



CROSS-GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

BY THE END OF THIS WORKSHOP YOU WILL HAVE:

- Identified the generations present in our world today, in one's congregation and in the workshop itself, synthesizing information about each generation's beliefs, values, world-view and gifts.
- Engaged in multi-age, multi-generational, small group genuine conversation; analyzed one's experience and applied it to one's life in the congregation and daily life.
- Explored cross-generational ministry through the lens of Accompaniment Values and Actions and practiced applying the concepts to one's ministry setting.
- Developed a network with peers and shared questions and expertise.
- Reviewed and evaluated resources for supporting a ministry of accompaniment and faith formation that includes all ages and generations.
- Integrated the multiple aspects of the Glocal Mission Gathering experience and created next steps for developing a comprehensive cross-generational lens for ministry.



CROSS+GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

This experiential and interactive workshop is designed for people in our congregations who relate to children, youth and elders. The focus is how we accompany one another where we are — our congregations and households — with the understanding that our participation in God’s mission happens at every age and stage of life.

When a congregation practices cross-generational ministry locally, the core values and action steps that form the foundation for accompaniment and mission are present and active. As all generations journey together locally, we will be infused with a new perspective and sense of identity and mission.



CROSS+GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The Global Mission Unit of the ELCA has a long history of valuing cross+generational ministry. In fact, the Global Mission Events are known for being intergenerational. The Global Mission Unit continues to build on this tradition with the intent of integrating the gifts of the generations into every aspect of its work. The Cross+Generational Engagement track at the Global Mission Gatherings is based on the belief that when a congregation practices cross+generational ministry locally, the core values and action steps that form the foundation for accompaniment are present and active.

The phrase “Cross+Generational Engagement” is used intentionally. It creates an image of all ages gathering around the cross and journeying together. A cross+generational approach embedded into a community of faith meaningfully engages children, youth, young adults, adults and elders into the planning, life and witness of that congregation. The goal for this track and for the ministry of a congregation is for accompaniment to be embodied and practiced locally. The desired outcome is an authentic community representing the gifts, experiences, faith stories and cultures of diverse ages and multiple generations for the purpose of reconciliation in our households, congregations, community and world.

So, How Many Generations Are There? Who Are the Generations?

Our newspapers are filled with articles about generational characteristics and the challenges and benefits of working together. The scriptures are also filled with references to the “generations.” Our faith language refers to “passing on our faith to the next generation.” Yet, seldom are people able to name all the generations or each generation’s uniqueness. Many ask, “What is meant by “cross+generational ministry?”

Generation specialists typically refer to five to six generations in our society. The actual dates may vary by a few years depending on whose research you consider. If we include those few still living who

are 102 and older, there are seven generations present on our planet:

Gen Z (Born after 2004)	Six and younger
Millennial (1983-2003)	Ages 7-27
Survivors (1965-1982)	Ages 28-45
Boomers (1946-1964)	Ages 46-64
Silents (1926-1945)	Ages 65-84
Builders (1909-1925)	Ages 85-101
Lost (1908 and before)	Ages 102 and older

For our purposes, it is not so important to know the names of each generation or even the specific age span. It is important to recognize that each generation’s beliefs and values are shaped by its time in history. Each generation has a unique world view. Each generation offers a gift to the other generations. The Body of Christ is not complete when the views, skills, faith narratives and perspectives of a generation are absent in the ministry and life of a congregation and community.

Most often when all ages are gathered on the church campus programs are offered for each specific age group. This approach is typically labeled “cross+generational” ministry. It is not. It is not enough to provide child care for the little ones and parallel opportunities for the older children, youth and “OWLS,” the Older Wiser LutheranS. It is not sufficient to have all generations simply share a common space as often happens in fellowship halls for a meal or on a patio for “coffee” time following worship. This ineffective approach to ministry is well summarized in the book, *Almost Christian*, “To treat adolescents as a separate species instead of as less experienced members of our own was one of the twentieth century’s largest category errors.”

