter into worship, their preferred musical style abruptly ended. The abridged and indistinct direction of a blended worship service seemed to thwart the very goal of celebration – to lead persons into the encounter with God.²⁴²

The blended service may become a stopgap strategy for smaller churches and a permanent strategy for churches that have acquired a liking for such formats.

“But, if a church is seeking to reach out to unchurched people, the blended format will be culturally unconventional. Radio and television music marketers have purposely segmented the music market to drive up music sales.”²⁴³

Indeed, each generation is encouraged to embrace its own musical style as a statement of individuality and distinctiveness. Of course one can argue that the entire idea of joining generations is culturally unconventional but so is attending church in modern days. Cultural norms are influences to consider, but innovators and forerunners never do.

Whitesel and Hunter conclude that although the blended format has become attractive to many church-goers, due to familiarity, to the unchurched, it often seems a half-hearted attempt to contemporize our message. And even though the blended format

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Presented on the next page

²⁴¹ LaRue, John C. Jr. “Worship Style Synthesis.” *Your Church*, Nov./Dec. 2001. P. 72.

²⁴² Whitesel, Bob. Hunter, Kent R. *A House Divided: Bridging the Generation Gaps In Your Church*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. P.167.

²⁴³ Ibid. P. 168.

cannot culturally relate enough to the unchurched, it will appeal to people who have an association with the church and are already familiar with the format. However, if the evangelism of the unchurched is a congregational goal, they argue, then moving away from the blended formats and toward the indigenous worship styles may not only be prudent, but necessary.²⁴⁴

The research done by Barna Research group was introduced in the Pros section. The very same study examined the various styles of music used in the churches. The data indicated that 35% of all Protestant worship services, including those held Sunday nights and during the week, utilized traditional worship music; 30% were blended; 16% were rock or contemporary Christian; 7% were gospel; 6% were praise and worship; 4% were a cappella; and 2% used no music at all.²⁴⁵ The churches most likely to have worship-related problems were those that utilized blended music, which Barna calls a questionable attempt to please everyone at once.²⁴⁶ It appears that the use of blended music merely reminds people of the fact that they have to share the music space with others who cannot tolerate their own preferences - just as they cannot tolerate those of others. The reliance on blended music seems to actually fuel rather than dampen the fires of discord. Other recent studies we have conducted even show that people are less likely to feel connected to God in a blended service than in one that uses a single style of music.

While the research presented in previous chapters show overwhelming support to the blending approach of worship several valid arguments confirm theory's sensitivity to practice. There is always the cost of discomfort in a multicultural church that one may not be willing to take unless they clearly understands the benefits. Perhaps the first steps in the generational blending should not begin in the sanctuary, but in interpersonal relations and educational programming

²⁴⁴ Ibid. P. 169.

²⁴⁵ Barna, George. Music

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

3.3 Intergenerational Conflicts and Steps to Solving Them.

Intergenerational ministries begin in one of two ways: either the church is founded with core intergenerational values, or the idea is introduced slowly. In the latter case, intergenerational proponents often face stiff opposition.

Worship/Music. The first murder took place between brothers in a disagreement over worship. Today's most agonizing battles continue often over the same old topic. While the biblical command for worship leaves no doubt as to its necessity, human differences allow a lot of room for different methods. People worship differently because of our cultural differences, different spiritual gifts and the possibility of interpreting and applying scriptural principles in multiple ways.

The differences in preferences during worship services range from wall to wall. It is far beyond the choice of music even though this is the most obvious factor. In fact, as confirmed by case summaries of qualitative research of Elmer Towns in Appendix 4, music is understood to carry individual and generational uniqueness more than any other channel. Worshipers' passion toward their music is inevitable and therefore somewhat respected or distanced from intergenerational conflict. According to Codrington²⁴⁷, in dealing with hassles, young people rated talking to mom number 48, talking to dad number 51 (out of 53) and music was number 1. Because the importance of music is a given, often it is the small, second-rate details that turn into lightning rods for ugly emotions.

McIntosh's research²⁴⁸ in the generational preferences of worship services' features contributes to receiving a full picture of what the four living generations expect on Sunday. While Builders value predictability both Busters and Millennials enjoy spontaneity and surprise. The choice of lighting has made the curve as if prescribed by Strauss and Howe. While Builders prefer a softer feel, other generations like bright lights to see people well. Millennials have started to light with candles thus producing an even darker sanctuary which they do not seem to mind as long as there exists a reasonable variety in what they do. The shortening attention span is reflected in preferences over the

²⁴⁷ Codrington, Graeme Trevor. Multi-generational. P.38.

²⁴⁸ McIntosh, Gary. One. Pp. 202-204

length of the service. Dress norms are very strong. While many Millennials and Busters do not even own classical formal clothing, Builders equate their Sunday apparel with their expression of reverence. They are highly frustrated by hats worn indoors, for example. The atmosphere and feel of the service is one of the key characteristics in understanding generational worship. This is how the generations would describe holy experiences. While Builders desire a quiet and reverent setting, Boomers and Busters prefer a celebrational mood. Pragmatic Millennials consider methods to be of low importance as long as the service is characterized by an authentic seeking of God's presence.

	Builder	Boomer	Buster	Millenial
Pace of service	Slow	Medium	Fast	Fast
Predictability	High	Medium	Low	None
Lighting	Dim	Bright	Bright	Variety
Amplification	Modest	High	High	Acoustic
Length	90 min	75 min	60 min	60 min
Dress code	Formal	Business casual	Casual	Casual
Feel	Reverent	Celebrational	Celebrational	Honest
Participation	Low	Medium	Medium	High

Table 5. Generational Worship Preferences²⁴⁹

Innovation. The content of Christian doctrine is not negotiable. The biblical principles of praying, teaching, evangelism, and holiness cannot change. But methods of applying them can and certainly should change with time and culture.²⁵⁰ Resistance to innovation has to do with the fact that adaptability decrease as age increases. Additionally, cycles of changes to paradigmatic understanding has increasingly shortened.

²⁴⁹ Based on McIntosh, Gary. One. Research.

²⁵⁰ Towns, Elmer. Putting. P. 131.

Leadership. The challenge to church leadership to move the congregations towards intergenerational ministry is two-fold. First, it is characterized by preaching/communication. Intergenerational interaction will need enforcing, study, encouragement and example. Second, the challenge set before leadership to encompass all-age groups involves administration. Zimmerman argues that only in rare circumstances may leadership be limited to a single generation and that churches should seek to be multi-generational as a matter of principle.”²⁵¹ Appreciative leaders are those who notice and heighten positive potential within an organization and see radical possibilities beyond the boundaries of an existing ministry.

Allowing new generations to try their wings also means to expect and consent to their inevitable failure. Leadership that is looking towards the future will count those failures into the learning process. Indeed, what other way is there? Otherwise, autocratic leadership in churches will lead younger generations to boredom resulting in passivity and the older to indifference resulting in domineering.