At a recent GMG, the youth who were present were invited to participate in the Cross+Generational Engagement track for a brief 45 minutes of planned interaction with the participating adults. When the adults reflected upon the experience of their encounter and conversation with the youth, there were tears - tears of appreciation and tears at the new found understanding



of the potential power of face-to-face exchanges between youth and adults. This - the result of a mere 45 minutes!

It is critical that environments are created that encourage the intentional working, playing, talking and worshipping along side one another both on and off a church campus. The building of sustainable, trusted, authentic relationships through meaningful conversation, shared rituals and traditions is essential. Congregations are a vast, untapped potential for bringing the generations together to accompany one another through life's milestones, challenges and celebrations and in the mission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Bill Bixby, former director of Youth & Young Adults Ministries for the ELCA, wrote in the Summer 2010 edition of the YMNet Connect Journal, "Cross-generational ministry is nothing more—and nothing less!—than a commitment to be God's many gifts/no walls Church! That is, to claim and to live out the mutual blessing, mutual up-building and mutual challenge that youth and elders can offer each other, centered in ". . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism . . ." Ephesians 4:5

Why Connect Global Mission with ALL the Generations?

- The scriptures are filled with references to the generations. Pages of Biblical text list the genealogy of families and connection from generation to generation. The meaningful interaction of the generations is critical for nurturing and passing on faith. Psalm 78:1-7
- At baptism the faith community welcomes the individual into the Lord's family and makes a promise to work together in God's world. Global Mission ministry is incomplete without children and youth. Intentionally including all generations in ministry is about keeping our promises! It is all about growing, shaping and developing leaders!
- A healthy ministry includes children, youth and young adults and elders. One is not too young to serve nor too old to serve. One cannot do youth ministry without including elders. And one cannot do ministry with elders if not engaged in ministry with children and youth. We are all the church of today. One does not earn the right to be involved in global ministry or to serve on a Global Mission Team or Board. The opportunity to accompany one another is a gift to be received and offered by each generation.
- Like the Biblical story of the 99 sheep and the one – the body of Christ is not complete when a generation and its gifts are missing. Luke 15:3-7
- In the story of David and Goliath we have a powerful text that defines the qualities of a young leader. We learn from King Saul's attempt to be supportive of this young person that God has already given David everything he needs to answer God's call and fulfill God's mission. 1 Samuel 17
- Timothy was still a young person, possibly a teenager when Paul trusted him enough to ask him to lead. Timothy learned by experience and with guidance from a wise elder who empowered him and mentored him. It was accompaniment at its best. 1 Timothy 4:7b-8
- The ELCA at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly passed a resolution that allows for and encourages the expanded role of youth and young adults in the governance of all expressions of this church. This means from the local church council and ministry teams to the ministries of the synod and churchwide offices. Amendments and additions to the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions S6.04.B09
- Too many of our youth today do not have enough caring adults in their lives. And our adults do not have enough kids in their lives! Often the relatives and grandparents who love them live miles away and are unable to be actively involved in daily interactions. Creating an interactive cross+generational community creates disciples who want to be like Jesus. Discipleship happens through personal, trusted relationships where the God story is articulated, freely shared and connected to one's daily life.
- No one, due to age, gets a pass from being involved in God's mission. Having raised one's own children or never having children are also not acceptable excuses. Moses, Aaron, Sarah &



Abraham, Simeon & Hanna, Zachariah & Elizabeth, and Paul are just a few of the examples of God's call to lead and serve into their 70's, 80's, 90's and well beyond.

- Our children and youth live in a complex world. They are connected 24/7. As Christians who want our children to live like Jesus, we cannot wait until our children become a certain age or able to travel away from home. They are part of a global community NOW, even in their own homes and community. The congregation has a duty to equip households as centers for local and global mission. It increases the faith maturity of a congregation and prepares people of every age to be apostles into all the world.
- Diversity is everywhere - not just "over there." Diversity of ages, generations, abilities, personality, race, gender, customs, rituals and traditions exist in one's family, community and congregation. Uniqueness is to be claimed and celebrated as it shapes one's identity and one's story.
- Research has shown that involvement in service projects or cross+cultural experiences by themselves do not nurture faith or character. It is involvement in meaningful service and interactive experiences with people who are both younger and older than one's self that is transformational. Meaningful cross+generational interaction creates responsible citizens and forms faith. <http://www.search-institute.org> It is about building character and equipping citizens to live responsibly in the world.
- Like in the story of the Wizard of Oz – we are simply better when we journey together, than apart.
- The foundation for Global Mission is respect for another, finding God's story in my story and your story, accepting the gifts of another, walking together and interdependence. We practice all this through effective cross+generational ministry in our own congregations and homes. In the end, it is all about nurturing faith and a purposeful life in Jesus Christ that brings redemption and healing to the world.

A Circle of Blessing

Through engagement of all the generations, our congregations have an opportunity to practice accompaniment and to introduce individuals and households to a healthy, local and global perspective. Mission is strengthened at all levels when the gifts of every generation are woven into the very fabric of the faith community.

In her newest book *Almost Christian*, Kenda Creasy Dean states that, "A generative faith, one where faith is viewed as God's gift and our identities are of a people who follow Jesus Christ and enact his love upon the world, requires a missional imagination. Our missional principles describe not only the way we ferry faith across borders but across generations. She writes: "Peer groups have their place in ministry, but when churches mimic the age-stratification created by a market-driven culture, discipleship formation suffers. . . . Teenagers reporting high degrees of religious devotion did not get that way on their own: their faith is the legacy of communities that have invested time, energy, and love in them, and where the faith of adults inspires the faith of their children."

As the generations journey together locally, our congregations and the ELCA will be infused with a new perspective and sense of mission in the world. As we view one another through God's eyes, accompaniment and reconciliation become a way of life, for every age, through Christ.

A key-note speaker at a GMG said this, "Accompaniment has become for us a word that overflows with meaning – what we believe about God and about our cross-formed global community. Accompaniment is a word that contains our joy-filled wonder at moments and at relationships that shine with God's grace."

Our hope is that the Cross+Generational Engagement track will equip you to discover, experience and celebrate the wondrous moments as the generations break bread together at the Lord's table and the kitchen table and walk along-side one another, locally and globally.

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THE CIRCLE OF GENERATIONS

A FOUNDATION FOR ACCOMPANIMENT IN ONE'S HOME, CONGREGATION & WORLD

Recognizing Generational Expertise & Knowledge, Decision Making, Sharing Gifts & Resources, Networking & Mentoring and Storytelling

-1925 Builders/Civic/G.I.

Faith based on knowledge and experience. Have heroes. "We will do whatever it takes to get the job done." Believe every generation will be better off. Live a life of sacrifice for the good of others. Want respect. (85-100+) Lost Generation, those over 100.

1926-1945 Boosters/Silents/Adaptive

Faith based on knowledge and involvement. Deeply committed to common good. Know hymns by heart. Hard work will get the job done. You can count on my word and a handshake! Save and pay cash. Shaped by the depression, WWII, industrial revolution. Rooted in tradition, loyalty, and conservation of resources. Grew up listening to radio, comfortable with sermons and traditional music. Trust institutions, leaders. May care for elderly parents, children and grandchildren. (65-84)

1946-1964 Boomers/Idealist

Post WWII. Dabble in church. Taught that institutional church will pass on the faith (forgot Deut. 6). Credit oriented. Buy now, pay later. Shaped by TV and incredible social-political change. Experienced assassinations of religious and political leaders, space exploration, civil rights, Viet Nam, women's movement, Watergate. Suspicious of institutions, hierarchy, and authority. Live to work and play. Creative, high standards. (46-64)

1965-1982 Busters/Survivors/Gen X/Reactors

(13th generation of immigrants to American soil). Searching for meaning and spiritual connection rather than religious or church connection. No loyalty to a denomination. Reached by non-denominational churches. Live in shadows of 3 generations. No fear - just do it! Concerned about

making ends meet. Shaped by computers, collapse of Berlin Wall, AIDS crisis, divorce. Accept Diversity. Environmentally conscious. Visual & entertainment oriented. Relationships important. (28-45)