The following includes observations and suggestions to avoid worship wars in a local community:

1. Some worshipers probably have the same worship experience, even though they express themselves with different forms. Fortunately, the validity of worship is not measured by the outward form of worship. Biblical worship is valid when one worships God in spirit (total expression of the heart) and truth according to the revealed Scriptural truth.²⁵² $\text{Worship method } x \text{ intensity or experience to an individual } a \text{ equals that of worship method } y \text{ to an individual } b.$
2. The strengths that one generation calls characteristic to their worship preference are also found in other expressions.²⁵³
3. Various reflections of worship may be characteristic of different times in a person's life. Usually people go through phases in their life when they express their Christianity

²⁵¹ Zimmerman, John C. "Leadership Across the Gaps Between Generations." *Cruz*. Vol. 31, No. 2, June 1995. Pp. 42-54. P.53.

²⁵² Towns, Elmer. Putting. P. 128.

²⁵³ Ibid.

differently. There seems to be more emphasis in various spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study and music when a believer has realized the need for them.²⁵⁴ It could even be argued that believers begin at one experience and gravitate throughout life from one worship experience to another.

4. Worship experiences have become standardized in churches because people with similar needs gravitate toward one another²⁵⁵

5. Some worshipers are converted within one worship experience and remain there throughout their lives. When this group finds an internal yearning to change their worship experience, they may interpret their feeling as temptation and reject them.²⁵⁶ It seems logical to those individuals that they strive to remain faithful to God by remaining faithful to their experience as it was when God first touched them.

In attempting to restore a generationally struggling church community, there is no magic cure but that what is already at the heart of the Christian message.

Tolerance as pertaining to eternal change. Anybody desiring to see change within generational interaction will need to begin the change within themselves. However, a warning sign should be raised at this point. “As good multiculturalists, we give people the right to be different, but therein lies the point – they are ‘different’, not ‘normal’. We’re the normal ones.”²⁵⁷ This is an important point. Our definitions of “normal” are so culturally bound that it is virtually impossible to escape them. We must not be scared of questioning what is truly biblical and timeless, and what is merely cultural form and expression.

It is lunacy to assume that the younger generations would have to melt into the mold that has been established by those who have gone before. Respect? – Yes. Cooperation? – Definitely. But likeness? – Never. This is certainly not how a family works.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Towns, Elmer. Putting, P. 129.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Tiplady, Richard. “Different Planets, or Parallel Universes?” GenX Magazine, October, 1999. E-zine, edited by Andrew Butcher, andrew.butcher@clear.net.nz (1999).

“Those newly pregnant parents who swear that “this baby won’t change the way we live” are rightly snickered at by those of us who know what having a baby means. The child changes the way you live. It changes the way you talk. It changes the way you view life, and innumerable adjustments are made in the home to accommodate the new life. Parents’ preferences are deprioritised in order to make these adjustments. This is not to say that the baby becomes the boss. There must be give and take, and the child must learn to live in interdependence within the family. But saying this is very different from saying that the parents will make no concessions for the child at all.”²⁵⁸

The family model assumes boundaries and limits. The tolerance that derives from that is closely related to respect.

If God is indeed worshipped according to the Scriptures – with all one’s heart – a different believer is not a disobedient believer. There is a biblical basis and often even a command for most generationally unique worship expressions.

Community. At the heart of all-age inclusive worship is an attitude of love and acceptance toward all people, expressed in and through personal relationships within the worshipping community.²⁵⁹ Drane considers community to be key to the mission of the church:

“We have lost a vital sense of community and the most desperate need of many people is for a place to belong. All around us, people are asking big questions but all too often they find neither understanding nor acceptance, among Christians. Yet the Jesus presented to us in the New Testament consistently identified the reality of loving community as one of the key aspects of Christian discipleship. Those churches that are growing in the West have worked hard at creating and nurturing effective community.”²⁶⁰

Some distinctive characteristics of this type of community are the faith community’s collective edification,²⁶¹ its inclusive nature²⁶² and its interdependence. Interdependence of true community of all the ages is a central theme in the writings of several Christian educators. For example, Westerhoff²⁶³ believes that three generations

²⁵⁸ Codrington, Graeme Trevor. *Multi-generational* .

²⁵⁹ Briebbenow, Greg. *Towards*. P. 6.

²⁶⁰ Drane, John. *Drane*, Olive. *Happy*. P.94

²⁶¹ Gorman, Julie. *Community that is Christian: A handbook on small groups*. Wheaton, IL: Victor. 1993. P. 54.

²⁶² Sutcliffe, John. *Learning community*. Nutfield, Surrey: Denholm. 1974. P.18.

²⁶³ Westerhoff, John. *Will our children have faith?* New York, NY: Seabury. 1976. P.53.

must interact if true community is to take. Benson and Stewart maintain that within the faith community the child needs the adult and the adult needs the child in a reciprocal fashion.²⁶⁴ Richards advocates viewing the faith community as believers who “share a common life, and who together experience the supernatural working of God,” adding that children are a part of that community.²⁶⁵ This truth is at the heart of the New Testament teaching on community. The basic message of the “Body metaphor” (1 Corinthians 12:12) is that we need each other. We are corporately the body of Christ, and individually members of it. David Watson helpfully notes the distinction and similarity between the Body of Christ and the Church.

“Although Christ is quite distinct from the church, as the body of Christ the church should be a powerful testimony to the reality of the risen Christ today. And that can only be true when individual Christians or groups of Christians, lose their independence and learn again what it means to belong to one another and to share together their common life in Christ as members of his one body.”²⁶⁶

The Bible endorses the diversity of cultures, but maintains that the unity of the church extends beyond this diversity (Ephesians 4:3-6, 13-16). Christ’s mission abolished the barrier between God and his people. It also abolished the barriers His people had between each other (Galatians 3:28). We do not cease to be Jew, Gentile, male or female, but these differences no longer represent barriers to fellowship. Finally, since community is only learned through experience it means little to theorize without experience.

Biblical correction. The faith community has a unique corrective to the phenomenon of imperfection in generational communication--the Bible. Modeling and apprenticeship situations allow for the learning and teaching of distorted truth at times. Accordingly, the Bible functions as a corrective in that its truths and revelations may be used as standards in opposition, whenever necessary, to individual or community norms.²⁶⁷ When experiencing tension, the first question to implore should be: Are there Biblical standards available to apply in the circumstance?

²⁶⁴ Benson, Dennis. *Stan*, Stewart. The ministry of the child. Nashville, TN: Abingdon. 1979. P.11.

²⁶⁵ Richards, Lawrence. A theology of children’s ministry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1983. P.371.

²⁶⁶ Watson, David. I Believe in the Church. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1978. P.98.

²⁶⁷ Kurko, Georgia A. Children’s. P 168.