1983-2003 Millennium/Generation Next/Gen Y/ Net Gen

New civic generation. Community minded, public servants. Faith responsive to nurturing. Looking for heroes. Experience a frantic pace of life, formative years spent in childcare, short attention spans, less respect for authority. The Internet always been a part of their life. Capable of networking and mass collaborations using the Internet without knowing anyone personally. Need close bonds with caring adults for balance in world. (7-27)

2004-2020 Adaptive/Gen Z/Homeland (<6)

**NO ONE IS TOO OLD OR TOO YOUNG
TO BE THE CHURCH –
ALL ARE THE CHURCH OF TODAY**

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Desired Outcomes Session I.

- Develop an awareness of the seven generational categories and impact on ministry.
- Appreciate the uniqueness and gifts of each generation.
- Experience cross+generational ministry as accompaniment.
- Understand the Biblical directive and research for bringing the generations together for blessing one another and passing on faith.

Key Messages

- A faith community's significant role is to bring the generations together for meaningful interaction.
- Meaningful interaction between the generations is a means to experience the values of accompaniment: Mutuality, Inclusivity, Vulnerability, Empowerment and Sustainability.
- Cross+Generational ministry engages us in action through: Resource Sharing, Recognition of Expertise and Gifts, Story-telling and Network Building.
- There are presently seven generations living in our culture and in our congregations. Each generation's character, beliefs, values, faith and story is shaped by its time in history.

Workshop Outline

- Circle of Blessing by generations or decades and hear words from Psalm 78:1-7.
- Identify and honor the eldest in one's midst.
- Divide into small groups (5 is best, no fewer than 3 or more than 7) with a mix of generations in each.
- Experience directed faith talk and caring conversation within these groups.
- Discussion on vital role of generations to understand "accompaniment."
- Application in own faith community.

Questions to Consider

- What is the best thing about being my age? The most challenging?
- How has my own character, faith and values been shaped by those in my own family tree?
- Who is someone of an older or younger generation who has influenced my life of faith?
- The distribution and percentages of the generation in your congregation and neighborhood?
- Do all the youth in your congregation and neighborhood have at least five caring adults in their lives?
- Do all the elders have at least five from a younger generation who interact with them?
- What are the gifts each generation contributes to the ministry of your congregation? What difference does this make? In your community? In the world? Past. Present. Future.

Tying It All Together

- Celebrate – The evidence of effective cross+generational ministry in your congregation and home.
- Tweak – An existing ministry to make it cross+generational.
- Add – One cross+generational ministry in your congregation this next year.
- Delete – Is there an age segregated ministry that is ineffective and needs to be deleted?

From the Bible

- Psalm 78:1-7
- Deuteronomy 6:7
- Deuteronomy 6:20-21
- 1 Kings 2:1-4
- 1 Chronicles 1-9
- Isaiah 44: 3-4
- Matthew 19:14
- Acts 2:17
- 2 Timothy 1:5



Desired Outcomes Session II.

- Understand that All are gifted regardless of age, generation, stage in life.
- One's own gifts identified and affirmed.
- Others have resources to offer and are a resource.
- Inspired, motivated and equipped to put the practice of accompaniment into action.

Helpful Resources

- *Find Your Fit* Workbook and Leader's Guide by Jane Kise
- *Lifekeys*, Text, Workbook, Leader's Guide by Jane Kise
- *Spiritual Gifts Inventory for Adults and Children* found on-line at: www.elca.org/christianeducation/programplanners/2005CEProgramPlanner/spiritualgifts.htm

Key Messages

- God SHAPed U (Spiritual Gifts, Heart/Passion, Abilities, Personality, Experiences)
- We are called to SHAPE the community of believers.
- We are Christ's body with many part.
- A cross+generational gifts based ministry can revitalize a congregation.
- Each person is called to identify the gifts in others and invite them for use in Christ's service.
- There is no such thing as a volunteer.
- It is all about being God's hands and a witness to Jesus, locally and globally.

Questions to Consider

- What is your earliest memory of being invited to have a significant role in your faith community?
- Something you know how to do or have knowledge about that you can teach someone else.
- Something you want to learn about or how to do.
- What is God calling you to do?
- How does your congregation assist others to discover and use their gifts in Christ's service?

Additional Focus and Activities

- Shared laughter and fun contributes to bonding and shared stories between generations.
- Effective communication takes work and is critical for the practice of accompaniment.
- Recognition of gifts and appreciation is an essential foundation for accompaniment.



ACCOMPANIMENT IN ACTION

Applying and Practicing the Action Areas through Cross+Generational Engagement

Resource Sharing

Ex: The sharing of space in the church between youth, elders, pre-school, worship?

C.

T.

A.

Expertise Recognition

Ex: How are all learners and teachers?

C.

T.

A.



Story-telling

Ex: The Jesus Storybook Bible, Recording Faith Stories

C.

T.

A.

Network Building

Ex: Mentoring

C.

T.

A.

Decision Making

Ex: Living out the ELCA 10% Resolution

C.

T.

A.



“WRAP-UP & TAKING IT HOME”

Based on the information given in the Global Mission binder, the plenary speakers and this workshop experiences, discuss with team members the ***Effective Components of Accompaniment through a Cross+Generational lens***. List them here:

Based on the description and ingredients of an effective model for Accompaniment above, complete a C.T.A.R. Scan of your ministry:

1. **Celebrate** those areas where your congregation already practices and carries out God’s reconciling mission through an effective cross+generational ministry. Be specific:

2. In what areas of ministry, with some slight **Tweaks** or adjustments, could you increase your congregation’s capacity to participate in God’s mission, proclamation and service, by becoming more cross+generational:

3. What new ideas, concepts or resources were you introduced to in this track? What are one or two new practices or approaches you would like to **Add** to your ministry that will increase your congregation’s capacity to be cross+generational and in mission and relationship with God and one another:



4. Based on what you have experienced in this track, is there anything you believe needs to be **Removed** from your congregation's practices as it does not fit an effective Cross+Generational Engagement Model:

Practice your response to, "What did you learn in the Cross+Generational Engagement track?"

To grow our congregation's capacity for cross+generational ministry I need to talk to or involve:

List names of people and organizations

Our Global Mission Team will meet (date) _____ to share and answer these same questions for each of the tracks we experienced.

Other:

RESOURCES FOR CROSS+GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN A GLOBAL WORLD

Research

www.exemplarym.com - In-depth study of exemplary congregations funded by Lilly.

www.fourthturning.com - Links to Strauss & Howe, generational experts.

www.fulleryouthinstitute.org/intergenerational-ministry - Fuller Seminary.

www.girlscouts.org - Click on "Research." Current. Excellent!

www.link2lead.com - Generational data/demographics based on congregation's zip code.

www.religions.pewforum.org - Up-to-date broad information.

www.search-institute.org/congregations - Search Institute, Asset Building.

www.youthandreligion.org - National Study of Youth & Religious Life.

www.generationwhy.com - Resources, links related to Gen X'rs & Millennial.

Resources & Web Sites

Across the Generations, Incorporating All Ages in Ministry, Augsburg Fortress, 2001.

All Are Welcome: A Primer for Intergenerational Ministry and Dialog, J. Gamboni, 1998.
www.pointsofviewinc.com/POVOurProducts.html

Bright Horizons - Ideas for connecting children and home to the world.
www.brighthorizons.com/education/better_world_family_activities_projects.asp

The Challenges of All Ages and Generations Worshiping Together, Vanderwell, 2007.
www.alban.org

Children and youth in worship - www.childrenatworship.org/welcome

Faith Family Style: Generations Growing Together, Augsburg Fortress, 2001.

Family Ministry: "Empowering through Faith," Diana Garland, Editor - www.fmef.org

Full Circle Triple AAA Training, Lyle Griner - www.everyday-everywhere.org

Funtastic Family Nights, Kurt Bickel, CPH, 1998.