Thus it can be concluded that a key challenge always facing the Christian church is for its practices to be congruent with its biblical and theological foundations. Due to the vulnerability of communal spirituality, however, there is much diversion of those foundations in practice,

The author categorizes two common, but critical generational dysfunctions in the faith communities. In the churches of missing generational identity unproportionality of generations allows a democratic neglect of a minority group. Due to the high-power party's little need for the low-power party in this ministry model, the conflict stays focused on the needs and fails to move to substantive issues. Second, dangers of a homogenous churches are discussed. While this model is effective in the spheres of evangelism and missions, it fails in the holistic approach to ministry. The Church is also about maturity, unity, discipleship and community with different believers that homogenous churches need to actively pursue.

Generational preferences of worship, as the most sensitive of all-age ministry issues discussed allow displaying the heart of Christian message through tolerance, community building and biblical correction. Further it requires creative innovation in ministering to a wide spectrum of needs and leadership must endorse such practices as norms.

IV. INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM.

Everybody needs a mentor, peer and a student.

4.1 Goals and objectives.

For education to take place we need to speak in terms humanly realizable and observable. The purpose of the religious community is to facilitate the movement of persons in holistic lifestyle toward the fulfillment of God, the world, and themselves. This definition synthesizes well with the more general one suggested by Niebuhr, “ to increase among men the love of God and neighbor.”²⁶⁸ Such fulfillment can be received through a holistic approach to education.

White suggests four major goals for intergenerational education:

1. Quality intergenerational relationship.

In society, at this point in time, almost any subject matter or any activity which enables people of various ages to talk and do things together can be extremely helpful. Some of the activities suggested in this work may seem to focus on matters of minor learning import. Nevertheless, even such mundane activities can be valuable. Especially if the content matter in the program or activity is of some cognitive substance, such interaction only becomes a plus in intergenerational human relations. In the works of George Herbert Mead and other developmental psychologists it is often suggested that

²⁶⁸ Niebuhr, H. Richard. *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry: Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education*. New York: Harper Brothers. P.34-35.

the human mind itself and one's sense of self are found through their interchange with others. Similarly, Erik Erikson held that the human developmental tasks of industry, identity, generativity, or integrity are fulfilled primarily by and through relations with others.

2. Significant cognitive learning

Perhaps the most obvious benefit of the activities suggested in this work is found in the transmission of faith throughout the church community in the natural flow of activities together. The study of the truths of the Bible will be taught in the flow of natural activities, conversations and games.

While the education provided by religious institutions should be taught in the frame of their sacred canon, historical tradition and ecclesiastical values it should also be truthful. The subject matter should reflect the best of modern scholarship concerning the Bible, the world, human beings etc.

Another concern in education in general as expanded by Søren Kierkegaard can be summarized in the words "little is true unless it is true for me." He writes: "All essential knowledge relates to existence, or only such knowledge as has an essential relationship to existence, is essential knowledge (Kierkegaard 176)."²⁶⁹ The topic of curriculum development for intergenerational learning will be discussed further in a section dedicated to that purpose.

3. Positive subjective impact

In religious education there has long been a polar tension between the proponents of cognitive content emphasis (usually meaning Bible knowledge) in the curriculum and the approach that uses life experience as the base for customized learning. While both are important, the format presented in this work gives priority to the experiential angle. Positive emotional experiences in education are building steps to deeper levels of

²⁶⁹ Kierkegaard, Søren. *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960. P.176.

learning, trusting and practicing. There needs to be a stage of “romance” in education prior to the stage of “precision”.²⁷⁰

This suggested format allows for recapturing the simplicity of faith that is needed for the biblical message to be understood by younger generations. Good ideas have a tendency to get complicated and “coded.” Intergenerational formats allow conscious filtering of the core concepts and thoughts.

4. Sound lifestyle consequence

A lack of evaluation ruins any cutting edge educational evaluation. This goal allows the possibility of measuring observable psychomotor behavior. The word lifestyle attempts to combine both cognitive and affective dimensions of personal growth. It is more than just what a participant thinks and feels, but how they act after the conclusion of the program or a measured time. In western societies, learning facts is the normal way to obtain an education. In many areas of life, information is all that is needed. Providing information alone, however, is not a way to bring about changes in behavior and relationships.

It is very common to receive positive feedback about the experiences from the participants. They claim in evaluation forms that the courses were well worth the time and effort and that they resulted in growth. With such statements, though, the evaluator faces the problem of attribution versus behavior in social-scientific study. People may claim (attribute) change for themselves, but has such really happened in behavior which can be seen and verified?

A. Immediate consequence

McGinnis has attempted to raise questions that the group leader can use for observation during the activities.

- a. When the games are played, are the participants laughing with, not at, each other?
- b. Is the laughter contagious?

²⁷⁰ Whitehead, Albert North. The Aims of Education and Other Essays. New York: Free Press, 1967.P.31.

- c. Does the activity allow for full participation by most persons? Or are few or many standing around waiting their turn?
- d. Can the activity be modified to include persons with age, skill, physical, or mental limitations? If so, how?
- e. Does the activity challenge all persons to work together for a common end?
- f. Do good feelings or bad dominate during or at the end of the activity?²⁷¹

B. Congregational impact

The author has been able to test some of the measuring tools used for learning evaluation in the Church settings that are well adaptable for the intergenerational ministry:

Parish Profile Inventory. Developed by Hartford Seminary this query was originally meant to study church organizational characteristics such as: worship, mission orientation, personal beliefs, style of ministry preferred etc.

Expressions of Faith Project. This assessment instrument was created by a joint team from Purdue University and Notre Dame. Sections 2 through 9 of the project's thirty-seven sections identify individual religious behavior such as worship attendance, Bible reading, private prayer, involvement in church leadership, social outreach etc.

Congregational Development Program Questionnaire. This tool originates from Bowling Green State University and is meant to reveal the changes in the congregational "climate." It measures "religiosity" in the following five items: 1. religious service attendance, 2. participation in social activities, 3. number of activities the member is involved in and 5. number of members known by first name.

Harkness also suggests a goal to be provision of foundation of consistency between the theology of community and its educational strategies.²⁷²

²⁷¹ McGinnis, James. *Helping Families Care: Practical Ideas For Intergenerational Programs*. Bloomington, IN: Meyer Stone Books, 1989. P.32.

²⁷² Harnness, Alan G. *Intergenerational*. P. 53.

4.2 Creating Curriculum

The uniqueness of the intergenerational learning curriculum lies in considering and appreciating the differences and likenesses of children, youth and adults. The designers will respond to the key question of how the various-aged people can worship/learn/act together in common experiences, parallel learnings, contributive occasions, and interactive sharing. Their task is to take advantage of the close physical proximity they are in on Sunday to build understanding and--why not?--mutual reliance. The course development depends strongly on what happens throughout the life of the organism, not only what happens in early life.²⁷³

Several basic components are necessary which, if included and properly utilized, will add to the effectiveness and appeal of the program.²⁷⁴

Basic Component One: Activity. While some materials tend to structure around dialogue or didactic instruction, they would find favor foremost amongst the older participants. Since non-family members are involved, that would increase the chance of exclusive communication patterns ignoring strangers. Planning sessions that are activity-oriented helps provide learning experiences that may stimulate conversations by themselves. Participation in an activity will lead to informal conversations about the meaning of the activity and the message of the Bible comes into focus. It creates an environment where children and adults alike ask questions and respond to each other. Learning will be mutually experienced rather than just a one-way relay from adult to child.

Numerous authors have emphasized the multisensory forms of all-age learning. For all young children, for example, learning is a total and sensory experience. They learn through all of their senses simultaneously. They take in the sights and sounds, smells and tastes, as they take in the whole of a new experience.²⁷⁵ Such total investigation takes place in worship as well. Young children comprehend worship

²⁷³ Baltes, Paul B. Reese, Hayne W.. The Life-Span Perspective in Developmental Psychology. In *Developmental Psychology: An Advanced Textbook*. Ed. Marc H. Bornstein and Michael E. Lamb. New Jersey, 1984. P.497.

²⁷⁴ Miles, M. Scott. *Families Growing Together*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1990. P.31-37.

²⁷⁵ Becker, Peter. Bertels, Gary L. Morgenthaler, Shirley K. *Children in Worship: Lessons from Research*. River Forest, IL: Pillars Press, Concordia University. 1999. P.13.

through all of their senses - smell and touch even taste, as well as sight and hearing.²⁷⁶ It is through multi-sensory worship that the participants literally “taste and see that the Lord is good” and find refuge in Him.²⁷⁷ Creating “room” for children to worship along with others, therefore, involves giving attention to children’s capacity to view the events of worship; the use of visuals; the use of sounds and smells and tastes; the use of physical objects and touch; opportunities and freedom for bodily movement and expression; employment of ritual; the use of repetition; the use of drama, story-telling and imaginative thought; and the use of the arts (drawing, painting etc.) and creative play.²⁷⁸ Liturgical innovation is thereby implied.

Basic Component Two: **Simplicity**. While the activities need to be interesting and substantial in context they need not be difficult and complex. The goal to have in mind should be that when planning the activities the youngest person involved should be able to handle the task with help from older members. While a child may not be able to sketch a project pattern, he can cut out paper shapes or color or glue. A senior adult may not have the manual dexterity to cut out small intricate shapes, but he can give significant conceptual guidance for a learning project. In other words, the session activity needs to allow all participants the opportunity to be involved at various levels of experience.

Basic Component Three: **Informality**. “School-mode” applications of religious education also lead to more cognitively focused “classrooms.” This approach can lead to a de-emphasis on the affective and behavioral dimensions of learning and produce children who can recite prayers and church doctrine, but who have little or no commitment to church. The balance of these learning dimensions can be attained by intergenerational interaction. Intergenerational learning is by nature experiential and relational. Randolph Crump Miller noted that the learning of cognitive facts was more likely to follow from positive emotional feelings and attachment, rather than the other way around²⁷⁹ We must balance the cognitive with the affective and the behavioral. Intergenerational learning does this. Active, simple learning experiences tend to almost automatically create an atmosphere which is loose and relaxed. There is little room for

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Psalm 34:8

²⁷⁸ Brieppenow, Greg. Towards. P.8.

²⁷⁹ Miller, Randolp C. Christian Education as a Theological Discipline and Method. In Who We Are? Ed. John H. Weterhoff II. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press. 1978. P.113.

suits and pulpits in such an environment. However, informal does not mean unstructured or unplanned. Sessions will need structure to flow smoothly and communicate security to participants.

Basic Component Four: **Involvement**. Every participant should be invited to engage in the activity. No one should be sitting out or merely observing. In large events, people can be divided into nuclear families or extended families, giving singles an option to join existing groups or to form new groups of their own. For another alternative, families can be split to allow maximum diversity and new learning.

Leader monopolization of time should be strongly avoided. Instead music, story telling, games and crafts responsibilities could all be incorporated. All tasks should be equally distributed, considering each member's abilities, of course. This will also contribute to the group morale.

4.3 Meeting different needs simultaneously

Understanding the faith development theory can help in developing appropriately overlapping session plans. The elderly, adults, teens, children over 6 and children under 6 have very different needs and expectations. Religious educators need to exegete the text and exegete the people. Intergenerational teaching is the intersection of that encounter.

Under 6 –

For the suggested format, children under six would be provided with a play area or child care with adequate equipment.²⁸⁰ Of course, breast feeding mothers should be assured that their children's presence is not discouraged. The child-care workers, when available, should be competent and adequate in number. Naturally, parents should be encouraged to suggest changes in the child-care arrangements.

²⁸⁰ Everist, Norma Cook. *The Church as a learning community: a comprehensive guide to Christian education*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002. P.183.

Over 6 –

Elementary school-aged participants need a mix of activities and need to have their time with adults in content sessions move quickly.²⁸¹ Some of the transitions for the change of pace may include but are not limited to: coloring, drawing and construction materials, snacks, carpeted floors or place mats for creative alternatives to listening in a sitting posture. Visual aides, puppets, stories and songs that include motions will liven any moral lesson for children. It has also brought good results to pair children with adults for participation at planned activities. The child at this stage becomes very inquisitive and should be encouraged to ask questions which make them think. They memorize easily, so Bible memory is profitable.²⁸²

Teens –

Teenagers are probably the toughest group to satisfy. Even though there are gaps in maturity between 12-13 year olds and 17-18 year olds, intergenerational events allow flexible inclination towards meeting them where they are in their social development.²⁸³ Some of the strategies for bringing out the best in their behavior have included providing ample social time, good audio-visuals, contemporary discussion starters, allowing teens to meet prior to the meeting. At the initial meeting it helps to allow teens to introduce themselves creatively as well as share their expectations and the fears they might have in regards to the program. Intergenerational programs are a wonderful platform for introducing teens to the responsibilities of leadership. They will be encouraged by the invitation to be included in the planning, which will also assure that their own interests will be represented. Plenty of physical activities such as hikes, games and walks will allow them to vent energy while service projects allow the group to give meaning to their desire to improve the world in an active manner.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Gangel, Kenneth O. The Christian Educator's Handbook on Teaching. Ed. Howard Hendrics. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1988. P.296.

²⁸³ Everist, Norma Cook. The Church P.183.

Adults –

Experience proves that usually if the children are pleased with the program, the parents will be also. However, there are additional ways to increase adults' satisfactions. Many of the following also apply for the elderly group. First, providing as much information as possible about accommodations and what to bring. The less parents are taken by surprise the better. Soliciting ahead of time any dietary, child care or accessibility needs (McGinnis 12).²⁸⁴ The distinctives of adult religious education are that, first, adults learn by their own initiative and are self-directed (differently from children and teens) and, second, want to know the importance of learning any given subject other than participating simply for the enjoyment of the experience.²⁸⁵

Elderly –

Allowing for the physical limitations of the elderly by slowing activity pace or providing alternatives will be met with appreciation by the older participants. They will enjoy telling stories from the past or drawing past parallels with the events of today. For many senior citizens the ability to concentrate on the topics over an extended time may be limited.