Generations of Faith - A comprehensive on-line Catholic resource.
<http://secure.cmdnet.org/index.cfm>

Lifelong Faith, the Theory and Practice of Lifelong Faith Formation - www.lifelongfaith.com
Volume 1.3 Fall/Winter 2007. Review of C+G Ministry.

Milestones Ministry for Home & Congregation, Milestone Intergenerational Enrichment Events, Milestones Worship Celebrations, Together in Faith - www.vibrantfaith.org.

Christian Century, "Misguided Mission, Ten Worst Practices," Wm Radecke, May 18, 2010 .
www.christiancentury.org/article.lasso?id=8440

Lutheran Partners, "Pass the Peas, Catch the Faith- Please!" Staats, July/August Vol 25, #4, p22.
www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Vocation/Lutheran-Partners/Complete-Issue.aspx

Safeguarding God's Children, A Manual for Training, Church Publishing, 2003. A resource for creating safe havens and protecting kids and adults.



Seasons of the Spirit, A curriculum for C+G community. - www.spiritseasons.com

Wealth of connections to resources for cross+cultural awareness with children.

<http://staff.lib.msu.edu/corby/education/multicultural.htm>

Connect, YMNet Journal, "On the Way – Cross-generational," Bill Bixby, Fall 2010, p18.

<http://www.elcaymnet.org/connectjournal>

Basic Reading List

A Tribe Apart, Patricia Hersch, Ballentine Books, 1999

All Kids Are Our Kids, Peter Benson, Josey-Bass, 1997

Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church, Kenda Creasy Dean, Oxford Press, 2010

Another Country, Mary Pipher, Berkley (Penguin) Publishing, 1999

Assets In Action, Deborah Fisher, Search Institute, 2003

Bridging the Generations, Katie Wiebe, Herald Press, 2001

Coming of Age, Hill, Anderson, Martinson, Augsburg Fortress, 2006

Engaging in Ministry with Older Adults, Dosia Carlson, Alban Institute, 1997

Family the Forming Center, Marjorie Thompson, Upper Room, 1996

From the Great Omission to Vibrant Faith, David Anderson, VFM, 2009

The Family Story Bible, Ralph Milton, Westminster John Knox Press, 1996

Frogs Without Legs Can't Hear, Anderson & Hill, Augsburg Fortress, 2003

Generations, William Strauss, Harpercollins, 1991 (and successive books)

Generations of Faith, Carl Eeman, Alban Institute, 2003

The Godbearing Life, Kenda Dean & Ron Foster, Upper Room, 1998

The Jesus Storybook Bible, Sally Lloyd-Jones, Zondervan, 2007

No More Us & Them. 100 Ways to Bring Your Youth & Church Together, Group, 1999

Passing on the Faith, Hardel & Strommen, Saint Mary's Press, 2008

Relationships Unfiltered, Andrew Root, Zondervan, 2009

The Shelter of Each Other, Mary Pipher, Putnam, 1996

SPARK Storybible, multiple contributors, Augsburg Fortress, 2009

The Spirit and Culture of Youth Ministry: Leading Congregations Toward Exemplary Youth Ministry, R Martinson, W Black & J Roberto, Lifelong Faith Pub, 2010

Stopping at Every Lemonade Stand, James Vollbracht, Penquin Books, NY, 2001

The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb, Eric Law, Challice Press, 1993

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BLESSING FOR THE GENERATIONS

May -

God be in your head and in your thinking;

God be in my head and in my thinking;

God be in your eyes and in your seeing;

God be in my eyes and in my seeing;

God be in your ears and in your listening;

God be in my ears and in my listening;

God be in your mouth and in your speaking;

God be in my mouth and in my speaking;

God be in your heart and in your understanding;

God be in my heart and in my understanding;

God be in your hands and in your serving;

God be in my hands and in my serving;

God be in your years and all the milestones of life;

God be in my years and all the milestones of my life;

God be with us as we walk along side one another.

God be with me as I walk along side you.

Amen!