Finally, for education to take place a church educator will need to speak in terms humanly realizable and observable. The four goals suggested in this work for all-age ministry are quality intergenerational relationship, significant cognitive learning, subjective positive impact and sound lifestyle consequence. An all inclusive curriculum design should follow the principles of activity, simplicity, informality and involvement in an attempt to meet all participants needs simultaneously. Appropriately overlapping session planning is the key to such lessons that considers the uniqueness of each of the cohorts development.

²⁸⁴ McGinnis, James. Helping P.124.

²⁸⁵ Gangel, Kenneth O. The Christian, P.151.

4.4 Practical Ideas for Intergenerational Ministry.

The following is collection of learning experiences.

Activities for deepening interpersonal communication:

Active listening to one another, open-ended questioning, hiking together, name tag making, nonverbal communication learning, sharing concerns, sharing personal experiences, sharing prized possessions, trust walk, dreaming.

Activities for exploring facts, ideas and meanings:

Searching for analogies, viewing art, Bible study, book reports, making bulletin boards, case study, field trip, film or filmstrip discussion, paraphrasing, play reading, poetry reading, puzzles, scrapbooking, smelling, tasting.

Activities for expressing attitudes, opinions and values:

Agree/disagree statements, brainstorming, completing sentences, crafts, drawing, recording a play, poster making, puppet show, surveying, rating, rhythm band, self-portrait, video recording, wire sculpturing.

Activities for celebrating faith and life:

Choral reading, costumes, flying kites, humming, the Lord's Supper, pantomiming, praying.

Activities to encourage Christian discipleship:

Boycotting, budgeting, debating, gift making, gift giving, interviewing, analyzing, letter writing, planning, role playing, serving, visiting, voting, witnessing.

Generationally balanced services.

Parent/child events (mother/daughter, father/son)

Godgrandparents

Youth group visits to shut-ins

5. CONCLUSION

“Come to the edge,” he said.
They said, “We are afraid.”
“Come to the edge,” he said.
They came.
He pushed them... and they flew.
Guillaume Apollinaire

Never before in living memory has the gap in mutual acceptance and understanding between generations been as large as it is today. Massive societal and cultural shifts, invigorated by shifting technology, increasing rates of change, globalisation and disconnectedness, have caused a serious rift between those born in the first two-thirds of the last century and those born in the latter decades. This dissertation has identified some of the causes of this divide, quantified the effects and suggested solutions to bridge it. Although generally applicable to many different organizations in society, especially schools, parenting, businesses with young and old employees or those with generationally diverse target markets, this dissertation has focused expressly in application on the context of local churches. Specifically, based on the findings of Cutler, Sawin, Roehlkepartain and others, the author has found agreement that the faith community, due to its biblical mandate, is the institution best suited to facilitate

significant cross-generational life and learning. Regretfully, the findings of Harkness, Kurko, Towns etc. confirmed the suspicion it can do a much better job of taking advantage of these opportunities. In search of legitimate, practical and biblical methods churches can utilize to take advantage of generational strengths rather than allowing them to distance people within Christian ministry, the author has found an all-age inclusive outlook of ministry as a viable alternative to institutional isolationism. Four of the active generations were thoroughly studied in an attempt to provide understanding that would create cross-generational learning, faith development and relationships.

Within the review of literature, it was discussed that the information about ecclesiastical creativity to involve different generations for learning has been somewhat overlooked and under-researched. However, this was compensated for by the unanimous consent of the researchers cited that the outcome of an activity performed together with a member(s) of a different generation is always greater than when done alone or with a peer when holistically measuring the entire development of a human being.

It is the author's conclusion that intergenerational bonding is an important and necessary part of an individual's life. If faith communities are to increase their effectiveness in fulfilling their mandate to equip people for life and relevant mission, no longer can the widely used homogenous-age group methodology go unquestioned. An intergenerational component must be considered, not as complimentary, but as having primacy over single age strategies.²⁸⁶ Churches can encourage adults to retrospectively evaluate their own faith journey and consider the importance of key people at significant points in their lives.

The process of purposefully evaluating faith development and discipleship will likely raise the awareness of a congregation regarding its corporate responsibility for the spiritual nurture of younger generations.²⁸⁷ This may incidentally increase the number of volunteer mentors and participants in all-age activities.

The education implications of utilizing such an integration are vast. People are designed by God to learn from others as they live in community. Living in community

²⁸⁶ Harkness, Allan G. Intergenerational. P.455.

²⁸⁷ Aoki, Wayne. Engert T. Patricia. Turk, Anne A. Wilson, Richard. Chen, Jennifer, Latu, Elizabeth. Mentoring and the Discipleship of Adolescents: Research and Applications to the Church. Journal of Psychology and Christianity. Vol. 19. 2001. Pp.377-386 P. 380.

transmits culture effectively. Educators must plan intentionally and work carefully to create and enhance a community of learners. Four simultaneous approaches to congregational ministry are suggested that compliment each other by meeting different developmental needs (abc, aa bb cc, aa+bb, ab bc ac).

It was argued that the foremost difficulty of intergenerational learning lies in assuring that both older and younger age groups derive mutual benefits from their participation. That is achieved through the stimulation of all participants, but with appropriate content. The four goals suggested in this work for all-age ministry are quality intergenerational relationship, significant cognitive learning, subjective positive impact and sound lifestyle consequence. An all inclusive curriculum design should follow the principles of activity, simplicity, informality and involvement in an attempt to meet all participants' needs simultaneously.

Because people are imperfect, some portion of what is learned and taught in community will be imperfect also. Instead of self-satisfying the urge for comfort amongst the objectionable, this paper calls for learning from generations that think differently. The imperfect way was shown through two examples of dysfunction and the conflicts resulting due to worship preferences. However, the faith community has a unique corrective to this phenomenon--the Bible. Tolerance and respect leading to acceptance of different believers is rooted in its teachings. Modeling and apprenticeship situations allow for the learning and teaching of distorted truth at times. Accordingly, the Bible functions as a corrective in that its truths and revelations may be used as standards in opposition, whenever necessary, to individual or community norms. Separating younger generations from adults, as well as including all generations, reveals the faith community's understanding (or lack of) of such norms.

Throughout this work the word generation was used in multiple meanings. However, in all the variations of the word it represents the contrast of human limitation over God's purpose. Our generation is temporal, cultural and changeable while God is eternal, foundational and unchanging. The more we are able to become intergenerational, the more we understand God's eternal plan displayed throughout the beauty of variety.

Which is better? More biblical? More loving? More appropriate? These are issues which must be addressed by churches seeking to become truly multi-generational in their ministries.

APPENDIX 1.

What Fuels the Generational Cycle?

By Marlowe C. Embree, Ph.D.

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During a Crisis (ekpyrosis or saecular Winter), when the culture is faced with a catastrophic external threat of such proportions that the culture itself may not survive (e.g., World War II), those who are children during this era are understandably raised to be obedient, to be silent, to conform, to basically get out of the way and not impede their elders (young adults) as they tackle the job of saving civilization. Assuming that the challenge is successfully met (the culture does not die, but is reborn into a new era or saeculum), the young adults who are seen as responsible for this epic victory take on a heroic persona. But something quite different happens to their children.

Rising to adulthood in a post-crisis High or cultural Spring, this generation -- the so-called Adaptive generation, the most recent example of which is the so-called Silent generation (born between 1927 and 1943) -- faces an intriguing paradox. On the one hand, outwardly they experience a time of tremendous optimism about the social order: likely a time of economic prosperity, social cooperation, and tremendous technological progress. On the other hand, they often feel as if they were "born too late" to emulate the "great deeds" of their next-elders, and feel relegated to an "also-ran" role in which they can, at best, be maintainers of a social system they did not build. In addition, as time goes by, the dark side of the saecular High begins to show itself, in the excessive conformism of the times, the stifling of autonomy and dissent, and in what increasingly begins to be seen as a spiritual or cultural sterility -- a society that is outwardly (technologically) sound but inwardly devoid of values and meaning.

In reaction to this, Adaptive parents raise their children to be introspective and value-driven. The children are usually overindulged, at a time when economic prosperity is such that concerns about survival seem remote and rising expectations for each succeeding generation a given. Coming of age, these individuals then respond dramatically, even violently, to the perceived value sterility and mindless conformity of the culture (they never experienced the cultural Winter that made these traits once a necessity and a virtue, and now only see their outmoded excesses). The result: a sudden values transformation, often explosive, pervades the youth culture in a time of Awakening or Summer (the Consciousness Revolution, the Summer of Love -- in a word, the 60's). This is an Idealist generation (most recently, the Boomer generation, born between 1943 and 1960): intensely inner-directed, value-driven, autonomous, idealistic, otherworldly, and generally contemptuous of "the Establishment" erected half a saeculum ago by their grandparents and so assiduously tended by their parents. Committed to the values of individualism and inner-directedness, Idealist parents raise their children even more autonomously and permissively than they were raised, often to the point of neglect ("latchkey children"), partly because they are so preoccupied with the inner search for values and for social transformation of the value landscape of society that they can fail to be good parents, and because (raised in a time of economic prosperity when thrift and planning for the future begin to seem redundant and needless) they tend to focus on the now and/or the eternal, neglectful of the intermediate future of the next generation. The result: a time of increasing neglect of, if not outright hostility to, children (It is no

accident that abortion became legal around this time), and as a result, a dramatic rise in social pathologies. This generation of "neglected" or "abandoned" children, a Reactive or Nomadic generation (most recently, Gen X, born between 1961 and 1981), too young to remember the cultural sterility to which their parents were reacting, grow up in a world that seems to them an unsafe, amoral jungle in which only the strong and the pragmatic survive. Certainly they feel that they receive little or no help, financial or otherwise, and have to learn to make it on their own. Seeing the excesses of idealism, they often become tough, cynical, hard-bitten pragmatists and adventurers.

Naturally, having experienced a childhood of neglect, these individuals become determined to raise their children very differently, protectively and nurturingly -- at a time when their next-elders reinforce this trend because of alarmist concerns about the breakdown of society, as society's external structures appear to be splintering or falling apart (an Unraveling or Autumn, e.g., the "culture wars" of the late 80's and the 90's). As the trends started in the Awakening begin to "go too far" and begin to be perceived as rampant individualism, hedonism, and amoralism, society clamps down and begins to look for ways to protect children and to foster collectivism, cooperation, volunteerism and the like. The result: a generation of valued children (a Civic generation) that grows up believing in the value of order, structure, teamwork, and responsibility in the face of a society that radically needs fixing. Currently, the Millennial generation (born after 1981) is the current Civic generation, the first wave of whom is just beginning to reach young adulthood. The last such generation was the generation (born between 1901 and 1927) who, as young adults, fought and won World War II: Strauss and Howe note many similarities between the young people of the Great Depression and today's Millennials.

APPENDIX 2.

Question	Gender			Age				Involvement		
	All	Fem-ale	Male	10-17	18-39	40-59	60+	Low	Acti-ve	Lea-der
Having high quality programs and activities for children	21%	20%	23%	18%	24%	22%	23%	17%	23%	21%
Having high quality programs and activities for youth	43%	45%	43%	45%	43%	46%	44%	42%	45%	44%
Having high quality programs and activities for families	42%	42%	44%	39%	43%	44%	47%	38%	43%	44%
Having high quality programs and activities for people of all ages to do together	50%	53%	49%	50%	51%	52%	53%	47%	51%	52%
Having strong connections in the community	35%	35%	37%	44%	34%	34%	29%	32%	25%	37%

Table 4. Perceived church priorities in Roehlkepartain’s study

Individuals in the Sample in Roehlkepartain's study:

The congregations varied considerably in size from fewer than 100 to 2,000- plus youth and adults who participate regularly in the congregation's services and activities. Most were Christian, including Lutheran (7), Roman Catholic (3), United Methodist (2), and independent (1). Two non-Christian congregations participated: Unitarian Universalist (1) and Muslim (1).

As this table shows, the sample is quite active in their congregations, with almost half indicating that they are in leadership or volunteer roles. About one-third of the sample was under age 18, and about half of the participating adults indicated that they were parents with children under age 18. Though not in the table, the sample is almost totally white, with people of color only representing 5 percent of the total.

Number of Respondents Percentage of Sample

Total Sample 1,592 100%

Gender Female 942 61%

Male 615 40%

Age 10 to 17 486 31%

18 to 39 247 16%

40 to 59 485 31%

60 and older 343 22%

Parental Status * Parent with child under age 18 580 48%

Parent with child 18 and older 582 48%

No children 171 14%

Tenure in the Less than 3 years 272 16%

Congregation 3 to 10 years 508 29%

More than 10 years 923 54%

Level of Congregational Attendance less than 2- 3 times per month 154 10%

Involvement** Attend regularly, but not a leader/volunteer 680 43%

Attend regularly and a leader/volunteer 758 48%

* Includes only adults. Responses do not add to 100% because respondents could have children in two different age groups.

** Regular attendance is defined as attending worship or prayer services at least 2- 3 times per month.

APPENDIX 3

Steven M. Ellair's survey: Toward Shaping Intentional Intergenerational Communities. Conducted in an Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 2000.

This survey was distributed to more than 600 parish leaders in the 287 parishes in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles through the Office of Religious Education's monthly packet. This is a mailing that includes all information regarding programs and offerings from the Office of Religious Education which is comprised of 32 consultants/directors. It was mailed in the early summer 2000 and was returned by July 14, 2000. In addition, a webpage was created (see Appendix B) in order to facilitate responding to the survey via the internet. This form-based site is an online duplicate of the hardcopy survey and directs results to a centralized e-mail account.

When asked, overall, how valuable they considered it to be to create an intentionally intergenerational parish community, respondents' average selection was 4.5. This is based on a Likert scale with "5" representing "very valuable" and "1" representing "not valuable." Respondents, therefore, find the creation of intentionally intergenerational parish communities significantly valuable. When broken into sub-categories of programs, community service projects, and liturgies, respondents also found the creation of each of these as intentionally intergenerational quite valuable (4.3, 4.2, 4.4 respectively).

When asked, overall, how difficult they considered the creation of intentionally intergenerational parish communities, respondents definitely perceived some level of difficulty averaging 2.7 with "5" representing "not difficult" and "1" representing "very difficult." In regard to the sub-categories of programs (3.4), community service projects (3.1), and liturgies (3.0), respondents found it moderately difficult to create each and found the creation of intentionally intergenerational programs to be the least difficult prospect. Likert scale for these questions ranged from "5" meaning "not difficult" and "1" meaning "very difficult."

Respondents were next asked to rank the generations from 1 to 6, starting with the generation given the most attention by the parish community and ending with the generation given the least attention by the parish community. The results were the following:

Most Attention	Least Attention
Elementary – Youth – Adult – Older Adult – Pre-K – Young Adult	

APPENDIX 4.

4 summaries of case studies completed by Dr. Elmer Towns at the School of Religion of Liberty University.²⁸⁸

Case 1.

Background: Retirement of a Builder pastor type. He spent his life ministering in a church that combined congregational government with biblical expositional preaching

Development: A new boomer pastor was called whose background placed high importance upon contemporary worship. A praise band was organized and added to the Sunday service. Since the congregation liked the preaching of the young pastor, they allowed the new ways in order to attract the younger audience.

Conflict: The boomer pastor was preaching on the topic of raising hands in worship and instructed everyone to lift their hands in worship. Two of the assistant pastors, that had served under the former pastor, would not follow his instruction. It was not in their hearts to do so. When interviewed one of them said to Dr. Towns: "I could not bring myself to do it. Raising my hands to please the pastor would have been hypocritical because it's not me." When the older church members saw the division on the platform, they also refused to raise their hands. They later turned to the older pastors for further direction and their loyalty had shifted.

Result: Because of the staff members' integrity they left the church to avoid causing divisions. Many older builder generation members also left the church soon after.

Case 2.

Background: Retirement of the builder pastor. While not with a very outgoing personality this pastor was known for his great shepherding style. He constantly visited parishioners at their homes, hospitals and nursing homes.

Development: A new boomer pastor was called that was known for his energetic worship and evangelism style. The church quickly began to grow by attracting young boomer couples. The clapping of hands and "Hallelujah!" became frequent. The Builder generation did not like the applause that was given after special music.

Conflict: During one of the services the pastor tried to call everybody to clap to Jesus. The younger generation responded vigorously while the pastor scolded the older members for "sitting on their hands." At the next board meeting (consisting of the older members) the members unanimously voted to terminate the pastor's service at the church.

Result: The pastor's family lost three months' income and most of the young people recruited by the boomer pastor, left the church

Case 3.

Background: A large independent church's pastor was known for its evangelistic messages where an invitation was given to walk forward and pray to receive Christ as Savior.

²⁸⁸ Towns, Elmer. Putting. Pp.47-61

Development: The pastor visited a seeker-driven pastor's conference and returned with a new vision to change his church into a seeker friendly church. The choir and the organ were replaced with praise teams and synthesizer music. Drama and large television screens were introduced.

Conflict: Everything traditional disappeared, as did the people wanting a traditional service. Many were missing the music that they grew up with.

Result: Approximately 1000 worshipers of various generations went to other churches and those that stayed had to reduce activities due to budget restraints. Several pastoral positions were laid off.

Case 4.

Background: A Lutheran Church followed a traditional Lutheran liturgy each Sunday.

Development: A new Boomer pastor introduced what he called a gospel service during the Sunday School hour. It was held in the Church gym with a piano instead of an organ and gospel songs instead of hymns. It was informal in style and characterized by testimonies and lay members participation in the service.

Conflict: The board of the church did not like that some young couples went home after the gospel service rather than staying for the main traditional service. In their opinion the gospel service was not an adequate replacement for the traditional Lutheran liturgy. When they considered dropping the gospel service, several of the Boomer couples threatened to leave the church.

Result: A denominational official was invited to mediate the conflict. It was decided to offer an early morning traditional service at 08:00 followed by the gospel service at 9:30. While the board thought that most of the younger couples would attend the first service, they did not in actuality. This left the majority of the worshipers with a worship schedule 2 hours earlier than was their choice.

APPENDIX 5.

Sample Sessions: 12 Week Program.

The following are sample session plans for weekly meetings of members of different generations for conversation, study and entertainment. Biblical topics are presented so that even the youngest participants will not feel left out. The focus of these meetings is on learning to express oneself in the presence of different people and noticing their unique God given features over theological excelling.

Specifically, the following criteria was created to determine whether the curriculum was successful in generating changes: (1) increasing levels of verbal and non-verbal interaction between participants; (2) a desire to be involved and engaged within the intergenerational activity; (3) displaying acts of empathy (assisting, helping, or providing support) to members of the opposite generation without being encouraged by a staff member; (4) greater levels of intermingling between generational participants during periods of non-instructional activity; and (5) an interest in making contact with a member of the opposite generation outside the confines of the intergenerational activity itself.

Session 1.

Theme: Many members, one Body

Objective: To have each person identify their skills and gifts and be encouraged by the group to use them

Gathering activity: Name tag making

Creative introduction: Finding partners (By their preference of ice cream flavors, and requiring at least a ten year age difference.)

Activity: Tracing one's partner's body on paper and writing on it the person's strengths.

Presentation: Partners introduce each other to the group.

Dramatic Bible reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-21; 26-7 (Each member gets a reading part)

Discussion

Concluding activity: Linking hands to form a body shape.

Prayer.

Session 2.

Theme: We are all teachers and learners.

Objective: To become aware of the constant teaching and learning that is happening in families and as a result of other interpersonal interaction.

Finding Partners Activity: Teaching something new to a partner (Examples: How to paddle, words to a new song, how to identify types of trees, how to stand on one's head, "what would I do differently, if I could start a family again," tricks one can do with their hands)

Presentation: Sharing the learning with others

Dramatic Bible learning: (1 Corinthians 12:8-10)

Discussion:

Closing: Singing a song as a group

Prayer.

Session 3.

Creative introduction:

Finding partners Activity: Preparation for a debate from the perspective of somebody in the group that you feel opposite about (Picnic on a beach)

Presentation: Delivery of the debate

Lesson: Resurrection

Dramatic Bible reading: Acts 8:26-40 The story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch. The Ethiopian Eunuch found answers when he dared to seek boldly for them.

Session 4.

Theme: We all serve and are served

Objective: To experience the mutuality of service

Dramatic Bible learning: Matthew 25:34-40

Discussion: Which acts of kindness do I receive?

Activity: Charity Event

Session 5.

Theme: He feels our hurt. The point at which we are is no accident.

Activity: Drawing what your family would seem like to the aliens from the outer space.

Presentation: Sharing pictures

Lesson: Mark 5:21-43 Not only did Jesus raise Jairus' daughter from death, but He healed the deep hurt Jairus felt over losing her.

Activity: Gift certificate

Each member makes a gift certificate for one other person promising some gift of time. For example, household chore, special walk, reading a book together. If the gift certificate is for an absent person, it could be mailed as a special surprise.

Session 6.

Gathering activity: Bible dictionary game. (Find the answers to the following questions:)

What is the difference between apostle and disciple?

What is the other name of Mt. Sinai? Where is this mountain located?

Who was Eutychus?

Who were the Sadducees and the Pharisees?

What is a parable?

Session 7.

Creative introduction: Reciting the apostle's creed

Daytrip

Session 8.

Theme: Conflict resolution

Creative introduction: Song “If you’re angry...”²⁸⁹

Words

If you’re angry and you know it,
Stop and think

If you’re angry and you know it,
Stop and think

If you’re angry and you know it,
It’s OK for you to show it

If you’re angry and you know it,
Stop and think

Gestures

fists pounding up and down
palm out; index finger to head

repeat

fist pounding up and down
open hands extend forward

fists pounding up and down
palm out; index finger to head

Activity: Peace Pie and Trouble Cake

(Which line belongs to an appropriate recipe)

- a. Take time to learn and think about problem before deciding
- b. Hit someone when you feel bad
- c. Decide rules together
- d. Have a big kid be boss
- e. Decide what to do about a problem before you learn all the facts
- f. Listen to another person
- g. Consider how the other person feels
- h. Yell in a mean way
- i. Talk to someone about how you feel
- j. Take turns telling about the problem
- k. Holler and don’t listen to what another person wants to say
- l. Use a kind tone of voice
- m. Have only one person tell about a problem
- n. Insist your ideas or ways are the best

Session 9.

Fighting fair

Lesson: Win-Win

Creative introductions: Draw your own Old Maid (Must Notsu) cards with the double pictures of the disciples and Judas as the Old Maid. Play and find the winner.

Intro: Find 3 partners

Activity: Find answers to the following questions:

Find the longest and the shortest Psalm.

Find the 10 commandments in the Bible.

Name a book in the Bible that represents each of the following kinds of writing:

Law, Poetry, History, Prophecy, Gospel, Epistle

List the name of all 12 disciples

²⁸⁹ McGinnis, James. Practical. P.32.

Write 10 important facts about any one person in the Bible?

Determine the approximate distance between:

Ur-Haran, Haran-Bethel, Nazareth-Bethlehem, Jerusalem-Corinth

Place the following events in chronological order:

Baptism of Jesus, call of Abraham, preaching of Jeremiah, resurrection of Jesus, execution of John the Baptist, creation, captivity in Egypt

Discussion: Find answers to the following questions:

- a. Why do we play?
 - b. How do we feel when we lose?
 - c. Does losing get in the way of your reasons for playing?
 - d. What are the positive values in competition?
 - e. What are the problems with competition and the values of cooperation?
 - f. How can we get the most positives and least negatives in our play?
- (McGinnis 34)

Session 10.

Theme: The world around us

Creative introduction: Skit 100 people in the world

Lesson: Jesus' style of helping people

John 9:1-12 Jesus heals the blind man

Luke 19:1-10 Jesus and Zaccheus

Activity: Origami

Closing prayer: Peace prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace;
 Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 Where there is injury, pardon;
 Where there is doubt, faith;
 Where there is despair, hope;
 Where there is darkness, light;
 And where there is sadness, joy.

O divine master,
 Grant that I may not so much seek
 To be consoled as to console;
 To be understood as to understand;
 To be loved to love;
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Session 11.

Activity: Blindfold Trust walk

Activity: A Christian cross-word puzzle

Discussion:

Quote: Love things and use people. Author unknown

Homework: Find a quote you would like to leave others at the closure of the program next time.

Session12.

Creative introductions: Share a quote with others

Creative Introduction: Have team write a modern psalm of praise for all the things God has done for them.

Presentation: Reading of the new psalms.

Activity: Communion

Praise song

Reconciliation rite

One cup and one loaf

Benediction: Col. 3:12-17

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RESÜMEE

Põlvkondadevaheline kogudus:

Kogudusetöö põhimõtted ja õppekavade alused mitmevanuselises kogukonnas

Põlvkondadevahelise mõistmise ja sallivuse määr pole olnud kunagi nii tagasihoidlik kui tänapäeval. Sügavad ühiskonna- ja kultuuriruumi muutused, mida on süvendamas uuenduste kiire tempo, globaliseerumine ning mittehomoogeensete inimgruppide isoleeritus on loonud arvestatava barjääri eelmise sajandi esimesel kahelkolmandikul ning hilisematel kümnenditel sündinute vahel. Käesolev analüüs on koostatud tekkinud pingete põhjuste osutamise, tagajärgede määratluse ning lahenduste leidmise eesmärgil. Kuigi selles esitatud järeldused on kasutatavad laiemalt eri ühiskondlikes organisatsioonides, kus tegeletakse laia vanusevahega inimestega, on erilise tähelepanu all rakendused, mis on suunatud kogudustes praktiseerimiseks. Nii väidab autor, et kuigi usuorganisatsioonid on ilmselt, tänu oma piibellikule mandaadile, sobilikeimad põlvkondadevahelise koostöö ja õppimise suunajad, on neil läbida veel pikk tee nende võimaluste rahuldavaks ärakasutamiseks. Eri vanuserühmadevahelise lävimise, usuarengu etappide ühildamise eesmärgil uuritakse nelja elavat põlvkonda.

Autor järeldab, et põlvkondadevaheline sidusus on oluline osa isiksuse arengus ning ühepõlvkondlik haridusformaat kogudusetöös ei tohiks põhjendamatult olla normatiivne.

Esitatakse neli põlvkondliku kogudusetöö suunda, mis samaaegses koosluses täiendavad teineteist ja vastavad erinevatele vajadustele inimarengus (abc, aa bb cc, aa+bb, ab bc ac).

Põlvkondliku kogudusetöö raskuse kese peitub võrdse kasu pakkumises nii noorte kui vanemate esindajate ühisel tegevusel osalemises. See eeldab kõigi vanuserühmade kaasamist neile kohase sisuga samaaegselt. Neli eesmärki, mida sellises õppevormis järgima peaks on tõhus vanusvaheline suhe, oluline kognitiivne õppetöö, subjektiivne positiivne kogemus ja kaasnev muutus väärtushoiakutes.

Eraldi peatükk on pühendatud põlvkondadevahelise suhtluse hälvetele ja nn. ülistussõdade teemale. Täheledatakse kahte enimlevinut hälbetüüpi, millest esimene

ahistab vähemusrühmi ja teine väldib mittehomoogeensust täiesti. Jumalateenistuste koostamisel analüüsitakse erinevate põlvkondlike eelistuste “segamisel” tulenevaid tugevusi ja puudusi. Autor väidab, et põlvkondadevaheliste konfliktide võti peitub koguduse nägemusel piibellikust autoriteedist kui sallivuse ja kogukondluse õpetusel.